

anne•marie  
**monin**

## THE HEAD OF MEDUSA

FRANÇOIS DAUJON (1759-1811)



FRANCE

18TH CENTURY, CIRCA 1790

PATINATED CAST IRON

DIMENSIONS :

H. 36.5 CM – W. 35 CM

*H. 14 3/8 IN – W. 13 25/32*

**27, Quai Voltaire, 75007 Paris**

This patinated bronze medallion in high relief depicts the head of Medusa. In 1787, François Daujon executed two similar medallions for the fountain at the Marché des Innocents in Paris' Halles district, now part of the Louvre Museum collection. (Photos below).



Pair of médaillons. Head of Medusa. 1787  
François Daujon



Place of origin: fountain of the Innocents. Paris

The Fountain of the Innocents was built in 1549 by Jean Goujon and Pierre Lescot to mark the arrival of King Henri II and his wife, Catherine de Médicis, in Paris.

In 1786, the Halles district was transformed, and the fountain itself underwent a number of transformations over the centuries. The church, which threatened to collapse, was demolished. The insalubrious cemetery was replaced by the Innocents market. The fountain was moved to the center of the square.

When the fountain was reassembled, additional decorative sculpture was commissioned from Lhuillier, Mézières and Daujon. Daujon replaced the taps with lion heads, installed in 1549, with new drinking water spouts in the form of medallions with Medusa heads. The mythological figure is recognizable by her hair entwined with snakes and her bulging eyes, which petrify anyone who meets her gaze. Daujon is said to have taken his inspiration here from a famous Roman fountain, the Bocca della verità.



Fountain *des Innocents*