

WORK ERECTED IN 1922 BY SCULPTOR  
**PAUL DARDÉ**

# MEMORIAL

IN TRIBUTE TO LOCAL « POILUS »

This monolith stele of local limestone sits on a dry stone pedestal. The stones come from Jasse Nove, four kilometers east of Saint-Maurice Navacelles, where several dolmens are located. Dardé excavated a slab 4 meters long, 1.90 wide and 0.30 thick and weighing six tons. Unfortunately, during transport, a fracture reduced the size.

The sculptor's main concern was that the « *monument be designed with the sole intent of possessing qualities of robustness, strength and durability* ». Dardé claimed: « Saint- Maurice is a country of dolmens; I wanted to maintain this beautiful monumental aspect ». The monument is a tribute to prehistoric standing stones and also a reference to the ancient tombstones that were displayed on the roadside, a kind effigy of the deceased. Its « *features are those of an authentic local caussenard* ».

## PAUL ADOLPHE MARIE DARDÉ, FRENCH SCULPTOR FROM HERAULT (1888–1963)

Paul Dardé lived a peasant life before starting evening classes at the Fine Arts School in Montpellier. His sculptures were noticed very early and after having travelled to Italy on a scholarship awarded to «the most deserving student», he moved to Paris, where he was taken in by Armand Dayot, editor of art and artists.

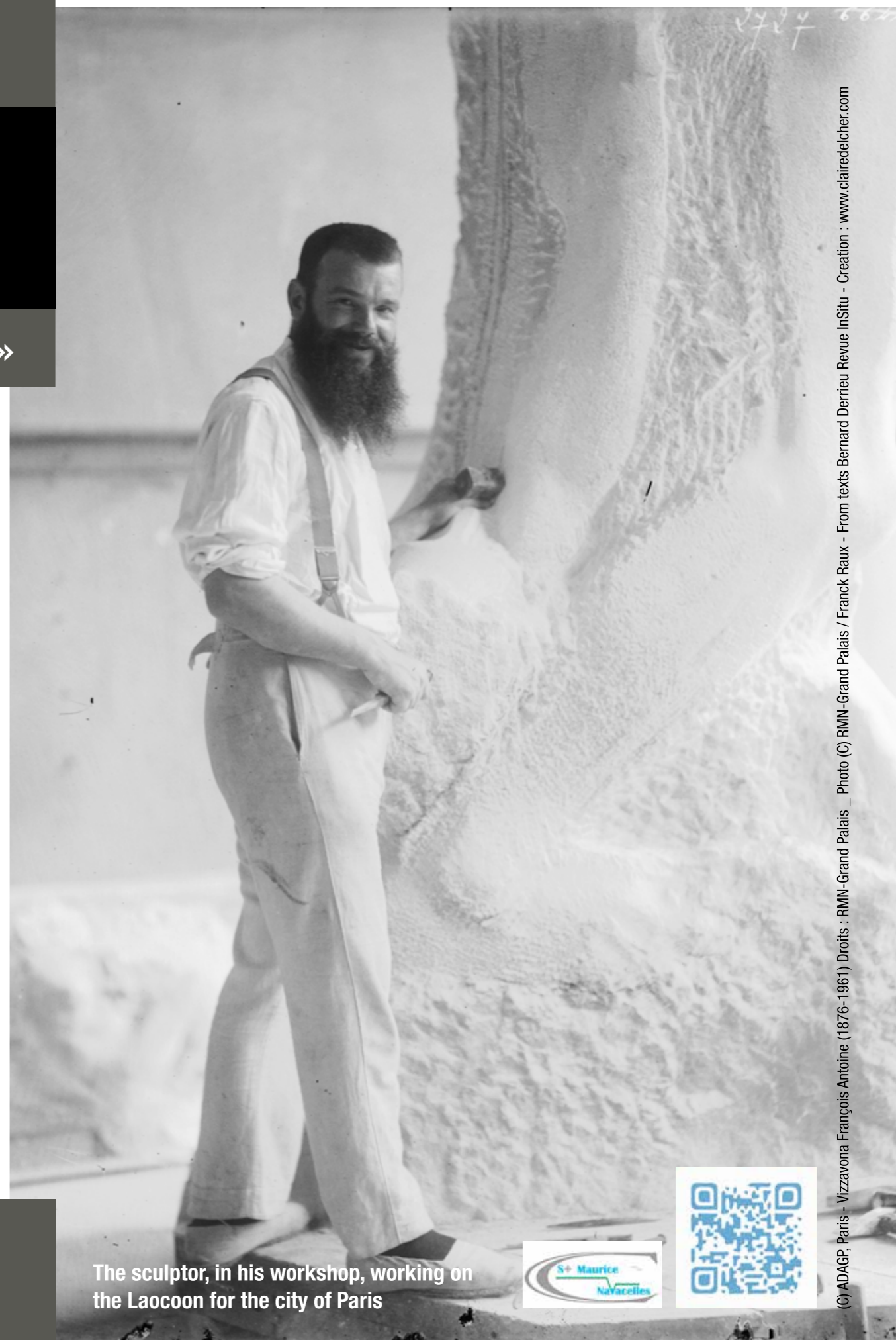
At 32, Dardé claimed freedom to work in his native region, where he began the construction of several memorials to 1914-1918 : Béziers, the Bousquet-d'Orb, Clermont l'Hérault, Lodève, Lunel, Saint-Maurice Navacelles, and Soubès in the Hérault, as well as Limoux in the Aude.

### AMONG HIS MASTERPIECES :

- 1920 : *The Faune* wins the national prize awarded by the Superior Council of Fine Arts
- 1925 : The monumental fireplace (40 tons), representing, among others, the figures of Perrault's tales, won at the international exhibition of decorative arts, the Grand Prize of metal, the diploma of honor of architecture and the gold medal of the Arts of the street.
- 1927 : *The Christ aux outrages*

In 1936, he retired to Saint-Maurice Navacelles where he began the construction of a workshop that remains unfinished. Today this building is registered in the inventory of Historical Monuments. It has become an artists' residence-workshop (on the Cirque de Navacelles road). The town is also home to another Dardé sculpture : the Milhau family Tomb in the Clastre cemetery.

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The sculptor, in his workshop, working on the Laocoon for the city of Paris

