

Introduction

MAKING AND UNMAKING SCULPTURE IN FIFTEENTH- CENTURY ITALY

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Around 1460, the artist Antonio Averlino (1400–69), better known to us by his adopted pseudonym Filarete (Greek for “lover of virtue”), produced a self-portrait medal, two copies of which survive (Fig. 1). The medal may be physically diminutive (7.9 × 6.7 cm), but its historical value is immense. Indeed, in this single object, it is possible to discern any number of themes that run, to varying degrees, through the period’s sculpture. By producing a medal, Filarete knowingly took up a format that was then something of a novelty. Decades earlier, Filarete himself, as well as Pisanello (ca. 1394–1455), produced some of the first examples of the type.¹ Being made of bronze, moreover, the medal reflects a growing appetite, within certain cultural spheres, for a material prized because of its associations with antiquity. And it provides a link to Filarete’s largest sculptural undertaking, the doors for St. Peter’s in Rome (1433–45), which originally measured around twenty-two-feet tall and demonstrate the vastly different scales at which sculptors worked. To model and cast the medal, and earlier the doors, Filarete drew upon skills that he learned during his training as a goldsmith and work as a bronze caster; but just as significantly he signed the medal “architectus” (a profession that had, at the time of the medal’s manufacture, come increasingly to preoccupy him), alerting us to another common reality of fifteenth-century practice: the hybrid career. And then there is the geographic itinerary that had led Filarete, a Florentine by birth, to the Sforza court in Milan, where he had been for about a decade before fashioning the medal. Earlier commissions in Rome, Rimini, Todi, Mantua, and Venice, among other cities, attest to a career spent, like many of Filarete’s peers, relentlessly on the move.²

Figure 1 Antonio Averlino (Filarete), medal with self-portrait (obverse and reverse), ca. 1460, bronze, Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Photos: © Victoria and Albert Museum, London



Most significant of all, perhaps, Filarete made himself, and less overtly his patron Duke Francesco Sforza, the very subjects of the medal. This occurs, first, in the commanding self-portrait in profile that he added to the medal's obverse – it, too, echoing classical precedents, in this case imperial Roman coinage; and, again, on the reverse, where the sculptor depicts himself “carving,” with hammer and chisel, a beehive. The chisel's action has evidently agitated several bees, who hover around the tree's trunk. And it causes the hive's sweet contents to spill out and pool in the medal's foreground. In fashioning this medal, Filarete not only produced a sculpted object of himself sculpting, but he invested that act – through the inscription encircling the scene, inspired by the ancient poet Virgil and the philosopher Seneca – with metaphorical connotations. Just as the sun, at upper right, enables industrious and ingenious bees to make honey, its analogy suggests, so does the radiant support of the patron (here a prince) invigorate the talent of artists. It would be difficult to think of a more compelling testament to the growing social and intellectual ambitions of fifteenth-century Italian sculptors, and to their necessary entanglements with patrons, than this medal.³

We begin our volume with this object because it exemplifies the range of interpretive concerns that have animated scholarship on fifteenth-century sculpture: the emergence of the self-conscious artist, the decisive role of the patron, and the profound influence of antiquity on art's content, appearance, and form. But sculpture developed along numerous lines and according to a range of theories. The humanist Bartolomeo Fazio (d. 1457) might have measured modern sculptural accomplishment in relation to antiquity, whose glory, says Fazio, an artist like Donatello (1383/6–1464) approached and so challenged.⁴ The humanist Cristoforo Landino described Donatello in the same terms, writing in 1481 that he was to be numbered “among the ancients.”⁵ Yet, in popular Florentine anecdotes, culled from that city's oral traditions, this same sculptor earned praise for his elemental cunning, his ingenuity, and his extraordinary aptitude for putting every form of deception to use – in life and work. That this century was defined by sweeping innovations in the plastic arts – arguably even more so than in painting and architecture – is well known. Less acknowledged, however, is the tremendous debate, and the lack of consensus, that drove such innovation. Fazio

emphasized Donatello's reliance on ancient models, and in this he was perfectly justified. But it was equally the case that Donatello produced works, and used materials, that deviate sharply from classical precedent.⁶

The excitement of Quattrocento sculpture then – and one of the challenges attending its study – lies not only in its experimental nature, but also in the many, often polemical, positions to which it gave rise and, relatedly, in sculpture's almost inexhaustible variety. These differences are evident even among established masters and major theoretical voices. In his writings, Leon Battista Alberti (1404–72), for example, expressly eschews the historical dimension of art, choosing to focus on establishing rational protocols and rules to govern how paintings and sculptures should be made⁷; Lorenzo Ghiberti (ca. 1378–1455), in his art and his *Commentaries*, a three-book treatise he started compiling perhaps as early as the late 1420s but never completed, took a radically different path, binding sculpture inextricably to history. The Florentine chronicler Giovanni Cavalcanti (1381–ca. 1451), meanwhile, recognized the diverse creative inclinations of artists, but he ascribed them to stellar or heavenly influences.⁸

In undertaking the present anthology, our ambition was, in one sense, to give the variety of sculpture in fifteenth-century Italy its due. To this end, we solicited essays from nearly twenty scholars active in the field, aiming to include contributions on a wide range of materials and encouraging our authors to address themes they deem fundamental to the period and its stakes. Such a proposition has ensured, on the one hand, broad coverage and a plurality of approaches; and it has meant, on the other, that our volume offers readers a “state of the field” at our current disciplinary juncture, even if this has not been our primary goal. It should also be acknowledged that our intention has never been to create an alternative to Renaissance art history textbooks or surveys of sculpture, but rather to supplement

them. This volume's essays – individually or collectively – are meant to deepen readers' understanding of Quattrocento sculpture, whether through enlarged analysis of objects or the presentation of different perspectives.

In another sense, our objective, in assembling this collection, has been to treat fifteenth-century Italian sculpture in as geographically inclusive a manner as possible: with essays on both traditional “centers” of art-historical scholarship (e.g., Florence, Venice, and Rome) and other, no less vital, arenas of sculptural production such as Milan and Naples. This was a tall order, bound to be unfulfilled given the variety and richness of sculptural production in this time and place. Bearing these thoughts in mind, we have elected, in this introduction, not to present a synopsis of the volume's contents, but instead to introduce the century's sculpture *tout court*. Readers will certainly find points of overlap between the remarks that follow and individual chapters, but it is our goal here to provide context and to expand topics and lines of argumentation that receive relatively less attention in the volume.

If this book can be said to have an overarching argument or thesis, it is that, in the realm of sculpture, the Quattrocento was a century defined by the focused interest in two related acts: *making* and what we call *unmaking*. *Making*, in the first place, refers to the facture of sculpture – how artists used materials and techniques, some invented in this century, to various visual, iconographic, and practical ends. Fifteenth-century sculptors worked in a stunning variety of media, and this volume's essays address numerous materials: gilded and unglazed bronze; polychromed and unpainted marble; polychromed wood; stucco; porphyry; glass and semiprecious stones; and glazed and unglazed terracotta. *Making* refers as well to the sculptural types (e.g., the portrait bust) and techniques (e.g., large-scale bronze casting) rediscovered or repopularized; and it alludes to the formulation

of new compositional, figural, or spatial modes, such as the representation of fictive space through linear perspective. *Unmaking*, meanwhile, is a word the period's actors routinely used to describe art's destruction. Ghiberti, for example, notes that a fourteenth-century German goldsmith named Gusmin saw his ducal patron "unmake" (*disfare*) his works to fund other expenditures, acts, Ghiberti reports, that devastated Gusmin and drove him from the profession.⁹ The transcripts of sacred plays specify that idols should be "unmade."¹⁰ Sculptors considered carefully not only the creative act, but also the potential destruction of art, an issue of which they were especially aware given the burgeoning interest in history, where they sometimes found descriptions of iconoclasm. Moreover, under the influence of contemporary humanists' investigation of the ancient past – a past whose physical remnants were often lost or severely degraded – sculptors in the fifteenth century were increasingly attentive to the disappearance and significant modification of art, through the effects of either humans or nature, and to the ways such modifications might be explained or interpreted. And, since many sculptors trained as goldsmiths, they were well aware that many sculptures were often crafted from older objects that had been melted down. Several of this volume's contributions examine instances of sculpture being destroyed, broken, effaced, converted (from pagan to Christian), repurposed, or liquidated and physically transformed into new objects entirely. *Unmaking* also refers to the fact that representational norms, having been established (some might say invented) and repeated, were often consciously left aside by other sculptors who worked to develop new approaches.

Finally, when taken together, the two terms can be understood to highlight the ways the fifteenth century has sometimes been constructed – as a transition in the Vasarian narrative, from the Middle Ages to the High Renaissance –

and our own interest, in this volume, in dismantling this notion and demonstrating that it stands on its own as an era of tremendous experimentation.

GOLDSMITHERY, TRAINING, WORKSHOPS, AND COLLABORATION

Perhaps more than any other practice, that of goldsmithery launched the careers of Quattrocento sculptors. The profession flourished up and down the Italian peninsula. In Milan, the century opened with activity by masters such as Beltramino de Zuttis, and toward its end the goldsmith and medalist Caradosso (ca. 1452–1527) was ascendant; in the Veneto and across northern Italy, generations of the Da Sesto family worked in towns large and small; communities of goldsmiths were active in the Abruzzo, most prominent among them Nicola da Guardiagrele (ca. 1390–ca. 1459), whose works often reflect the figural compositions in the bronze reliefs of Ghiberti's first Florence Baptistery doors and whose travels helped spread Florentine stylistic innovations (Fig. 2).¹¹ In Naples, Alfonso V of Aragon supported a thriving community of goldsmiths. For Alfonso, every object could theoretically be made of precious metals: in 1442, he had goldsmiths fashion gilded silver rods for sounding drums when he hunted with his dogs.¹² Guild books and other documentation reveal how many worked in the industry in each city. In Lucca, for example, forty-seven goldsmiths were active over the course of the fifteenth century; in Rome, there were around 130.¹³ Goldsmithery was an international art: its practitioners traveled, carrying with them techniques, drawings, finished works, and, at times, a style – the "International Gothic." The goldsmiths working in Lucca came from Genoa, Siena, Piacenza, and Milan, as well as the nearby



Figure 2 Nicola da Guardiagrele, processional cross of St. Maximus, 1434, silver, enamel, and copper, Museo Nazionale D'Abruzzo, L'Aquila. Photo: De Agostini Picture Library/A. De Gregorio/Bridgeman Images

cities of Pisa, Fivizzano, Carrara, and Sarzana.¹⁴ Those in Rome, who were often attracted to the city by papal patronage, hailed from all over Europe: not just Italy, but also Spain, Flanders, and Germany.

Many Quattrocento sculptors trained in the shops of goldsmiths.¹⁵ Nowhere is this more clearly documented than in Florence, a mercantile city with exhaustive record-keeping routines. Filippo Brunelleschi (1377–1446), Donatello, Ghiberti, Michelozzo (1396–1472), and Luca della Robbia (1399/1400–82) all either apprenticed with goldsmiths or worked, early on, with precious metals; the latter three individuals practiced the art throughout their lives (Fig. 3). Many later Florentine sculptors – for example, Andrea del Verrocchio (1435–88) and Antonio del Pollaiuolo (ca. 1431–98) – similarly trained with goldsmiths before moving on to produce large-scale sculpture in varying media. One finds this pattern elsewhere. The Padua-based sculptor Andrea Briosco (1470–1532), called Riccio, learned goldsmithery from his father before specializing in bronze.¹⁶ Although known today for their work in marble, the Lombards Antonio and Cristoforo Mantegazza first trained as goldsmiths, which deeply influenced their later undertakings: the marble reliefs they fashioned for the façade of the Certosa of Pavia (1470s–90s, although Cristoforo d. ca. 1482), for example, resemble ancient carved gems and cameos, objects goldsmiths often set into precious metal frames. In Parma, the goldsmith Gianfrancesco di Luca Enzola (ca. 1430–ca. 1513) gravitated toward bronze, eventually creating the first struck portrait medals. And Beltramino de Zuttis produced large-scale sculptures like the imposing, over life-sized gilded copper bust of God the Father (Fig. 4) for the Milan Cathedral.

