Donatello, Michelangelo, Cellini
SCULPTORS' DRAWINGS
FROM RENAISSANCE ITALY

Edited by
MICHAEL W. COLE

with essays by
MICHAEL W. COLE • DAVIDE GASPAROTTO • ALINA PAYNE
OLIVER TOSTMANN • LINDA WOLK-SIMON

Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston
Paul Holberton publishing, London
2014
Donatello, Michelangelo, Cellini
SCULPTORS' DRAWINGS
FROM RENAISSANCE ITALY

Curated by Oliver Tostmann and Michael W. Cole
at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston
13 October 2014 – 23 January 2015

This exhibition was generously sponsored by Bank of America. Additional support was provided by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Humanities. The Museum receives operating support from the Massachusetts Cultural Council.

Contents

6 Director's Foreword
8 Curator's Foreword
10 Acknowledgments
12 Why Did Sculptors Draw?
   Michael W. Cole
40 The Power of Invention: Goldsmiths and Disegno in the Renaissance
   Davide Gasparotto
56 The Sculptor-Architect's Drawing and Exchanges between the Arts
   Alina Payne
74 Disegno as Ritratto: Drawing in the Biography of Baccio Bandinelli
   Linda Wolk-Simon
102 The Sculptor as Draftsman: A Motif in Florentine Portraiture
   Oliver Tostmann
122 CATALOGUE

248 Bibliography
263 Selected Index
264 Photographic Credits
PIETRO FRANCAVILLA
Cambrai, 1548 – Paris, 1615

Record drawings of Giambologna’s models for the Apennines, the fountain of Samson and a Philistine, and a fountain of Neptune, 1582–1603

Five drawings on two sketchbook sheets signed by Pietro Francavilla depict study models made by his teacher and employer Giambologna. Drawn at the top of the recto of cat. 43, the terracotta model of the reclining figure for the Apennines is still extant (fig. 74). The other models depicted on this sheet, one for the supporting figural bracket of the fountain of Samson and a Philistine, shown below the Apennines model at the bottom of the recto, and another for a fountain of Neptune, shown on the verso, are not. The models for two variations of the fountain of Samson and a Philistine, drawn on the recto and verso of cat. 44, do not survive, either. Yet the drawings evidently show models, not only because they differ from Giambologna’s completed works, but also because they include the wooden bases that once served as supports for the studies. That Francavilla incorporated this information in his drawings reveals his concern to show that their subjects were models and not finished sculptures. This is relatively rare in the history of Renaissance artists making studies after models. In the mid-sixteenth century, it is more common to find drawings of architectural models—particularly of those models made for complex building projects like St. Peter’s or by prominent architects such as Michelangelo—than it is to find drawings of figural models for sculptures. By revealing the preparatory nature of his subjects, Francavilla helps demonstrate the importance of models to Giambologna’s working method.

In the oeuvre of Giambologna, a sculptor whose bronze and marble works were often finished by assistants, the preparatory model held special status as an object that preserved the artist’s original creative impulses. Giambologna displayed models in his house, was depicted with models in portraits, and occasionally depicted models in his

FIG. 74
Giambologna
Model for the Apennines, 1582
Terracotta, height 0.078
Museo Civico, Firenze

LITERATURE
Arvey 2003, pp. 14–16, 258, fig. 105, pp. 70–71

NOTES
1 Arvey 2003, pp. 14–16. The watercolors that Giambologna personally used as supports for most of his terracotta models are always extant. For example, the model for the Apennines, now in the Bargello (fig. 14), today holds the base that appears in Francavilla’s drawing. Similarly, the terracotta model for Fiesole Triumphal Arch (fig. 95), which is in the Victoria and Albert Museum, has visible marks that suggest it was once attached to a wooden block, as seen in Arvey 1982, p. 148, fig. 74.
2 On this point, see Cole 2003, pp. 10–11.
3 For Giambologna’s use of models, see Cole 2003, pp. 10–11, Arvey 1982, p. 148, fig. 74, and Rusini 2006.
4 This was relief now in the Bargello. There is a gold leaf and enameled relief of the same subject from the Studiolo Museum of Francesco I in the Museo degli Argenti, Palazzo Pitti, Florence.
5 In addition to the absence of a base on Giambologna’s terracotta model (see note 4 above), Francavilla’s drawing differs from the model in another way: the drawing shows a grass-like backstop extending above the figure—a form that does not appear in the model, where the sky stops just below the figure’s elbow. The sketchiness of this section of the drawing implies that Francavilla exaggerates his depiction of the model, in the same way that he added more to the rear drawing of the model for a fountain of Neptune.
FIVE DRAWINGS OF TWO SKETCHBOOK SHEETS SIGNED BY PIETRO FRANCAVVILLA

PIETRO FRANCAVVILLA

Camerl, 1548 – Paris, 1615

Record drawings of Giambologna’s models for the Apennines, the fountain of Samson and a Philistine, and a fountain of Neptune, 1582–1602.

