

Case 2

Antoine-Louis Barye

French, 1796–1875

Horse Surprised by a Lion, ca. 1850

Bronze, presumed sand cast

Modeled circa 1850, this group was likely designed after a sculpture that Barye had exhibited at the Salon of 1834. The dramatic tension conveyed in the fatal encounter between the predatory lion and the gracefully galloping horse demonstrates the sculptor's talent for transferring the emotional qualities of the heroic scene from the human sphere into the iconographic register of the animal kingdom. According to popular Western symbolism, the horse and the lion are the most noble of animals. In Barye's dynamic composition, their struggle is transformed into a spectacular display of the interplay of dignity and might.

Copper: 92.7%, Zinc: 3.2%, Tin: 2.3%, Lead: 1.3%, additional trace elements

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