Goldsmiths practiced, and taught to their apprentices, the art of *disegno*, a term signifying both the physical act of drawing and the invention and judgment used to produce a design.¹⁷ So, too, did they produce a wide variety of objects –

utilitarian (e.g., buttons, pens, and buckles), decorative (book covers), and ceremonial (processional crosses); and they employed a vast range of techniques, not only those utilized to fashion and decorate objects, but also chemical processes used to refine the substances with which they worked. They purified raw metals, mixed and tested alloys (pure silver and gold were used rarely), modeled soft materials like wax and clay, cast through the lost-wax technique, chiseled and smoothed surfaces, assembled parts into larger structures, incised and punched surfaces, and, finally, adorned them with, for example, gold, faceted and polished stones, and enamel.¹⁸ To learn the art, one had to master techniques fundamental to many other types of sculpture, hence goldsmithery's utility and popularity among young artisans, no matter their particular artistic inclinations. For example, documents refer to the young Guido Mazzoni (ca. 1450–1518), known today for his electrifying, life-sized sculptural groups in painted terracotta (which were sometimes placed against painted backgrounds), as an *orafo* (goldsmith).¹⁹ An apprenticeship in goldsmithery was also profitable for aspiring painters, since they often decorated the water-gilded surfaces of panel paintings with punchwork. The fundamental nature of training in goldsmithery assumes visual form in an illuminated miniature from northern Italy, which represents the diverse forms of expertise that underlay work in metal – modeling, casting, surface finishing, gilding – as well as the range of objects to which such expertise might be applied, not all of them sculptures (Fig. 5).

Goldsmithery was a living art that encouraged experimentation and invention – and it had been thus for centuries. The refinement of gold, for example, produced a black, silver-rich residue used, since antiquity, to make niello, which goldsmiths employed to create decorations on engraved metals (Fig. 6).²⁰ Just before 1400, goldsmiths invented *émail en ronde bosse*, a technique that involved coating irregular surfaces



Figure 3 Michelozzo di Bartolomeo, *St. John the Baptist* from the silver altar of the Florence Baptistery, 1452, partially gilded silver, Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Florence. Photo: Alfredo Dagli Orti/Art Resource, NY



Figure 4 Beltramino de Zuttis, *God the Father*, 1425, gilded copper, Cathedral of Santa Maria Nascente, Milan. Photo: Scala/Art Resource, NY

completely in enamel, often white in color; the process has been tied to Luca della Robbia's invention, about forty years later, of tin-glazed terracotta.²¹ It is broadly accepted, moreover, that the advent of printmaking, and particularly engraving, in Italy during the latter half of the fifteenth century resulted from the technical adaptations of goldsmiths, who had, since at least the twelfth century, used the burin and stylus to inscribe metal surfaces.²²

In addition to teaching fundamental processes, the goldsmith's shop, like other *botteghe*, offered artistic parentage where family connections were lacking. Consider the family backgrounds of several sculptors who started out in goldsmithery: the fathers of Donatello and Luca della Robbia were tied to Florence's booming wool industry; Michelozzo's was a tailor; Antonio del Pollaiuolo's sold poultry; and Brunelleschi was the son of a notary. Verrocchio's father was a *fornaciaio*

(a kiln operator), a member of the stone carvers and woodworkers' guild, and, eventually, a customs official. While these vocations allow that Verrocchio's introduction to clay and stone occurred under his father, it is perhaps more accurate to trace his beginnings as a sculptor, as in the examples already cited, to his tenure in a goldsmith's shop.²³ It was just as common, if not more, for sculptors to be born into their trade. Ghiberti learned goldsmithery from his adoptive father, Bartoluccio, and he trained his sons in the arts of goldsmithery and bronze casting. Careers in stonework were also passed down along family lines: in Florence, Desiderio da Settignano (1428/31–64), Benedetto da Maiano (1442–97) and his brothers Giuliano and Giovanni, and the Rossellino brothers had fathers in that trade; as did Bartolomeo Bon and the Lombardo brothers, Tullio and Antonio, in Venice. Domenico Gagini (ca. 1425–92) probably learned to carve stone from his father in Genoa before making his name in southern Italy; and Nanni di Banco was a third-generation stoneworker at the Florence Cathedral complex.²⁴ Entering the family business frequently affected decisively the type of work that one did, and it was not uncommon for sculptors to specialize in the same media as their fathers. The material repertoire of those whose entrée came through goldsmithery generally ranged more freely, perhaps because these individuals were less bound by concerns for continuity in a family firm. Moreover, some of the material flexibility, even intrepidity, of those who apprenticed with goldsmiths, perhaps derives from the experimental nature of work in precious metals, noted earlier.

Those who entered the sculptural trade from within enjoyed certain advantages. Take Ghiberti, for instance, whose victory in the competition for the Florence Baptistery's second set of bronze doors, in 1401–2, has often served as a parable for the early Renaissance: an upstart, in his early twenties, outshining the field of



Figure 5 Northern Italian illuminator, *Craftsmen under the Influence of Mercury*, fifteenth century, from Leonardo Dati's *De sphaera mundi*, Ms. A.X.2.14=Lat. 209, 11r, Biblioteca Estense, Modena. Photo: © DeA Picture Library/Art Resource, NY



Figure 6 Processional cross (attributed to Baccio Baldini), ca. 1460–80, partly gilt silver, niello, and copper with traces of gilding, over wood, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Photo: Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City

predominantly older and more conservative artists with his brilliant naturalism and technical prowess (Figs. 129–130 illustrate the panels he and Brunelleschi submitted in the contest). Yet, when the guild that supervised projects at the Baptistery, the Arte di Calimala, drew up his contract, it awarded the commission to Lorenzo and his stepfather, a likely indication that the committee viewed the younger artist's family situation as a guarantee.²⁵ Indeed, that Ghiberti could (and eventually did) utilize his stepfather's shop, tools, equipment, and collaborative network may have influenced his selection over Brunelleschi, the runner-up, whose lineage offered no such assurances. Families could also transmit proprietary secrets from one generation to the next, as the Della Robbia did with their recipe for tin glazes, which secured the firm's monopoly on that "lucrative art" for nearly a century.²⁶ Finally, guilds often waived entrance fees for the sons of members, encouraging fathers to train their sons in the art they practiced.²⁷

In the fifteenth century, every sculptor, no matter his innate gifts, proclivities, or background, began his career as a humble apprentice. Despite shifts in the social perception of artists and in the ways that they regarded their work, sculptural training remained relatively unchanged from the preceding centuries. It began with matriculation to a workshop, typically in one's early teens, and saw the apprentice progress from menial tasks – preparing materials or maintaining the master's tools – to more complex feats of design, modeling, carving, and finishing. While an assistant might eventually graduate to independent activity and open his own shop, this process could be lengthy, typically ranging from six to fourteen years, depending on the city and the trade.²⁸ It does not follow that all artists carried on in the profession in which they trained. Ghiberti's Florentine shop was organized in 1403 and remained a center of casting even after his death in 1455.²⁹ For young artists

interested in metalwork, the opportunity to learn bronze casting – an art that, until then, native Florentines did not practice – under the aegis of Ghiberti must have been irresistible. Little wonder, then, that the shop gave rise to a lineage of artists skilled in bronze sculpture, among them Donatello, Michelozzo, and, possibly, Filarete. But numerous individuals who worked there as apprentices or full-fledged assistants went on to other pursuits. Masolino, Paolo Uccello, and Benozzo Gozzoli became painters, for instance.

How did sculptors' workshops function, and what did they look like? For large-scale enterprises, like those linked to the Florence and Milan Cathedrals, shops were for work and not commerce. But these spaces were not closed off; on the contrary, marble sometimes spilled out of the shops run by the Opera (board of works) of Florence Cathedral and onto city streets, necessitating its removal to permit passage.³⁰ The physical character of shops that produced objects for purchase, meanwhile, was largely regularized, owing in part to the extensive controls exercised by guilds in many cities (e.g., the *arti* of Florence or the *fraglie* of Padua). In general, these shops were ground-floor establishments, sometimes with apertures, not unlike those depicted in an engraving from the 1460s (Fig. 7). Such a format was at once practical – it eased the flow of materials and personnel from the street – and a means of quality control, allowing for the surveillance of shop conduct by patrons, passersby, and, in the case of certain professions such as goldsmithery, officials who circulated through the city, scouring shops for evidence of substandard materials (alloys and gems in particular).³¹ Behind this large "open-air" work area one might find specialized facilities and equipment, such as a casting pit, foundry or kiln, or a space for carving, as well as smaller work spaces, rooms for storage, a garden or outdoor work space, and a study for more private routines: drawing up accounts or reading, for instance.³² Shops could



Figure 7 Baccio Baldini, *The Children of Mercury*, 1460s, engraving, Musée du Louvre, Paris. Photo: © RMN-Grand Palais/Art Resource, NY

be more or less personalized. Some were passed along to family members, as noted earlier, but others changed hands often: the “Bischeri” workshop in Florence was occupied, at one time or another, by the sculptors Donatello, Michelozzo, and Verrocchio before going to the painter Lorenzo di Credi.³³ There are notable exceptions to this pattern. Sculptors attached to courts, for example, often worked in the residence of their patron.³⁴ The *bottega* of Pier Jacopo Alari Bonacolsi (ca. 1460–1528), called Antico, was in the Gonzaga family castle in Bozzolo (near Mantua); and the Aragon rulers kept shops for metalsmiths at Castel Nuovo in Naples.³⁵ The Este Palace in Ferrara, meanwhile, housed a foundry, as did Castel Sant’Angelo in Rome, which likely served as Filarete’s shop when he modeled and cast the doors for St. Peter’s.³⁶ Yet even this

must be qualified. In certain cases, sculptors might base their operations directly on site, alerting us to the possibility that, far from a stable place, the *bottega* was simply wherever the sculptor chose to conduct his work.³⁷

Still, the location of a shop – when it was fixed – was heavily influenced by certain pragmatic factors. One was market demand. Florentine wax specialists gravitated toward the churches of Santissima Annunziata and Orsanmichele, where there was a custom of exhibiting wax votive images and therefore a demand for this work.³⁸ In the fourteenth century, Venetian municipal law mandated that goldsmiths locate their shops on the Ruga dei Oresi, but, by 1392, many evidently had stalls in or near the piazza San Marco, in close proximity to mint officials, who could ensure that the metals they used met standard.³⁹ Naturally, artists who worked in multiple media or *métiers* might occupy more than one shop. At several junctures in his career, for example, Donatello rented three or four separate work spaces concurrently, seemingly to accommodate his materially and technically diverse projects, which required different tools, facilities, and access to different “supply chains.” A second factor determining shop location was the nature of the work itself. In the fourteenth century, the Florentine government granted the Cathedral Opera a monopoly over the sale of wood, which explains the high number of woodworkers’ shops near the cathedral.⁴⁰ So, too, did the church’s possession of stores of marble lead to concentrations of stoneworkers’ shops nearby.⁴¹ Where hazardous processes were involved – kilns were prone to explosions – it was only logical to set up one’s shop away from densely populated areas. In Venice, at least, bronze sculptures were invariably cast at the Arsenal or on the remote northern periphery of the island, Cannaregio, later settled by the city’s Jewish population (whence the name “ghetto,” from “getto,” or foundry).⁴²

