



TWO PROFILE HEADS FRANZ HAGENAUER CA. 1970

Pair of rare profile heads, Franz Hagenauer,
Werkstätte Hagenauer Wien, ca. 1970, brass
nickel-plated, marked

Among the most impressive and well-known works of Franz Hagenauer are his representations of human heads. These sculptures span from the mid-1920s until his passing in 1986, marking a significant chapter of this important designer's œuvre. Throughout this period, there is a recognizable continuum of development and change in Hagenauer's work. Initially, it exhibited clear parallels to the works of contemporaries such as Amedeo Modigliani or Constantin Brâncuși. However, by the mid-1930s, Franz Hagenauer developed a completely independent style that diverged widely from that of his peers, showcasing a truly unique personal aesthetic.

Starting with his role as a professor of design at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna, new impulses from his teaching activities also inspired his artistic endeavors. While his figural representations were previously almost exclusively three-dimensional, by the late 1960s, he began designing heads that were nearly two-dimensional. These were also crafted using a new technique. A brass plate served as the base onto which tubes and other metal parts were soldered or screwed. This resulted in distinctive art objects with a particularly intense expression. At first glance, these heads appear nearly identical. However, Franz Hagenauer varies the model with stylized attributes that are only slightly different, creating heads that are unmistakably male and female, respectively. The female head's eyebrow forms an arch and her chin is subtly rounded. The male head's brow, on the other hand, is drawn straight and his chin is strikingly angular. With these profile heads, Franz Hagenauer thus also demonstrates his mastery of formal reduction.

