



## Bronze Sculpture Bronze Automobile Mascot Signed Ael



880 EUR

Signature : A.E.L. (Augustine et Emile Lejeune)

Period : 20th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Bronze

### Description

Automobile mascot, Woman with a veil, in silver-plated bronze, monogrammed AEL (for Emile Louis Lejeune) mounted on a Carrara marble and gilded bronze base. Height of the mascot 15 cm. Total height, with base, 24 cm. The company was founded in London in 1910 under the name of AE Lejeune (AEL), by a French silversmith Emile Lejeune and his wife Augustine (known as "Mimi"), who had arrived in England from Paris in 1904. The company initially manufactured small ornamental bronze, sculptures and architectural fittings. He later found a market for car mascots, the first probably being the "Speed Nymph", the design of which was recorded in 1917. Lejeune commissioned mascots from sculptors such as Frédéric Bazin and Charles Paillet. In 1926, they moved the

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premises from Hallam street to Great Portland street. In 1929, AEL was described as "the world's largest manufacturer of automotive car mascots". They have been commissioned by the major British car manufacturers to produce their official mascots; these included the Star, Crossley, Alvis, Rolls Royce and Bentley. Upon Lejeune's death in 1933, his 25-year-old son, his son took over and renamed the company, although "Mimi" was appointed chairman and managing director. In 1940, Louis Lejeune was in France during the Battle of France and did not return to England until 1945, when he replaced his mother as managing director. Louis Lejeune died in 1978 and the company passed to his English widow, Eloise. In 1978, the company was bought by export manager and hobbyist sculptor Sir David Hughes. The Great Portland Street office and workshop had been reduced to "Dickensian decay" and Hughes moved the operation to Wilburton in Cambridgeshire where he established a small foundry and investment casting shop. Hughes' son, Timothy, has run the company since 1998. Hughes passed away in May 2003.