Equally apparent is that sculptors' workshops – indeed most shops, no matter the trade – were charismatic hubs of social interaction. The very infrastructure of the *bottega*, with its networks of collaborators and apprentices, ensured this. Certain sources capture this sociability more than others. In popular Tuscan storytelling traditions, for example, the *bottega* – along with other highly trafficked spaces like the piazza and the marketplace – acts as a kind of “connective tissue” against which the events of life unfold. A good example is the *Tale of the Fat Woodworker*, in which Brunelleschi, Donatello, and others orchestrate an elaborate ruse to convince an unsuspecting carpenter, Manetto, that he is someone else. Not only does the plot transpire in workshops, but news of the joke's success is passed, by word of mouth, through them.⁴³ Workshops were, after all, also vital sites for the exchange of information, where craftsmen mingled, exchanging news, gossip, or trade secrets – “talking shop,” as it were – in the common work space or on benches that sometimes flanked their entrances.⁴⁴

For this reason, as well as the general intrigue of sculptor's activities, workshops were notable attractions for those outside the ranks of professional artists. In 1473, Filippo Strozzi commissioned Benedetto da Maiano to make a luxury daybed (a *lettuccio*) for King Ferrante of Naples,

and Florentines, hearing about this gilded, intarsiated, and diamond-encrusted object, flocked to Benedetto's shop to catch a glimpse of it.⁴⁵ When he was in Florence in 1433, the itinerant antiquarian Ciriaco d'Ancona visited Donatello's and Ghiberti's *botteghe*, at least partly because of the “good many antique things” that these sites housed.⁴⁶ And the Venetian government routinely included trips to the glass-making facilities on Murano, and to the foundries at the Arsenal, in its itineraries for visiting dignitaries, thereby tethering sites of artistic labor to official state business.⁴⁷

The occasional presence of distinguished visitors ought not disguise the extent to which sculptors' workshops were also always thick with noise, dirt, and sweat. Working conditions in shops were often exceedingly dangerous. Practices like fire gilding and tin glazing could activate a sculpture's surface in exquisitely subtle ways, but they also entailed prolonged exposure to high temperatures and toxic substances like mercury and lead.⁴⁸ While accounts of sculpture from the period occasionally embraced this difficulty – by flatteringly comparing the sculptor's feat to that of an alchemist or Vulcan – it was just as common for them to pass over it in silence. This is certainly the case in Alberti's treatise *De statua*, for example, where the sculptor's labor amounts to mastering a series of geometric, and hence



Figure 8 Nanni di Banco, base of the niche of the *Quattro Santi Coronati*, ca. 1409–17, Orsanmichele, Florence. Photo: Miguel Hermoso Cuesta, licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0



Figure 9 Lorenzo Ghiberti, *Self-Portrait* from the north doors of the Florence Baptistery of San Giovanni, 1403–24, gilded bronze, Museo dell’Opera del Duomo, Florence. Photo: Amy R. Bloch

rational, exercises. There was good reason for such omissions. In an era marked by sweeping efforts to elevate that art’s social and intellectual status – to measure its *distance* from manual labor – the messy realities of workshop practice could prove discomfiting. In his well-known *paragone*, or comparison, of the sister arts, for example, Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519) submitted the “bodily fatigue” accompanying certain pursuits, like marble carving, as evidence of sculpture’s intellectual inferiority to painting. While the painter plied his trade with “ease,” the sculptor’s toil produced dust; it caked his face with mud and made him look like a baker. The painter’s *bottega*, by contrast, was “clean [and] filled with music . . . unmixed with the pounding of hammers.”⁴⁹ Others present a more positive view of sculptors’ workshops. Tasked to fill a niche on the façade of Orsanmichele with sculpture, and thus to convey publicly its ethos, the Florentine guild of stone carvers and woodworkers (the *Arte dei Maestri di Pietra e Legname*) had Nanni di Banco add a relief of four

sculptors working in their *bottega* (Fig. 8), all of them dressed in shop clothes, including protective turbans, and using contemporary tools such as the trimming hammer swung at far right and the drill being manipulated by the sculptor second from the left.⁵⁰ In the self-portrait he embedded in the framework of his first set of Baptistery doors, Ghiberti proudly dons the same headgear (Fig. 9).

Work in the shop was far more collaborative than certain romantic conceptions of the autonomous Renaissance artist would have us believe. True, particular customs attest to a growing regard among sculptors and the patrons who paid them for individual accomplishment. Sculptors’ contracts – to cite one example – frequently specified that the most important details issue from the master’s “own hand.”⁵¹ And the signatures that sculptors added to their works – to cite another – often courted the idea that they, and they alone, had produced it, this in defiance of what were almost certainly the facts. So, too, did the competitions that patrons staged, like the one at Florence’s Baptistery, pit artists against one another as lone agents. But there are other examples of artists banding together in collectivities that protected them from the vicissitudes of the marketplace. In Pavia, for example, a group of Lombard sculptors who competed for the contract to complete the Certosa’s façade in 1473 agreed that the contest’s winner would share the work (and thus the profits) with the other sculptors, no matter who was victorious. Such practices were not uncommon in Lombardy.⁵² Where workshop practice was concerned, sculpture was far less likely to be a solo performance than a plural affair. This was clearly the case with large, multifaceted decorative campaigns: those at the Cathedrals of Florence and Milan, for example; or at the portal Arch for the Aragon fortress, Castel Nuovo, in Naples (built and embellished between 1452 and 1471); and for the High Altar of the Santo in Padua, which Donatello undertook in concert with “eighteen or twenty assistants,” by one later



Figure 10 Filarete, *Self-Portrait with Assistants*, 1445, reverse of left door, St. Peter's, Rome. Photo: Robert Glass; reproduced by permission of the Fabbrica of St. Peter's, Vatican

estimate.⁵³ On occasion, sculptors might even celebrate the collaborative input that went into large-scale undertakings, as, for example, in the relief that Filarete added to the reverse of his bronze doors at St. Peter's in Rome, which depicts the master and his assistants (they are labeled "Antonius et discipuli mei" – Antonio and my disciples) fêting their accomplishment with music, wine, and dance (Fig. 10).⁵⁴

Partnerships, in which two master sculptors worked together on a project, were extremely common. To complete the tomb of the papal secretary Piero da Noceto in Lucca Cathedral (1469), Matteo Civitali (1436–1501) formed one such association with the Milanese carver Domenico Orsolini.⁵⁵ The specialization inherent in the production of sculpture often drove further collaboration. A good example is polychrome sculpture. While some sculptors, for example Guido Mazzoni, painted their own works, others preferred to outsource this activity to specialists. The Siennese wood sculptor Francesco di Valdambrino (ca. 1375–1435) did this; and the *ricordanze* of the Florentine painter Neri di Bicci document literally dozens of examples of Neri painting works that had been sculpted by others.⁵⁶ Along parallel lines, sculptors who worked in bronze routinely subcontracted the activity of casting to technicians such as bell, cannon, or artillery founders. Donatello often handed over the founding of his bronze works to professionals, forming a legal business partnership with Michelozzo, an expert caster, partly for this

reason.⁵⁷ When the Venetian bronze founder Alessandro Leopardi (ca. 1466–1522/3) cast Verrocchio's equestrian statue of the mercenary soldier Bartolomeo Colleoni, he made sure to add his signature to the horse's girth, asserting his role in the work's creation and thus staking a claim for the importance of facture in the creative process.⁵⁸

THE IMPORTANCE OF HISTORY

In the Quattrocento, sculptors worked against a backdrop of profound intellectual changes across the Italian peninsula. An intense, and eventually widespread, interest in the past – especially the ancient pagan past – captivated large swaths of urban populations. Emerging in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, this focused interest in antiquity increased and diffused throughout Italy in the fifteenth century, a period that saw a drive among scholars, today called humanists, to discover new versions of classical Latin and, eventually, Greek texts that, they hoped, did not contain the inaccuracies they believed sullied medieval transcriptions. These books were studied, their readers scouring them for advice they could apply to all aspects of life, including the production of art. A high literacy rate in northern and central Italy (e.g., around 70–80 percent for men in Florence, in all social strata, in the early fifteenth century) helped to drive this interest⁵⁹; but even those who did not read classical Latin could satisfy their

curiosity about ancient life and history by consulting the many translations of Latin texts into the *volgare* (Italian) produced in the fifteenth century, or by attending popular storytelling events in the piazza or the marketplace.

Artists throughout Italy immersed themselves in the study of ancient art. A select number of sculptors engaged with the textual remnants of antiquity, most famously Ghiberti, whose *Commentaries* contains a history of Greek and Roman art that relies largely on the most authoritative sources on ancient painting, sculpture, and architecture (Pliny's *Historia naturalis* [*Natural History*] and Vitruvius' architectural treatise, *De architectura*), as well as a discussion of thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Italian art, an autobiography, and excerpts from texts on optics. Many sculptors had knowledge of ancient sources and, as was common, owned a small selection of books that included classical titles. Giuliano and Benedetto da Maiano, for example, shared a study that contained twenty-eight volumes; most of their books were strictly religious, but they also owned Boccaccio's *Decameron* and Dante's *Commedia* and, remarkably, three volumes of Livy as well as Cristoforo Landino's translation of Pliny.⁶⁰ Sculptors were often close to humanists and educated patrons and gleaned from them knowledge contained in textual sources that they would have had difficulty reading. The rediscovery of antiquity's textual heritage affected sculpture in quite direct ways. For example, the carved roundels (ca. 1460) ringing the courtyard of the Medici Palace in Florence draw on classical sources such as Lucretius' *De rerum natura*, a book that regained popularity after its rediscovery in 1417 by the humanist Poggio Bracciolini, to illustrate the world's earliest historical development.⁶¹

Sculptors and humanists alike, perhaps for different reasons, sought out and collected ancient reliefs (figural and decorative), busts, statues (often damaged), as well as vessels, coins, and cameos. Although most owned only a few such artifacts,

certain sculptors, such as Ghiberti and the Lombard Andrea Bregno (1418–1503), had large collections.⁶² Even when they did not own antiquities, sculptors studied them intensely, often making trips to Rome to study the city's copious ancient relics. They produced copies of classical reliefs and statues; and by drawing these same works they assembled virtual collections of antiquities on paper. Sculptors sometimes worked with spolia, and they were called to “restore” ancient works, a practice occurring in Venice perhaps as early as the 1430s.⁶³ It was not uncommon for sculptors to carve missing limbs for ancient fragments, as Tullio Lombardo (ca. 1455–1532) did in the early 1490s. By the end of the century, Michelangelo (1475–1564) had produced several statues that his peers – some at least – mistook for ancient.

Quattrocento sculptors worked intimately with the physical remains of ancient culture. Not surprisingly, in the light of this engagement, the art historian Erwin Panofsky proposed that sculptors, among all Quattrocento artists, were the first to integrate coherently ancient forms into their works, blending an insistent naturalism with ancient dress and classicizing settings to produce images that bespeak a careful study of the world around them and a concern for historical consistency.⁶⁴ Many fifteenth-century sculptors did indeed give their figures ancient garb and place them in architectural settings that were classicizing in form and detail. This approach not only derived from a desire to integrate what they saw in the material remains of the ancient world, but also, for some, reflected an awareness that such presentation was frequently appropriate, for authoritative sources confirmed that many biblical figures, whether Jewish or Christian, lived during the eras of the ancient Greeks and Romans. The intense study of ancient culture thus led to an informed interest in history and a desire to understand when people lived, with whom they shared their world, and how events related chronologically.

