Ossip Zadkine (Russian-French 1888-1967)

Sculpture Pour Jardin (1943-1944)

Signed and numbered O.Z and number 1/6

Stamped, Modern Art Foundry/ New York

Bronze, with rich brown/black patina

Height: 20.6"(52.5 cm)

Width: 54.5" (138 cm)

Depth :24" (61 cm)

This bronze (1/6) is the only one that was cast during the artist's lifetime

Ossip Zadkine (1890–1967) was born in Vitebsk, Belarus, of Russian-Scottish descent, and grew up in Smolensk. In 1909 he enrolled at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris, though he soon rejected academic training and established his own studio at La Ruche. There he encountered Archipenko, Lehmbruck, and later Brancusi and Picasso, joining the emerging Cubist circle.

His early work in direct carving revealed his fascination with primitive art. After enrolling in the First World War in the French Foreign Legion, Zadkine returned to Paris and worked alongside Modigliani before exhibiting widely. Recognition came in Brussels in 1919, when critic André de Ridder championed his work, and in 1920 with his first solo exhibition. Over the 1920s he exhibited in Brussels, Paris, London, and Tokyo, and in 1927 achieved a major success when the Moscow Museum of Western Art acquired his bronze The Musicians.

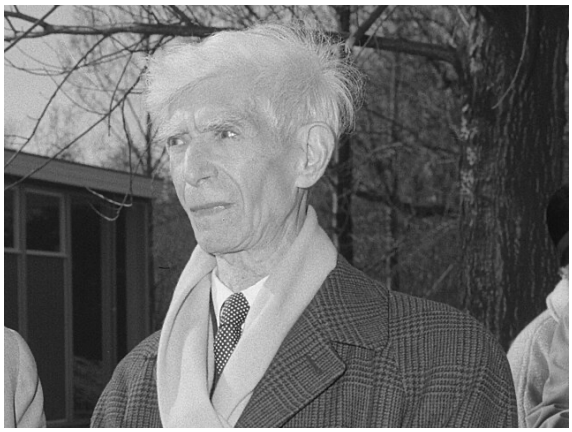
The early 1930s brought his first retrospective in Brussels, followed by exhibitions in Paris, Manchester, Chicago, New York, and Venice. By this period Zadkine was an internationally recognised sculptor. During the Second World War, with Jewish ancestry, he fled to the United States, exhibiting with fellow exiles such as Matisse and Chagall.

After the war he returned to France, producing his most celebrated monument, The Destroyed City (Rotterdam, 1953), a haunting memorial to wartime devastation. His later work combined the solidity of Cubism with a lyrical humanism, bridging classical archetypes and modern abstraction.

Zadkine died in Paris in 1967 and is buried at Montparnasse Cemetery.

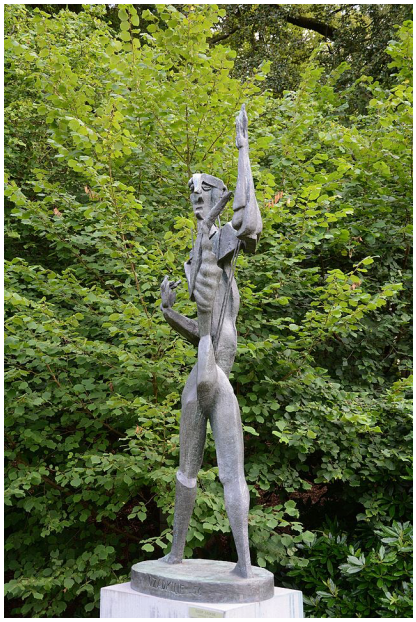
Works by Ossip Zadkine are in the public collections of the Museum de Fundatie in Zwolle, the Van Abbe Museum in Eindhoven, Museum Beelden aan Zee in

Scheveningen, Kröller-Müller Museum in Otterlo, Museum Jan van der Togt in Amstelveen, and the Middelheim Museum in Antwerp.



Ossip Zadkine in 1965

The sculpture depicts a reclining female figure, turned in profile, with her torso twisted, with one leg extended alongside the body and the other bent at the knee. The anatomy of the human body is fragmented and stylised through geometric composition yet remains recognisable. The intensely worked surface alternates between smooth planes and rugged textures, and the interplay of empty spaces transmits an energetic dimension to the composition. Across the chest runs carved channels that evoke the strings of a lyre. Music is a recurrent theme throughout Zadkine's career, linking to his other celebrated series of works of Orpheus.



Ossip Zadkine, *Orpheus*, 1956, Beeldentuin Middelheim Museum, Antwerp, Belgium

The reclining nude is a classical figurative subject in Western art, where figures of gods and mythological personifications were placed in villa gardens and fountains. Zadkine consciously recalls this rich heritage while simultaneously innovating it by adopting

the Cubist language, breaking the figure into geometric planes and linear intersections. Yet here it is rendered with the roughened, expressive surface characteristic of his postwar bronzes.

This sculpture highlights a pivotal shift in Zadkine's career, a transition from his early, smaller Cubist explorations in wood, created without preparatory models, into his larger postwar production. The treatment of the rough and tactile surfaces of the bronze underscores the tension between vitality, weight, and lyricism, as well as monumentality and fragility, as manifested in *The Destroyed City* (Rotterdam, 1953), his more crucial public commission.



De Verwoeste (The Destroyed City), 1953, Rotterdam

This sculpture stands at the intersection of archetypal mythological symbolism and the personal elaboration of the Cubist language, serving as a symbol of cultural renewal and manifesting the crucial resonance that defines Zadkine's legacy.

Literature

Lecombre, Sylvain. *Ossip Zadkine: L'Oeuvre sculpté.* Paris: Paris-Musées, 1994. Catalogue no. 378, illustrated.