

# BOWMAN SCULPTURE

## **ALFRED BOUCHER (French, 1850-1934)**

Alfred Boucher was born in Bouy-sur-Ovin, France. His father was a gardener who worked for the sculptor Joseph-Marius Ramus and it was Ramus who recognised the young Boucher's talent and invited him to work in his studio as his assistant. Boucher entered L'École des Beaux Arts de Paris in 1869 and exhibited at the Paris Salon from 1874 onwards, winning a Grand Prix at the Exposition Universelle in 1881 with his model of La Piété Filiale before moving to Florence where he won the admiration of illustrious patrons such as George I of Greece and Maria-Pia of Romania.

Boucher was also a committed teacher who encouraged a number of talented sculptors including Camille Claudel; indeed, it was Boucher who persuaded Auguste Rodin to take Claudel on as an assistant, before his second trip to Florence in 1883.

Boucher won the Grand Prix de sculpture de l'Exposition Universelle for the second time in 1900 and set up the studio La Ruche in Montparnasse in 1902. The studio space, which was designed to help young artists and came to be known as the beehive, was later used by a number of the leading artists of the 20th century, including Archipenko, Chagall, Soutine and Leger.

Boucher sculpted portrait busts, allegorical figures, groups and monuments in both marble and bronze. He was highly regarded by his patrons as well as his peers, including his friend Auguste Rodin (1840-1917).