But it is important to remember that, although beautiful and captivating, antiquities were often mere fragments: an arm broken at the shoulder, a leg, a torso missing its limbs, a head. The study of antiquity vividly reminded sculptors of the cruelty of history, the predations of time and nature, and of the fragility of their own art. Fragments, moreover, implicitly prompted viewers to contemplate precisely why they had been so severely damaged, a question capable of stimulating consideration of how subsequent events – iconoclasms, wars, accidents, purposeful liquidation – shaped the condition of sculpture. Antiquities, enmeshed in a historical web, evoked ancient Greece and Rome but also highlighted the people and events that intervened between the ancient past and the fifteenth-century present.

The study of antiquity jolted sculpture in other ways as well. Techniques sporadically practiced in the medieval era but inextricably tied to ancient Greek and Roman civilization, such as the modeling of stucco and terracotta and the casting of bronze, returned in force and were taught and practiced across Italy. Bronze, a material whose dignity and significance derived in part from its connection to the Roman emperors who used it to produce imperial monuments, appealed to civic and wealthy private patrons who had the means to fund the alloy's acquisition and transport to Italy (often from afar). Sculptors revived, moreover, types of ancient sculpture. The statuette re-emerged around 1450 in central Italy, and its centers of production soon shifted to northern cities such as Mantua and Padua, where, respectively, Antico and Riccio fashioned increasingly refined examples. Made for display on tabletops, these works could be handled, allowing collectors to appreciate through touch their fine surfaces and details and through sight their fluid silhouettes, which varied as the viewer turned the object, often aided by a round base (Fig. 67). Bronze equestrian statues, a staple of Roman imperial



Figure 11 Mino da Fiesole, portrait bust of Piero de' Medici, 1453–4, marble, Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence. Photo: Wolfgang Sauber, licensed under CC BY-SA 3.0

art, were again produced in the Quattrocento. Niccolò III d'Este, marquis of Ferrara, commissioned one from two Florentine sculptors; and Donatello and Verrocchio fashioned equestrian monuments portraying, respectively, the condottieri Erasmo da Narni (Padua) and Bartolomeo Colleoni (Venice). Portrait busts, a type common in republican and imperial Rome, reappeared in the middle of the fifteenth century, the earliest examples coming from the shop of Mino da Fiesole, whose marble portrait bust of Piero de' Medici (1453–4; Fig. 11), originally displayed above a door in the Medici Palace, is exemplary. Although the work clearly relies on the ancient type, it differs from ancient models as well. Unlike many ancient examples, Mino's bust lacks a base, and its gaze bristles with psychological intensity, fully activating – indeed controlling – the surrounding space.⁶⁵ This type often conveyed authority, hence Mino's popularity among royal patrons (he carved a bust for King



Figure 12 Pisanello (and workshop), portrait medal of Alfonso V of Aragon, king of Naples (obverse and reverse), ca. 1449, bronze, inv. GIII, Naples 2, Münzkabinett, Staatliche Museen, Berlin. Photos: bpk Bildagentur/Münzkabinett, Staatliche Museen, Berlin/Reinhard Saczewski and Lutz-Jürgen Lübke/Art Resource, New York

Alfonso of Aragon in Naples, where he resided for a year); but it could also delight, captivate, and mystify. Desiderio da Settignano turned marble into ethereal portraits of adults and gleeful, smiling, and pensive children. At the century's end, Tullio Lombardo invented the high-relief bust (e.g., Fig. 169), examples of which represent marble portraits of anonymous sitters – if indeed they are to be identified – gazing upward as if contemplating some unknowable mystery.

Sculptors also devised entirely new sorts of objects. As noted, Pisanello and Filarete began producing bronze portrait medals around 1440 with a profile portrait on the obverse and an image on the reverse, the latter typically mythological or allegorical and speaking to the personage's virtues or qualities (Fig. 12).⁶⁶ Although modeled on ancient coinage and meant to be held in one's palm and examined closely, medals were larger in size than coins (ca. 5–10 cm versus 2–3 cm) and served a multitude of functions: they were given as gifts, worn on chains, and even embedded within the foundations of

buildings.⁶⁷ The cost of bronze meant that princes, those with princely aspirations, and wealthy military captains who wished to advertise their military prowess and status as available for hire commissioned most medals. Another marquis of Ferrara, Leonello d'Este, commissioned at least six medals from Pisanello, which count among the most sensitive and poetic in their presentation of themes related to peace, love, and benevolent rule. These medals, recalling coins but insistently different from them, evoked simultaneously the ancient past and its historical distance from the Quattrocento present.⁶⁸

SCULPTURAL GEOGRAPHIES

While sculptors might confront temporal distances in their artworks, they also physically bridged geographic ones (Fig. 13). What impelled sculptors to travel? While some might journey to other cities – Rome, for example – for inspiration, the majority were led by work-related opportunities. Those who

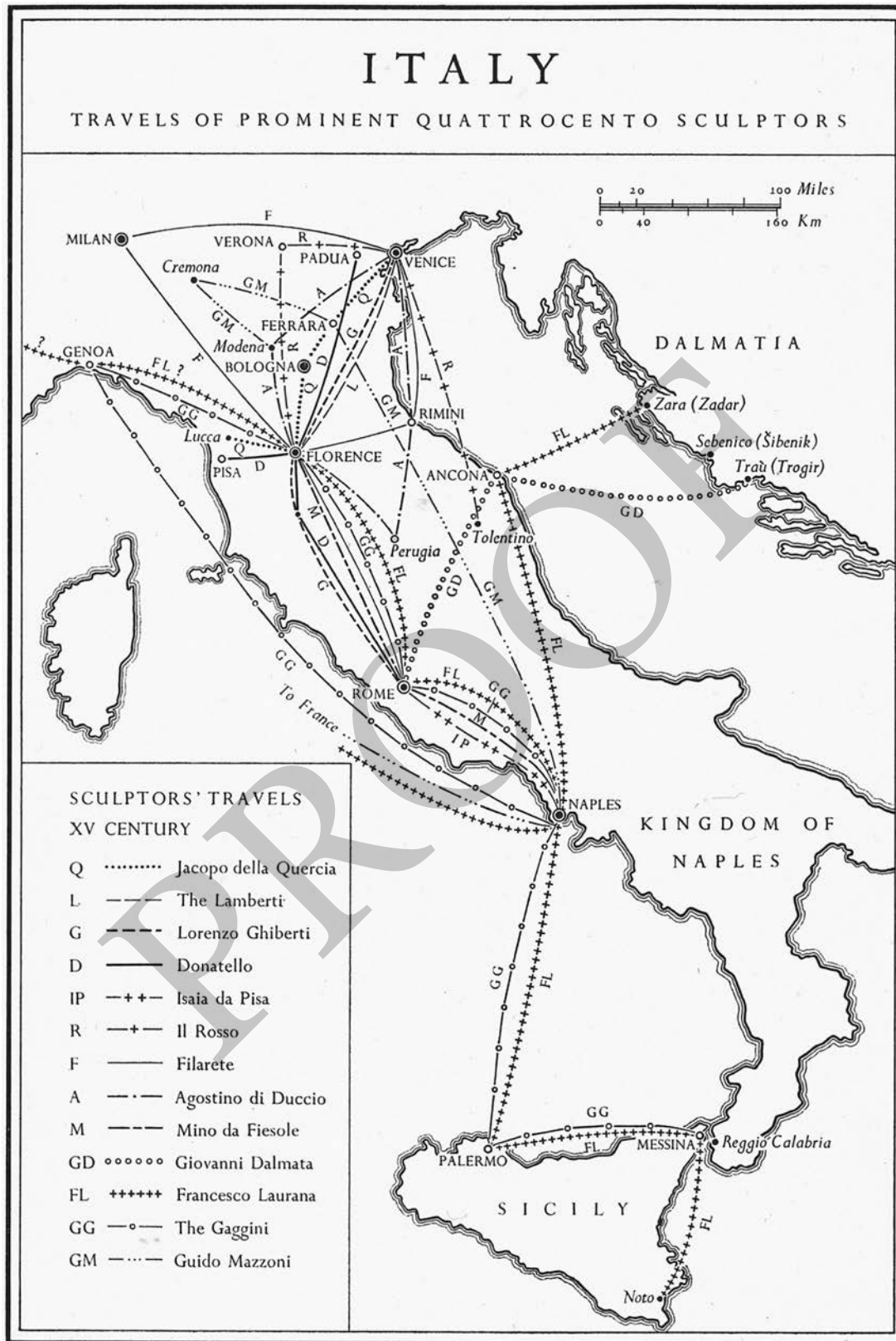


Figure 13 Map of Italian sculptors' travels in the fifteenth century (from Charles Seymour, *Sculpture in Italy: 1400-1500* [Harmondsworth and Baltimore: Penguin, 1966], p. 18)

possessed certain skills, for example, might seek out markets where their expertise was less readily available.⁶⁹ It was not uncommon, for instance, that bronze specialists from Lombardy or the Veneto – both regions with inveterate casting enterprises – took up work elsewhere on the peninsula. The Parisian artillery founder Guglielmo Monaco, who arrived in Naples in 1451, fashioned in the 1470s monumental, historiated bronze doors for the Castel Nuovo, a commission awarded by Ferrante of Aragon.⁷⁰ Because bronze casting was essential to the production of cannons and arms, cities recruited sculptors in times of war.⁷¹ Indeed, it has been suggested that the Ottoman Sultan Mehmed II's appeal to the Venetians for bronze sculptors and founders owed less to an enthusiasm for their art than for their command of cannon technology.⁷² While at least one sculptor, Bartolomeo Bellano (ca. 1437/9–1496/7), made the sojourn to Istanbul, in 1479 or 1480, Mehmed's subsequent request, for an even more "subtle master of bronze casting," was, tellingly, denied.⁷³ The vectors might also move in reverse, with sculptors relocating to places with a more established market for the skills they sought. Among the possible rationales for Donatello's sojourn to Padua, for example, was the city's wealth of metal-working experts, which allowed him to create bronzes at a greater scale, and in greater numbers, than he had in Florence.

Just as often sculptors traveled to fulfill individual remits. Some, like the medalist Matteo de' Pasti (1420–67/8), propelled by their reputations, navigated courtly networks – Matteo worked in cities such as Ferrara and Rimini. Others moved freely among corporate, courtly, and religious commissions: the sculptor Giovanni Dalmata (born Ivan Duknović, ca. 1440–after 1509) worked not only throughout his native Dalmatia, but also for Pope Paul II in Rome, the king of Hungary Matthias Corvinus in Budapest, and in Venice. Still others were drawn to large-scale public projects, which might offer, among other enticements,

stable employment for decades (in some cases) and maximum visibility for their products.

