



Juan Samsó y Lengly

Barcelona, 1834 – Madrid, 1908

The Virgin of Covadonga

1908

Plaster model

127 × 61 cm

This is a **plaster model of the wooden sculpture of the Virgin Mary that can be found in the basilica**. The original carving is made from painted wood and adorned with precious stones. The model on display here is a prototype; it was **created prior** to the final carving and enables us to appreciate the sculptor's artistic intentions and creative process.

The composition consists of a formal representation of the Virgin Mary and the infant Jesus. Rather than a scene of maternal intimacy, it is a solemn and rather distant depiction. The Christ Child is giving a blessing with his hand, in line with an iconographic tradition that is reminiscent of the works produced during the Italian *quattrocento* period and lends the sculpture a tremendous air of majesty and presence.

The final carving was completed and donated to the **Basilica of Covadonga** in 1908, although its creator died shortly after finishing the work and was unable to hand it over in person. It was his heir who finally delivered it to the basilica, where it remains today on the right-hand side of the chevet. Consequently, it is not only an example of **religious sculpture executed in the academic style**; it is also a testament to the devotion and artistic heritage that is inextricably linked with Covadonga.