



Jessie O'Connor

Date

c. 1904-1914

Primary Maker

Andrew O'Connor

Medium

Bronze

Dimensions

43.5 x 17.5 x 21 cm

Description

O'Connor, who had previously been married, went to Paris about 1903 on holiday with Jessie Phoebe Brown. They remained in France until the outbreak of war in 1914. It was in this period that their four sons Hector, Owen, Roderic and Patrick were born. In the same period Jessie seems to have been almost exclusively O'Connor's only

model (apart from his four sons); and her head with its very distinctive nose was the model for numerous sculptures, both male and female, in bronze, plaster and marble. These sculptures appear under a variety of titles. Jessie recalled how friends teased O'Connor for using Jessie as a model for male sculptures when he would simply coarsen the features. Accounts of O'Connor's unusual predilection for modelling only Jessie vary. Jessie herself believed that the sculptor had no desire to use other models; but Jessie is also recalled as being too jealous to allow O'Connor other female models. Before her death in 1974 she told Homan Potterton of how O'Connor frequently took casts from her face and recalled how her hair at the period was extremely long, so much so that she could sit on it. (Homan Potterton, 'Andrew O'Connor - A complementary catalogue to the exhibition marking the centenary of the sculptor's birth', Trinity College, Dublin, September 1974, p. 29.)