The geographic itineraries that sculptors followed to these sites were often exceedingly diverse. Hardly had its workshops opened, in 1387, than Milan Cathedral became a high-gravity destination for sculptors, including swarms of *oltremontani* – the Italian term for individuals hailing from "beyond" the Alpine "mountains" – whose native aesthetic sensibilities well suited, and may even have informed, the program's strongly Northern European flavor. The workshop at Florence Cathedral likewise became a magnet for sculptural talent from throughout Italy and beyond; as did the papal court in Rome, which featured sculptors from Spain, Flanders, and Germany. To complete the prolific decorative program at the Castel Nuovo in Naples, Alfonso of Aragon employed no less than five master sculptors, and thirty-three assistants, drawn from Spain, Italy, northern Europe, and the Dalmatian coast.⁷⁴ In this case, the arrangement was one of mutual reciprocity. For foreign sculptors, Alfonso's patronage provided stable employment and a connection to a high-profile commission. For Alfonso, meanwhile, the project offered symbolic capital, inasmuch as the Spanish king could now claim to "command" some of the best sculptural talent that his growing Mediterranean empire had to offer – an artistic parallel to Alfonso's aggressively expansionist ambitions. A similar logic obtained, albeit on a lesser scale, at the Tempio Malatestiano in Rimini, realized through the joint efforts of a Florentine (Alberti), a Veronese (Matteo de' Pasti), and a journeyman who had previously worked in Florence, Venice, and Modena (Agostino di Duccio).

The impact that travel could have on sculptors' work was just as varied as the reasons that prompted their journeys. One potential effect, to be sure, was exposure to new styles, sculptural media, and formats. In certain cases, patrons demanded that sculptors yield to foreign norms. This was typical in large-scale programs like the

one at the Castel Nuovo, where the many individual sculptors all conformed to a single style – a local, Neapolitan variant of the *all'antica* idiom – in an effort to ensure consistency across the Arch's many decorative parts. A similar logic informed the decoration at Florence Cathedral, where the building's wardens, the *operai*, even levied fines on sculptors whose work strayed from the project's stylistic standards.⁷⁵ It follows that a sculptor's native style might chafe against that of a foreign culture. No sooner had Filarete conceived the plan and ornament for the principal hospital, or Ospedale Maggiore, in Milan (1460s) than the building's overseers dismissed him from the project, perhaps because of its overly "Florentine" character – a possibility supported by the Gothic ornament the patrons later introduced to the building's façade, characteristic of Milanese taste. In the treatise he wrote on architecture during these same years, Filarete disparaged modes and customs that Italians had borrowed "from the Germans and the French," which he saw as corrupting the classicizing style that was Italy's patrimony.⁷⁶

In other cases, sculptors, having been exposed to a foreign style, might strike something of a compromise in their work. Such stylistic eclecticism is apparent, for example, in the portal for the Medici Bank in Milan (Fig. 14), the formal vocabulary of which is both Florentine (in, e.g., the Donatellesque putti) and Milanese (in, e.g., the richly carved spandrels) – a stylistic equivalent, perhaps, of the building's unifying role for the Sforza and Medici families. A less straightforward example of stylistic hybridity may be found in the oeuvre of Francesca Laurana (ca. 1430–1502), whose career offers a limit case for the geographic paths that sculptors might follow. Born and likely trained in Vrana (in Dalmatia, whence his surname, deriving from "La Vrana"), Laurana began his solo career at the Aragon court in Naples before moving, successively, to the Angevin court in France, various cities throughout Sicily, back to Naples (with an excursion to Apulia on Italy's east coast), possibly to

Urbino, and Provence, rarely spending more than a decade in any one place.⁷⁷ The bearing that such travel might have on Laurana's style is borne out in countless of his works. The celebrated portrait busts of Aragonese women that Laurana completed in the last decades of the Quattrocento (Fig. 15), for example, are irreducible to any one influence, being, in Charles Seymour's words, as much "Mediterranean and Slavic in scope as [they are] Italian."⁷⁸ Similarly, Bertoldo's oeuvre would look quite different if we take seriously the recent revelation that his family's origins were in Germany and not Florence.⁷⁹ That one of the pioneers of the portrait medal and plaquette, as well as Donatello's protégé and Michelangelo's mentor, may not have been Bertoldo, but Berthold, the son of German immigrants, is a testament to how complex and interpenetrating the geographies of fifteenth-century Italian sculpture, even of the most supposedly local sort, might be.

The travels of sculptors could lead to the proliferation of their style and fame. This was the case with Niccolò di Giovanni Fiorentino (ca. 1418–1506), who, after aiding Donatello in Padua, led a diaspora of the older sculptor's style to Dalmatia, where Niccolò worked for nearly four decades. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the Orsini chapel at Trogir Cathedral (in present-day Croatia), the lower walls of which Niccolò lined with a horizontal band of *spiritelli*, unmistakably Donatellesque, both in spirit and letter (Fig. 16).⁸⁰ Along similar lines, Domenico Rosselli (ca. 1439–97/8) carried the gentle marmoreal aesthetic of the Rossellino workshop, in which he likely trained, from Florence into the Marches and Umbria.⁸¹ And in reverse movements, many sculptors, having traveled to Florence and studied Ghiberti's first doors in situ, translated their compositions into reliefs in stone and metal (see, e.g., Fig. 2).⁸² The location of Filarete's and Donatello's bronze works, respectively, at St. Peter's and the Santo – two of the most important pilgrimage sites in



Figure 14 Unknown architect, portal from the Medici Bank in Milan, ca. 1460, marble, Museo d'arte antica, Castello Sforzesco, Milan. Photo: Giovanni Dall'Orto, licensed under CC

Western Christendom – likewise ensured their visibility to foreigners.

A sculptor's fame could also proliferate with the expanses that objects themselves traveled.

Whatever other qualities they possessed, the portrait medals, plaquettes, and statuettes that Italian sculptors turned out, with increased frequency, throughout the century were portable, exposing



Figure 15 Francesco Laurana, portrait bust of Beatrice of Aragon, 1471–4, marble, The Frick Collection, New York. Photo: The Frick Collection, New York City

their makers to distant recipients they might never meet. The plaquettes of Galeazzo Mondella (1467–1528), called *Moderno*, are known to have traversed the Alps, inspiring imitations in the Netherlands; and Mehmed II received a

medal from Bertoldo di Giovanni (ca. 1420–91), perhaps commissioned by Lorenzo de' Medici, in the 1480s.⁸³ This latter example is a powerful indication of the ease with which medals traveled, inasmuch as Lorenzo took for granted that



Figure 16 Niccolò di Giovanni Fiorentino, detail from the Chapel of the Blessed Giovanni Orsini, late 1460s, Cathedral of St. Lawrence, Trogir, Croatia. Photo: Sarah K. Rich

an object produced in Florence would reach Mehmed in faraway Istanbul. There it joined other such specimens, including examples by Costanzo da Ferrara and Gentile Bellini (Fig. 17 [all three medals]), both of whom had been embedded in the Sultan's court.⁸⁴ By the end of the century, printed images had increased artists' reach still more. If goldsmiths produced some of the earliest engravings in Italy, as noted earlier, several of them gained a continental following through the pursuit. Impressed on feather-light paper and produced in multiples, Antonio del Pollaiuolo's *Battle of the Naked Men* (ca. 1465–75; Fig. 18) circulated widely in Europe, being copied, with varying exactitude, in several German cities already by the century's end.⁸⁵ By signing the printed matrix, moreover, sculptors like Pollaiuolo ensured that, wherever a particular copy wound up, its producer was there too, in name. Nor was portability confined to small-scale works. Witness the thirty-foot-tall wall tomb of Cardinal Rainaldo Brancacci (ca. 1426–8), the

individual parts of which Donatello and Michelozzo carved in a workshop in Pisa and then shipped by sea to Naples, where they were assembled on site at the Church of Sant'Angelo a Nilo (Fig. 19).⁸⁶

The materials of sculpture had their own itineraries. These could be more or less protracted. Nearly every province in Italy possessed some type of stone that could be – and was – carved, for example, but sculptors sometimes opted to import materials from elsewhere instead. The fine white marble obtained in the Apuan Alps along Italy's west coast – most famously in Carrara but also at Pietrasanta and Seravezza – was particularly sought after and, owing to these quarries' proximity to Pisan shipping lines, widely distributed throughout the peninsula: not only to Naples (as in the Brancacci monument), but also to Sicily, Genoa (and thence by ox-cart to Lombardy), Venice, and up the Arno River to Florence. To reduce the weight and size of marble blocks, and therefore cargo costs, sculptors routinely worked near the quarries, as Donatello and Michelozzo had in Pisa.⁸⁷ Equally coveted, if utterly different in appearance, was the limestone native to the Istrian peninsula, shipments of which frequently crossed the Adriatic in wide boats with flat bottoms (some stonemasons owned their own boats): to cities along Italy's east coast such as Venice and Ancona, and, up the Po Valley, to Ferrara and even into Lombardy.⁸⁸ It was common for monuments to integrate a range of types of stone quarried in far-flung places. This was especially true in Venice; by one count, San Marco is adorned with over fifty varieties of stone with diverse origins.⁸⁹ The crowning tabernacles and statues added to San Marco in the early fifteenth century comprise at least six types of stone: Carrara marble, Greek (Parian) marble, verde antico (from Thessaly), *marmo greco fiorito* and *marmo greco venato* (quarried on an island in the Sea of Marmara, in modern-day Turkey), and Istrian stone.⁹⁰ The geography of bronze was more expansive still.



Figure 17 Top to bottom: Bertoldo di Giovanni, portrait medal of Sultan Mehmed II (obverse and reverse), 1481, bronze, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Costanzo da Ferrara, portrait medal of Sultan Mehmed II (obverse and reverse), 1481, bronze, Victoria and Albert Museum, London; and Gentile Bellini, portrait medal of Sultan Mehmed II (obverse and reverse), 1480, bronze, Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Photos: Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City (Bertoldo di Giovanni) and © Victoria and Albert Museum, London (Costanzo da Ferrara and Gentile Bellini)

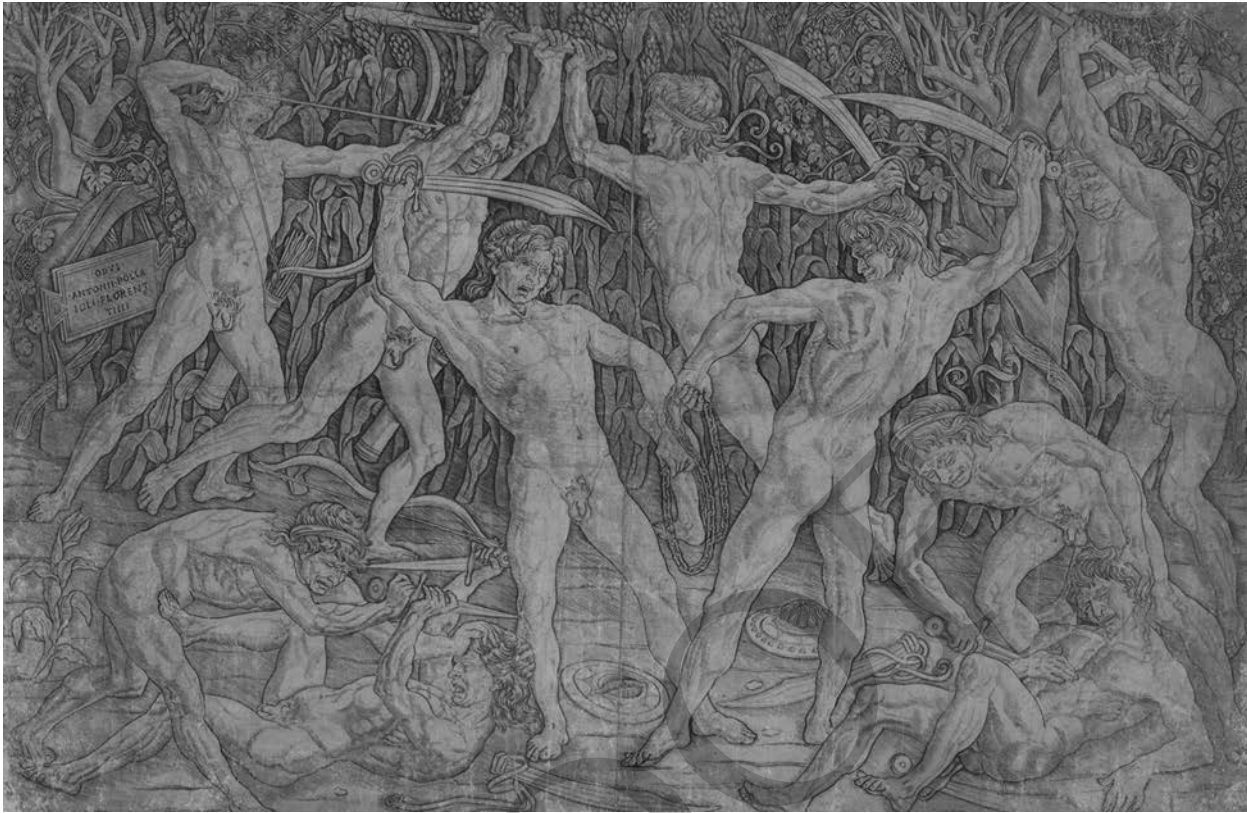


Figure 18 Antonio del Pollaiuolo, *Battle of the Naked Men*, ca. 1465–75, engraving on paper, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Photo: Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City