Once and Brown ink over black chalk, on paper, 138 x 200 mm (5½ x 7½ in.)

Victoria and Albert Museum, London, purchased with the assistance of the Meyer Requén and the Art Fund 1.592/1953 and E.531/1953


The Mounting Figure of the Apennines, 1582

Giambologna

Museo dell’Opera del Duomo, Florence

FIG. 74

Giambologna

Model for the Apennines, 1582

Tempera, 31 x 41 cm

Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence

In the oeuvre of Giambologna, a sculptor who was also a designer and marble worker, the study models were often finished by assistants. The preparatory model held special status as an object that preserved the artist’s original creative impulses. Giambologna displayed models in his house, was depicted with models in portraits, and occasionally depicted models in his own works. The Mounting Figure of the Apennines (one near a stage), Francaville’s drawings differ from this model in another way: the drawing shows a gesso-like backdrop extending above the figures—a form that does not appear in the model, where the clay stops just below the figures’ shoulders. The sketches in this section of the drawing resemble that Francoisville’s original drawing of the model, in the same way as the added stage to the mezzotint drawing of the model for the fountain of Neptune.

LITERATURE


NOTES


2. The woodblock for the mounting figure of the Mounting Figure of the Apennines, now in the Bargello (fig. 74), is the basis for the drawing impresses that appears in Francoisville’s drawing. Similarly, the terracotta model for the Mounting Figure of the Mounting Figure of the Apennines (fig. 75, which is in the Victoria and Albert Museum, has visible marks that suggest it was once attached to a wooden plaque for display (see Arno, 1985, p. 46, fig. 74). On this point, see Cole, 2011, pp. 11–15.


4. This wood model is in the Bargello. There is a gold leaf and amethyst relief of the same subject from the Studiolo Museum of Francesco I in the Museo degli Argenti, Palazzo Pitti, Florence.

5. In addition to the absence of a base on Giambologna’s terracotta model (see note 1 above), Francoisville’s drawings differ from the model in another way: the drawing shows a gesso-like backdrop extending above the figures—a form that does not appear in the model, where the clay stops just below the figures’ shoulders. The sketches in this section of the drawing resemble that Francoisville’s original drawing of the model, in the same way as the added stage to the mezzotint drawing of the model for the fountain of Neptune.
The painting contains a precise rendering of the artist's features with a continuing representation of his work environment. It has frequently been illustrated, but the authorship, dating, and purpose of this portrait of the Flemish sculptor and architect Giambologna have not been debated. The sculptor is portrayed sitting on a stool in front of a table covered with a red cloth. He turns to look over his shoulder directly at the beholder, his right hand concealing a drawing he has just created. The upper right corner of the picture provides a view into a spacious workshop illuminated by two large windows. A side entrance, shown in the background, indicates the dimensions of this space.

There can be no doubt about the identity of the sitter, for Giambologna's appearance is documented in a number of portraits. His biographer Filippo Baldinucci described him as "small in stature, yes, but finely and solid." We know from the inventory of his estate drawn up in 1677 that Giambologna kept not only an art collection but also numerous pictures of himself in his residence at Borgo Pinti. Given its dimensions (21 x 15 1/2 in.), the work islimitated to be a "portrait of the Signor Cavaliere when he was young" could certainly be the Edinburgh painting.

More important than the concrete location of the depicted space is the idealized division of the interior into studios and homes. While the view into the workshop shows productive disorder, its chalky color suggesting dust in the air, noble textiles predominate in the study room. The elegantly dressed artist has left the hard work of his profession behind him and now dedicates himself in a relaxed way to the creative act of drawing, symbolized in the tools—a pencil, ruler holder, quill, inkwell, and not least the compass, which his right hand stands playfully on the table surface.

Whether this is a drawing compass or a pair of dividers is unclear. What can be said is that the instrument, which could be employed in various ways, contained such concepts as scale, proportion, and "right measure." It associates Giambologna with a particular kind of art, referring to his reason, method, reflectiveness, and process of creation. Concomitantly concerned measuring and drawing with learning and judgment, though on a more practical level the compass was essential for the replication of statues, as well as for the systematic study of architectural proportions. For this reason, it appears as a professional attribute in numerous portraits of sculptors and architects.

The Edinburgh portrait visually connects hand and intellect, means and means, to one another; the artist's illuminated forehead refers to his inspiration while the drawing he has just completed shows the materialization of his ideas.

Though it is true that Giambologna's powerful hand allows only a limited view of what he has drawn, one can see that the page, covered right to the edges, treats a ground plan, even if the few recognizable elements cannot easily be aligned with a specific project. Still, the portrait bears hints unmistakably of Giambologna's competence in architecture, to which he began dedicating himself in the 1590s and which, like her sister art, sculpture, grounded itself in the mastery of drawing. The picture associates the artist not with graphic bravura but rather with calculated planning and a command of proportion. The painting shows the kind of art that even nobles found suitable because it allowed the elimination of labor.