

Après la tempête (After the Storm)



Drama Queen

Though known as an actress, Sarah Bernhardt sculpted more than 50 works. Always dramatic, Bernhardt posed for photographs wearing her “sculptor’s outfit,” which included a long lace-trimmed jacket, trousers, and low-heeled pumps.



Après la tempête (After the Storm), ca. 1876

Take a closer look

Sarah Bernhardt (1844–1923) transformed cold marble into smooth and wrinkled skin, frothy sea foam, and a coarse fishing net. Complex both in technique and narrative, this sculpture is considered by critics to be Bernhardt's most ambitious work.

Something to talk about

In *Après la tempête*, a woman from the north coast of France cradles her grandson after a storm at sea has passed. Look carefully at Bernhardt's handling of the figures. What evidence suggests this story might have a happy ending? A tragic one?

Who knew?

Ever the eccentric, Bernhardt kept a menagerie of animals in the walled garden of her London home. In fact, she sold this work to purchase a cheetah, a wolf, and six chameleons—one of which rode on her shoulder.

Sarah Bernhardt, *Après la tempête (After the Storm)*, ca. 1876; White marble, 29½ x 24 x 23 inches; National Museum of Women in the Arts, Gift of Wallace and Wilhelmina Holladay; Photograph by Lee Stalsworth