Being an alloy made of copper and tin – ingredients mined in disparate areas in northern and southern Europe, including the region around Venice (where copper mines existed by 1420) – bronze owed its very existence in Italy to transcontinental trade.⁹¹ Much of the bronze for Ghiberti's *St. Matthew* at Orsanmichele was purchased in Venice and passed through Ferrara and then Bologna en route to Florence.⁹² Some of the bronze for his second set of Florence Baptistery doors came from Flanders.⁹³ Given how difficult it could be to amass sufficient materials, especially for outsized undertakings, it was not uncommon for sculptors to seek local alternatives: melting down previously cast bronze objects, including bells or cannons, for reuse. We know, for example, that some of the metal likely earmarked for Donatello's *Judith and Holofernes* (Fig. 64), which came from no fewer than five separate sources, was scrap purchased from other metalworkers in Florence.⁹⁴

By rule of thumb, geography was a powerful determinant in the kinds of materials sculptors used. It is no coincidence, for example, that Carrara marble is less frequently found in Venice; or that Emilia boasted a rich tradition of terracotta sculpture (the region sat on abundant deposits of clay, after all). By the same token, the lack of a first-rate local sculptors' stone in Emilia goes a long way to explaining why sculptures in that medium are comparatively harder to find there. Knowing this fact, and the lengths to which Emilian (or Emilia-based) sculptors and patrons had to go to find quality stone, moreover, makes major sculptural initiatives in that medium all the more impressive. To compete with the sculptural decoration at churches in other cities, for example, the wardens at San Petronio in Bologna had marble transported, at great labor and expense, from the Veneto and Lombardy.⁹⁵ At the same time, individuals might minimize such labor by repurposing exotic



Figure 19 Donatello and Michelozzo, tomb of Rainaldo Brancacci (detail), ca. 1426–8, marble, Sant’Angelo a Nilo, Naples.
Photo: Daniel M. Zolli



Figure 20 Agostino di Duccio, Chapel of St. Sigismund (southwestern wall), ca. 1449–50, Proconnesian marble, Tempio Malatestiano, Rimini. Photo: Daniel M. Zolli

materials that they found closer to home. This could occur more or less respectably. To acquire the stone for his Tempio in Rimini (begun late 1440s), for example, Sigismondo Malatesta thoroughly ransacked the early Christian church of Sant'Apollinare in Classe, near Ravenna, taking porphyry, verde antico, and serpentine but looting a surplus of exotic Proconnesian marble in particular (Fig. 20).⁹⁶ Although Ravenna was but thirty miles to the northwest, this did not stop Sigismondo and his humanist entourage from imagining a different patrimony entirely for these spoils. They were, in the words of the humanist Roberto Valturio, “marble born in the farthest provinces” (he later called them “peregrino marmore,” a phrase that highlights the stones’ foreign origins and suggests, moreover,

that that they had made a pilgrimage to Rimini); and they ensured that nothing was more truly “ancient” in Rimini than the Tempio.⁹⁷ In this case, it was the exotic origins of the stones – Egypt and Greece, for example – that mattered to Sigismondo, not how he obtained them.

And yet, while materials from afar might have the appeal of the exotic, those that were locally sourced, even when not inherently costly, could inspire pride, inasmuch as they reflected a region’s identity. This was true of *macigno*, the bluish-gray sandstone quarried in the hills that ringed Florence, especially around Fiesole to the northeast. The Tuscan practice of carving this stone is preserved in the names of at least two well-known sculptors, Desiderio da Settignano and Benedetto da Maiano, who are known by the names of the localities where their families – expert *macigno* workers – had been based. So bound was the stone to local identity, in fact, that some even likened its character to that of the Florentine people, who were, like *macigno*, proverbially hard and unyielding.⁹⁸ Little wonder, then, that two of the most significant Florentine civic sculptures of the fifteenth century, the *Marzocco* and *Dovizia*, were wrought from *macigno*. In these cases, the material’s symbolic richness clearly outweighed the attraction of more expensive alternatives like marble.

THE PRESENCE OF SCULPTURE IN EVERYDAY LIFE

Fifteenth-century Italians interacted with sculpted objects often, in private and public settings and for varied purposes: practical, religious, and economic. Interactions could be intimate and direct and involve not just vision but also touch. Coins passed through hands during financial transactions; private devotions often involved the handling of crucifixes; many kept in their homes, or wore as pendants, the

incised metal cases enclosing Agnus Dei waxes, consecrated disks stamped with images of the Lamb of God and papal insignia; and at the Mass's conclusion worshippers often kissed the pax, a type of devotional object made of precious metal or ivory and decorated with reliefs and ornament.⁹⁹ The surfaces of all of these objects – as well as those of large-scale reliefs and statues that we might more readily call artworks – often became smoothed as a result of the accumulated effects of so many touches, highlighting sculpture's power to register, in the softened edges of a worn surface, the vibrancy of a city's economy or the intensity of its citizens' religious devotion.

In the Quattrocento (as before and after), domestic interiors were sites of devotion, and sculptures in homes structured worship and reinforced religious belief. Wood or metal crucifixes located in bedrooms stimulated prayer and sometimes particularly intense devotions.¹⁰⁰ The metal-encased Agnus Dei waxes possessed, many believed, apotropaic powers, protecting women in childbirth (they were frequently added to marriage and betrothal chests) and preventing illness and natural disasters.¹⁰¹ Christiane Klapisch has shown how young Florentine women, upon their marriage or entry into a convent, often received elaborately garbed dolls made of gesso, wood, terracotta, or stucco. Such figures, sometimes modeled on statues displayed or processed in public, represented the Christ child and, Klapisch suggests, engendered maternal behavior and permitted the sorts of imagined interactions with Christ described in devotional manuals and hagiographies; inventories indicate that not only women, and not only Florentines, engaged with these dolls.¹⁰² Whereas in certain cities, such as Venice, paintings more often than sculptures served as devotional objects in homes (Venetian homes did contain sculpted elements such as stone fireplaces), in other locales sculpture was common.¹⁰³ In the early fifteenth century, the Dominican friar Giovanni Dominici, in

his treatise on the governance of the family, recommended that houses include paintings or sculptures of Mary, the Christ child, or the saints, which he believed taught the young proper comportment.¹⁰⁴ The fifteenth century saw the emergence, and then tremendous popularity, of a type close to that specified by Dominici: the Madonna and Child relief (e.g., Figs. 39, 179, and 180).¹⁰⁵ Sculptors – Ghiberti, Donatello, Michelozzo, and Desiderio da Settignano among them – carved these of marble or modeled them in clay or other pliable substances, or used molds to make multiples in stucco, gesso, or terracotta. These were often polychromed and then, after purchase, placed in tabernacle frames or attached to bases adorned with buyers' coats-of-arms. These images promoted prayer and reminded their viewers of the power of divine figures to intercede in human lives. From the perspective of the classically minded, these works perhaps additionally recalled the venerable history of modeling and the use of casts, techniques that Pliny discusses extensively.¹⁰⁶

Some private residences contained collections of sculptures. In Padua, the wool merchants Gaspare and Baldassare Olzignani kept in their house a group of sculpted objects in lead, alabaster, wood, and bronze gifted to Baldassare while he was held captive by the Turks.¹⁰⁷ A handful of homes were filled with sculpture, most prominent among them the Medici Palace in Florence, which brimmed with not only ancient, medieval, and contemporary reliefs and statues, but also bits and pieces of rich materials like porphyry. Donatello's bronze *David* and *Judith and Holofernes* (Figs. 62 and 64) stood, respectively, in the courtyard and garden. The oft-cited 1492 inventory of the palace mentions a number of works: the bust of Piero de' Medici by Mino da Fiesole; a bust and relief by Desiderio da Settignano; a bronze centaur and battle scene relief by Bertoldo; a bronze statuette of *Hercules and Antaeus* by Antonio del Pollaiuolo; a relief of

the Ascension by Donatello.¹⁰⁸ Numerous devotional images of the Madonna and Child graced the structure's interior. Piero's study, which foreign dignitaries visited in the fifteenth century, contained – along with books, mounted gems, hardstone vessels, and other wondrous items (e.g., a “unicorn's” horn) – ancient and medieval cameos, carved bone and ivory, bronze casts, and, in the ceiling, Luca della Robbia's painted *Labors of the Months*.¹⁰⁹ The inventory reports that the Medici stashed colonettes and slabs of porphyry and sheets of alabaster under a bed, presumably in case they were needed for a construction project or perhaps a repair.¹¹⁰ They owned bronze inkstands adorned with soldiers and clocks decorated with reliefs and enameled sprites (*spiritelli*), reminding us that sculpture adorned utilitarian items as well.¹¹¹ Homes contained combs and small betrothal chests (*forzerini*) decorated with reliefs in bone or ivory, inlaid wood, and horn that narrate ancient pagan stories such as the tale of Jason and the Argonauts (an especially popular choice).¹¹² The Genoese Baldassare degli Embriachi, who established his shop in Florence in the late Trecento and eventually expanded to Venice, specialized in the creation of such works (and in carving bone more generally), as did his descendants who continued the family business (e.g., Fig. 21).¹¹³ Sculpture could cover almost any surface. The remarkable step-ends commissioned, at century's end, by Giuliano Gondi for his Florentine palace's staircase represent moralizing stories deriving from sources including Aesop's fables and an Arabic translation of a book of Indian tales.¹¹⁴

