

# BOWMAN SCULPTURE

## AIMÉ-JULES DALOU (French, 1838-1902)

Aimé-Jules Dalou was born in Paris in 1838. He began his artistic career as a student of Carpeaux and Duret at the *École des Beaux Arts*, where he met Auguste Rodin. He debuted at the Paris Salon in 1861, exhibiting the piece *Dame romaine jouant aux osselets* ('A Roman Lady Playing Jacks'). He then developed a highly personalised sculptural style, focusing on the depiction of female figures in day-to-day tasks. The success of such models was crowned when Dalou received critical acclaim and a third-class medal for the sculpture *Brodense* ('The Embroiderer'), at the Paris Salon of 1870.

The artist was a left-wing Republican, a political conviction that led him to flee Paris for London in the aftermath of the Franco-Prussian War (1870-1871) and of the subsequent political instability in France. During his time in London, Dalou was appointed as a tutor at the Lambeth Art School. Dalou's presence on British soil from 1871 represents a key moment for the development of sculpture in the country – his student cohort included important English artists such as William Goscombe-John, George Frampton and Harry Bates.

As the recent TATE Britain exhibition, *Impressionists in London* (2017-2018) highlighted, Dalou's contribution to the development of sculpture in Britain can be easily paralleled to the influence exercised by Monet, Tissot, Pissarro, Sisley and Derain on British painting in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Although the artist returned to France in 1880, his artistic output outlived his stay in the country, occupying prominent spaces in the city and becoming a source of inspiration for the future generation of British sculptors, contributing to the foundations of the New Sculpture movement.

Upon his return to the French capital, all consideration of a French Monarchy had disappeared and Dalou could profess freely his Republican views, even submitting a design for a group entitled *Triomphe de la République* ('Triumph of the Republic', 1899), which was erected in Place de la Nation, where it can still be seen today.

In the last 20 years of his life, Dalou slowly drifted away from the depictions of day-to-day life which made his fortune in the early phases of his career, focusing on a project for a *Monument aux Travailleurs* ('Monument to Labourers'), which was never completed. He died in Paris in 1902, surrounded by friends and family. His works are housed in major museum collections in France (e.g. Musée d'Orsay and Petit Palais, both in Paris), and abroad (e.g. Victoria & Albert Museum, London, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City).