

GALERIE LAMY
CHABOLLE



A Painted terracotta pug With Sulphide Eyes

Terracotta and sulphide

Czech Republic

Late 19th century

52 x 45 x 25 cm (20.5 x 17.7 x 9.85 in.)



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Painted terracottas of this type, most often depicting life-size pug with eyes in cristallo-ceramic known as ‘sulphide’, are frequently held to be of Austrian origin on the grounds of their resemblance to the small animal figurines of Friedrich Goldscheider. The hypothesis of a Victorian English production has also been put forward, most likely due to the breed itself and a strong tradition of animal sculpture in porcelain and *terracotta* in Staffordshire.

It seems more probable, however, that dog sculptures of this kind are of Czech manufacture: similar cold-painted *terracotta* dogs do indeed bear the mark of Johann Maresch (1821–1914), a Bohemian ceramicist whose manufactory was active in Ústí nad Labem, near the present German-Czech border. The use of sulphide — the encrustation of ceramic forms within molten crystal or glass — further supports this Bohemian hypothesis; and the fact that the Kingdom of Bohemia belonged to the Austro-Hungarian monarchy from the sixteenth century until 1914 might account for the Viennese reputation of these objects.

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