Many palaces projected their sculptural adornment publicly. The white marble diamonds with pink veins encrusting the exterior walls of the Palazzo dei Diamanti in Ferrara, a building commissioned from Biagio Rossetti by the Este and built in the last decade of the Quattrocento, extend from the wall; reliefs of candelabra line the palace's corners. In Venice, Friuli, and Istria there existed a long tradition that continued into

the Quattrocento of punctuating façades with sculpture. Relief tondi (*patere*) or arch-topped rectangles (*formelle*) adorned the zones above arcaded windows. Often carved centuries earlier (the first *patere* were made around 1100) and imported from other sites, these represented a very wide range of subjects – animals, ancient pagan figures, Christ, demons, and mythological creatures such as centaurs – and were meant to ward off evil and protect a home's inhabitants.¹¹⁵ In fact, sculpture could be found immured within the external walls of houses and churches in cities throughout Italy in the Quattrocento (e.g., Fig. 181). In Venice and the Veneto the so-called *capitelli* framed sculpted or painted images, typically of Mary and (sometimes) Christ, and these objects, illuminated by lamps throughout the night, sacralized the city but also, individuals hoped, warded off civic behavior considered improper.¹¹⁶ In a different vein, princes displayed their coats of arms all over their palaces – as well as on other surfaces in public spaces in cities under their control. Sculpted objects also moved through streets and squares. The active nature of the sculpture industry in Florence led, in the Quattrocento, to the development of a new element in the festivities celebrating the feast of St. John the Baptist: the fashioning of floats representing the entire Judeo-Christian narrative, from the stories of Adam and Eve to the Last Judgment, which were processed down city streets. The floats contained elements fashioned from ephemeral materials as well as human actors, a combination that enlivened the objects crafted out of inanimate materials and turned human bodies into constituent elements of artistic spectacles.¹¹⁷ On a smaller scale, wax sculptures were often carried in public processions held on religious holidays.¹¹⁸

It is difficult to overstate the impact of sculpture on public spaces in fifteenth-century Italy. Certainly, the ancient practice of adding sculptures to buildings, along roads, and in squares, which both Pliny and Vitruvius describe, influenced this



Figure 21 Workshop of the Embriachi, casket with the story of Jason, ca. 1390–1410, wood, inlaid with marquetry of horn and covered with bone plaques on a poplar framework, Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Photo: © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

development. Alberti highlights the earlier practice, reminding readers of his architectural treatise, *De re aedificatoria*, that ancient Rome had so many public statues that some said that it had a “second population . . . made of stone.”¹¹⁹ All over Italy similar populations appeared. In Florence, bronze and marble figures and reliefs decorated the exteriors of the Cathedral and Baptistery; and the guilds commissioned statues of their patron saints

for the church of Orsanmichele (e.g., Fig. 84 and 108). Public works changed the face of Quattrocento Florence, lending its streets and squares a theatrical quality deriving from the sculptures’ forceful engagement – physical and emotional – of surrounding space. Numerous cities saw the creation of dynamic sculptural works for public sites: in Siena, Jacopo della Quercia (ca. 1374–1438) fashioned for the main public square,

the Campo, a new fountain, the Fonte Gaia (1408–19; Fig. 220); and Antonio Federighi (ca. 1420–90) and Lorenzo Vecchietta (1410–80) crafted a cycle of niche figures representing patron saints (begun 1451) for the Loggia della Mercanzia, where the city's guild court met. In Venice, a profusion of public statuary transformed the city no less profoundly: statues were made to adorn the façades of San Marco and spaces around the church; Giovanni and Bartolomeo Bon completed the monumental Porta della Carta for an entrance to the Palazzo Ducale; and façades of numerous buildings, for example the Scuola di San Marco (a confraternity), received sculptural decoration. Public sculptures not affixed to architectural exteriors were strategically placed to emphasize cities' historical roots or particular virtues. The Siene government had sculptures of a she-wolf suckling Romulus and Remus, a group that functioned as a civic emblem, placed atop columns located throughout the city (most prominently, one in gilded bronze by Giovanni di Turino [ca. 1384–1455] was elevated atop an ancient granite column in front of the Palazzo Pubblico in 1429).¹²⁰ Around the same time, Donatello sculpted the *Dovizia* for Florence's marketplace. Public works carried religious, civic, and economic significance – and often they were multifaceted in meaning. The Orsanmichele statues, for example, were the focus of religious devotions on the feast days of the saints they represented, when guild members processed to the statues and made offerings before them.¹²¹ These and other sculptures simultaneously possessed civic significance, demonstrating the aims and wealth of their patrons, whether their commissioners were guilds, confraternities, or governments.

Sculpture had, for centuries, played crucial roles in religious ceremony and rites within churches. This continued in the Quattrocento, although sculptors increasingly drew on the vocabulary of antiquity in designing wholly new types of monuments such as sacrament

tabernacles (*ciboria*), altarpieces, tombs, candelabra, pulpits, and relief elements to adorn interiors of churches. Donatello's pedimented tabernacle for St. Peter's, replete with reliefs drawing on antique motifs and figures and classical architectural vocabulary, inspired others by Bernardo Rossellino and Desiderio da Settignano. A palpable drive to innovate similarly defines the development of monumental tombs, which not only highlight the Christian theology of death, but also demonstrate the interests, and often power, of the deceased and the living. Bernardo Rossellino's tomb for the humanist chancellor Leonardo Bruni (Santa Croce, Florence; Fig. 142) includes (on the bier) eagles, birds that lift his soul toward heaven – a Christian heaven symbolized by a relief of the Virgin and Christ.¹²² The tomb contains a host of classical elements as well: pilasters, an entablature, arch, and a Latin inscription. It set a new standard for humanist tombs while also emphasizing Bruni's deep interest in the classical past and the devotion of the Florentine state, which ordered the work, to memorializing its great scholars. The Bruni tomb influenced Desiderio da Settignano's Marsuppini tomb (also Santa Croce), Mino da Fiesole's tomb for Count Hugo of Tuscany in the Florence Badia, the tomb designed by Matteo Civitali for Piero da Noceto (Lucca), and Pietro Lombardo's tomb for Antonio Rosselli in Padua. Pietro in turn moved in breathtakingly inventive directions when he completed, toward the end of the fifteenth century, the tombs for Doge Pietro Mocenigo (Santi Giovanni e Paolo, Venice), with its active warriors within niches, and the bishop Giovanni Zanetti (Treviso Duomo), with its virtuosic carving. Tullio Lombardo's Vendramin tomb (Santi Giovanni e Paolo; Fig. 158), poetic and classicizing, builds on these precedents. Other works religious in subject and function communicated the power of their patrons as well. The sculptures the Medici commissioned for San Lorenzo (Fig. 187), which bespeak the family's

wealth and highlight, from their perspective, the venerable nature of the family's lineage, come to mind.

If the Quattrocento saw the production of a remarkable variety of sculpture, it was defined as well by a certain hesitancy, often shaped by religious belief, about the appropriateness of the art in certain contexts. Preachers such as Giovanni Dominici, mentioned earlier, and the Franciscans Bernardino da Siena and Bernardino da Feltre railed against vanity and encouraged the avoidance, and even destruction, of luxury goods, among these sculptures. The aforementioned Franciscans also helped stage iconoclastic bonfires of the vanities (in the 1420s and 1483). In the Quattrocento, such conflagrations most often destroyed things believed to embody vanity (clothing, makeup, mirrors) or objects used in activities considered improper, such as gambling (dice and playing cards were often burned). The most extreme examples occurred in 1497 and 1498, when the Dominican preacher Girolamo Savonarola, amid a climate of fervid religiosity in Florence, oversaw during Carnival enormous bonfires in the piazza della Signoria that consumed not just clothing and gambling devices, but also musical instruments and art, including figural sculptures, some nude and some by renowned masters.¹²³ However, like Dominici, Savonarola, who commissioned several portrait medals (e.g., Fig. 75), did not object to all art.¹²⁴ In 1497, before the great fire consumed its victims, he led a procession through the city that, according to one contemporary source, was headed by four boys carrying a sculpture of the infant Jesus said to be by Donatello.¹²⁵

Other sculptural types, such as the statue-in-the-round, although not burned, were similarly considered suspect. Such works had been displayed for centuries. In fact, in Venice, Verona, and Siena, ancient statues, a number reworked, were in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries elevated on columns (sometimes integrated into

fountains) and placed in prominent sites. These and also ancient triumphal columns inspired the creation of new statue-topped columns in the Quattrocento, most famously Donatello's *Dovizia*. Works capable of being viewed in the round, whose release from an architectural fabric made them similar – too similar, for some – to the animated and real body, were associated with miracles, and this rendered them, many believed, capable of stimulating idolatry.¹²⁶ Fifteenth-century Italy did not see sustained campaigns of iconoclasm, but artists and their contemporaries were aware that some considered these works to be potentially dangerous. Ghiberti, for example, recalls in the *Commentaries* the story of an ancient marble Venus unearthed in Siena, installed on a fountain in an elevated position, but then later torn down, smashed, and buried in Florentine territory, all because, it was believed, Siena's inhabitants had worshipped it, committed idolatry, and thereby caused adversities to befall the city.¹²⁷ Its destruction, his account reports, was carried out to prevent further “honoring” of the statue representing the pagan goddess. Ghiberti must have been interested in this tale not only because of its dramatic account of a type of image worship that contravened Christian norms, but also because it demonstrated how natural forces and human actions all too often damage or destroy artworks. Unmaking was for him a major concern.

* * *

This volume opens with essays that focus intently on the act of making, more specifically on the treatment of surfaces and the development of novel modes of ornamenting the outer skins of sculpted forms. In general, the chapters explore sculptures in ever-expanding contexts: the authors focus on surface, then examine body and form, the use of figures within fictive spaces (often to communicate dramatic narrative), the

ways sculptures can be understood to have performed within real spaces, the role of the sculpted image in broader artistic contexts, and, lastly, the place of sculpture in history. As mentioned, the production of sculpture during the Quattrocento in Italy cannot be comprehensively covered in one volume (given the richness of sculptural production during this century). It is our hope, however, that this organization, at the very least, highlights the many contexts in which this era's sculptures, no matter their specific chronological or geographic origins, can profitably be examined. Correspondingly, this ordering foregrounds the constellation of issues considered by those who, in the fifteenth century, a time of relentless experimentation in the field of sculpture, devoted themselves to all aspects of this art.

