

'CIVA'

By Demetre Chiparus
Circa 1920

A rare bronze and ivory figure of the seated Hindu goddess, *CIVA*, (or Shiva), clad in a heavily jewelled bodice with full-length sleeves, a scarab beetle between her breasts, with two areas of 'skin' (ivory) peeping through the costume, firstly above her breastline, and secondly revealing her torso and navel. Her hands, feet, face, and daggers are also ivory. She is wearing a heavily jewelled peaked headdress that has flaps that hang down to her upper chest. Her pantaloons are jewelled in deep relief. She is sitting on a complex brown onyx base with three diamond-shaped inlays. Her base is fitted for illumination.

Height : 54 cms

Signatures : Engraved 'Chiparus' on the marble base.

References : i) Bryan Catley, *Art Deco and Other Figures*, Antique Collectors' Club, London, 1978, pg. 100.
ii) Victor Arwas, *Art Deco Sculpture*, Academy Editions/St Martin's Press, 1992, pg. 55.
iii) Alberto Shayo, *Chiparus Master of Art Deco*, 2nd Edition, Abbeville Press Publishers, pg. 169.



CIVA is the most desirable of all Chiparus designs, closely followed by 'Thais', 'Miss Kita', 'Semiramis', 'Almeria', 'Salome', 'Clara' and 'Kamorna'. The model on offer is in superb condition, the ivory with some but not unsightly cracks. The quality of the ivory carving is unsurpassed, with incredible life given to the face, feet and hands. The quality of the bronze moulding is superb too, especially in the detail on the bodice. Of all Chiparus's designs, *CIVA* exhibits the true genius of his ability to impart lifelike detail/texture onto bronze. *CIVA*'s desirability is borne out by the prices it achieves on auction.

We are extremely fortunate to have found this version, which is in very good overall condition.



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