NOTES

- 1 Robert Glass, "Filarete and the Invention of the Renaissance Medal," *The Medal* 66 (2015): 26–37.
- 2 That Filarete eventually found stable patronage under the Sforza, moreover, owed largely to the encouragement of the Florentine banker Piero de' Medici – evidence of how artists might benefit from diplomatic relations across a courtly network and also serve as "symbolic capital" abroad, enhancing a court's cosmopolitan character.
- 3 On this medal, see Joanna Woods-Marsden, *Renaissance Self-Portraiture: The Visual Construction of Identity and the Social Status of the Artist* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998), pp. 79–84 and Berthold Hub, "Filarete's Self-Portrait Medal of c. 1460: Promoting the Renaissance Architect," *The Medal* 66 (2015): 50–60, whose interpretation considers the bees the results of the architect's work.
- 4 Michael Baxandall, *Giotto and the Orators: Humanist Observers of Painting in Italy and the Discovery of Pictorial Composition, 1350–1450* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), esp. pp. 109 and 168.
- 5 Ottavio Morisani, "Art Historians and Art Critics – Cristoforo Landino," *The Burlington Magazine* 95 (1953): 270.
- 6 A notion alluded to in Eugenio Battisti, *L'antirinascimento*, two vols. (Milan: Garzanti, 1989), vol. 1, p. 104; and discussed at length in Daniel M. Zolli, *Donatello's Promiscuous Technique* (Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 2016).
- 7 Leon Battista Alberti, "Della pittura/De pictura," in *Opere volgari*, ed. Cecil Grayson, three vols. (Rome and Bari: G. Laterza, 1960–73), vol. 3, pp. 46–7 (2.26).
- 8 Claudio Varese, "Giovanni Cavalcanti storico e scrittore," in *Storia e politica nella prosa del Quattrocento* (Turin: Einaudi, 1961), p. 111.
- 9 Lorenzo Ghiberti, *I commentarii*, ed. Lorenzo Bartoli (Florence: Giunti, 1998), p. 90.
- 10 Nerida Newbigin, "Dieci sacre rappresentazioni inedite fra Quattro e Cinquecento," *Letteratura italiana antica* 10 (2009): 111.
- 11 Laura Cavazzini, *Il crepuscolo della scultura medievale in Lombardia* (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 2004), pp. 118–25; Ezio Mattiocco, "Orafi e argentieri d'Abruzzo precursori e contemporanei di Nicola della Guardia," in *Nicola da Guardiagrele. Orafo tra Medioevo e Rinascimento. Le opere. I restauri*, ed. Sante Guido (Todi: TAU, 2008), pp. 23–60.
- 12 Elio and Corrado Catello, *L'oreficeria a Napoli nel XV secolo* (Naples: Di Mauro, 1975), pp. 21–45, esp. p. 25.
- 13 Antonella Capitanio, "Maestri e statuti dell'arte orafa a Lucca tra xiv e xvi secolo," *Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa. Classe di lettere e filosofia* 13 (1983): 496; Costantino Bulgari, *Argentieri, gemmari e orafi d'Italia*, four vols. in five (Rome: L. Del Turco, 1958–74), vol. 1 (pt. 1; Roma).
- 14 Capitanio, "Maestri e statuti," pp. 498–9.
- 15 Many who worked primarily as painters did as well, for example, Masolino, Botticelli, Domenico Ghirlandaio, and Francesco Francia.
- 16 Volker Krahn, "Riccio's Formation and Early Career," in *Andrea Riccio: Renaissance Master of Bronze*, eds. Denise Allen and Peta Motture (New York: The Frick Collection; London: Philip Wilson Publishers, 2008).
- 17 Davide Gasparotto, "The Power of Invention: Goldsmiths and Disegno in the Renaissance," in *Donatello, Michelangelo, Cellini: Sculptors' Drawings from Renaissance Italy*, ed. Michael W. Cole (London: Paul Holberton Publishing, 2014), pp. 41–55, esp. p. 42.
- 18 *L'oreficeria nella Firenze del Quattrocento* (Florence: S.P.E.S., 1977), pp. 144–6.
- 19 Adalgisa Lugli, *Guido Mazzoni e la rinascita della terracotta nel Quattrocento* (Turin: U. Allemandi, 1990), p. 329.
- 20 Theophilus, *De diversis artibus/The Various Arts*, ed. and trans. C. R. Dodwell (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1961), p. 128.
- 21 Marco Collareta, "Nel concerto delle arti," in *I Della Robbia. Il dialogo tra le Arti nel Rinascimento*, eds. Giancarlo Gentilini with Liletta Fornasari (Milan: Skira, 2009), pp. 41–2.
- 22 David Landau and Peter Parshall, *The Renaissance Print, 1470–1550* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1994), esp. pp. 1–2.
- 23 Andrew Butterfield, *The Sculptures of Andrea del Verrocchio* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997), p. 3; on his workshop, see Richard David Serros, *The Verrocchio Workshop: Techniques, Production and Influences* (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Santa Barbara, 1999).
- 24 Mary Bergstein, *The Sculpture of Nanni di Banco* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), esp. p. 7.
- 25 This point has been made by, e.g., Adrian W. B. Randolph, "Republican Florence, 1400–1434," in *Artistic Centers of the*

- Italian Renaissance: Florence*, ed. Francis Ames-Lewis (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 122; for the contract, see Richard Krautheimer, in collaboration with Trude Krautheimer-Hess, *Lorenzo Ghiberti* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982), pp. 368–9, doc. 26.
- 26 The phrase “lucrative art” appears in Luca della Robbia’s 1471 will; see L. Burlamacchi, *Luca della Robbia* (London: George Bell & Sons, 1900), p. 101. Our thanks to Rachel Boyd for this reference.
- 27 This was common throughout Italy, but, for the Venetian context, see Susan Connell, *The Employment of Sculptors and Stonemasons in Venice in the Fifteenth Century* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1988), p. 55.
- 28 On the ages of apprentices and the duration of apprenticeships, see Peter Burke, *The Italian Renaissance: Culture and Society in Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), esp. pp. 51–6 and Anabel Thomas, *The Painter’s Practice in Renaissance Tuscany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 43–6. For statistics, see Richard Goldthwaite, *The Economy of Renaissance Florence* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), p. 373.
- 29 On the Ghiberti shop, see Aldo Galli, “Nel segno di Ghiberti,” in *La bottega dell’artista: tra Medioevo e Rinascimento*, ed. Roberto Cassanelli (Milan: Jaca Book, 1998), pp. 87–108.
- 30 Louis F. Mustari, *The Sculptor in the Fourteenth-Century Florentine Opera del Duomo* (Ph.D. dissertation, The University of Iowa, 1975), pp. 239–40.
- 31 On the layout of shops, with a focus on Florence, see Thomas, *The Painter’s Practice*, esp. pp. 27–71 and Maria Luisa Bianchi and Maria Letizia Grossi, “Botteghe, economia e spazio urbano,” in *Arti fiorentine. La grande storia dell’Artigianato*, six vols. (Florence: Giunti, 1999), vol. 2 (eds. Franco Franceschi and Gloria Fossi), pp. 27–63.
- 32 On the workshop study, see Dora Thornton, *The Scholar in His Study: Ownership and Experience in Renaissance Italy* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997), esp. p. 88 and Christina Neilson, “Demonstrating Ingenuity: The Display and Concealment of Knowledge in Renaissance Artists’ Workshops,” *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance* 19 (2016): 80–1.
- 33 On workshops changing hands, see Thomas, *The Painter’s Practice*, pp. 42–3.
- 34 On this phenomenon, see, for example, Luca Molà, “States and Crafts: Relocating Technical Skills in Renaissance Italy,” in *The Material Renaissance*, eds. Michelle O’Malley and Evelyn Welch (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007), pp. 134–53.
- 35 On Antico, see Neilson, “Demonstrating Ingenuity,” pp. 69–71. Hence, on Naples, see Guido Donatone, *La maiolica napoletana del Rinascimento* (Naples: Gemini Arte, 1994), pp. 29–30.
- 36 On the Este foundry, see Cesare Cittadella, *Catalogo storico de’ pittori e scultori ferraresi e delle opere loro con in fine una nota esatta delle più celebri pitture delle chiese di Ferrara*, four vols. (Ferrara: F. Pomatelli, 1782), vol. 2, pp. 46–50; on the possible location of Filarete’s shop at Castel Sant’Angelo, see Robert Glass, *Filarete at the Papal Court: Sculpture, Ceremony, and the Antique in Early Renaissance Rome* (Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton University, 2011), pp. 204–5; and Giuseppe Zippel, “Documenti per la storia di Castel Sant’Angelo,” *Archivio della Società romana di storia patria* 35 (1912): 178–81.
- 37 See Thomas, *The Painter’s Practice*, pp. 46–7 and 53–4; and *Il Duomo di Firenze. Documenti sulla decorazione della chiesa e del campanile tratti dall’archivio dell’Opera*, ed. Giovanni Poggi (Berlin: Bruno Cassirer, 1909), p. 257, doc. 1289, on how the Florence Cathedral Opera made use of the Duomo itself, as sculptures – the organ loft by Donatello, for example – were carved in discrete spaces within the church (then still under construction).
- 38 Thomas, *The Painter’s Practice*, pp. 16, 22, and 47–8.
- 39 See Susan Mosher Stuard, *Gilding the Market: Luxury and Fashion in Fourteenth-Century Italy* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), esp. pp. 172 and 191. On the location of the mint in Venice, see Alan M. Stahl, *Zecca: The Mint of Venice in the Middle Ages* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), pp. 281–6.
- 40 Thomas, *The Painter’s Practice*, p. 21.
- 41 Thomas, *The Painter’s Practice*, p. 19.
- 42 Victoria Avery, *Vulcan’s Forge in Venus’ City: The Story of Bronze in Venice, 1350–1650* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), esp. pp. 23–4.
- 43 Pressed to explain his role in the trick, Donatello glibly rejoins that he knew nothing about it and “remembered hearing [people discussing] it yesterday in [his] workshop, but [was] preoccupied” (“Donatello fece anche lui le viste di non ne sapere nulla; poi disse: io mi ricordo pure testè, che se ne ragionò ieri in bottega, ma io ero in fantasia”); see Antonio Manetti, *Novella del grasso legnaiuolo*, ed. Domenico Moreni (Florence: Magheri, 1820), pp. 36–7.
- 44 On workshops as sites for the exchange of information, see, most recently, Neilson, “Demonstrating Ingenuity,” pp. 63–91. On the benches outside of shops, see Yvonne Elet, “Seats of Power: The Outdoor Benches of Early Modern Florence,” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 61 (2002): 453–5.
- 45 Doris Carl, *Benedetto da Maiano: A Florentine Sculptor at the Threshold of the High Renaissance*, two vols. (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006), text vol., p. 27.
- 46 *Vita viri clarissimi et famosissimi Kyriaci anconitani* (*Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, vol. 86, n. 4), eds. and trans. Charles Mitchell and Edward W. Bodnar (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1996), pp. 70 and 132.
- 47 On official visits to the Arsenale and Murano (in the late fifteenth century), see Rinaldo Fulin, “Saggio del catalogo dei codici di Emmanuele A. Cicogna,” *Archivio veneto* 4 (1872): 59–132, esp. p. 95; and Luigi Zecchin, *Vetro e vetrai di Murano. Studi sulla storia del vetro*, three vols. (Venice: Arsenale, 1987–90), vol. 1, p. 233.
- 48 On the dangerous conditions of workshops, see James R. Farr, *Artisans in Europe, 1300–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 128–41.

- 49 Claire J. Farago, *Leonardo da Vinci's Paragone: A Critical Interpretation with a New Edition of the Text in the Codex Urbinas* (Leiden: Brill, 1992), pp. 256–7.
- 50 Mustari, *The Sculptor*, pp. 279–85.
- 51 Ghiberti's contract for his first set of doors, for example, stipulates that many of the important details be "di sua mano" (cited in Krautheimer, *Lorenzo Ghiberti*, pp. 368–9, doc. 26). The contract for the pulpit at Prato, meanwhile, specifies that Donatello would receive twenty-five florins for every marble panel that was from "eius propria manu"; see Volker Herzner, "Regesti donatelliani," *Rivista dell'Istituto nazionale d'archeologia e storia dell'arte* 2 (1979): 192, doc. 168. On this aspect of contracts, see Hannelore Glasser, *Artists' Contracts of the Early Renaissance* (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1977), pp. 72–8.
- 52 Evelyn Welch, "Patrons, Artists, and Audiences in Renaissance Milan: 1300–1600," in *Artistic Centers of the Italian Renaissance: The Court Cities of Northern Italy: Milan, Parma, Piacenza, Mantua, Ferrara, Bologna, Urbino, Pesaro, and Rimini*, ed. Charles M. Rosenberg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 24.
- 53 The estimate comes from a letter of the Cinquecento sculptor Baccio Bandinelli, although he might have exaggerated this number for effect (he was petitioning to his patron, Grand Duke Cosimo de' Medici, for additional assistants); see Giovanni Bottari and Stefano Ticozzi, *Raccolta di lettere sulla pittura, scultura ed architettura*, seven vols. (Milan: Giovanni Silvestri, 1822), vol. 1, pp. 70–1.
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