



# Jean-Antoine Houdon

✦ *Sculptor of the Enlightenment*

Jean-Antoine Houdon

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART, WASHINGTON  
THE J. PAUL GETTY MUSEUM, LOS ANGELES  
MUSÉE ET DOMAINE NATIONAL DU CHÂTEAU DE VERSAILLES





# Jean-Antoine Houdon

+ *Sculptor of the Enlightenment*

Anne L. Poulet

*with*

Guilhem Scherf

Ulrike D. Mathies

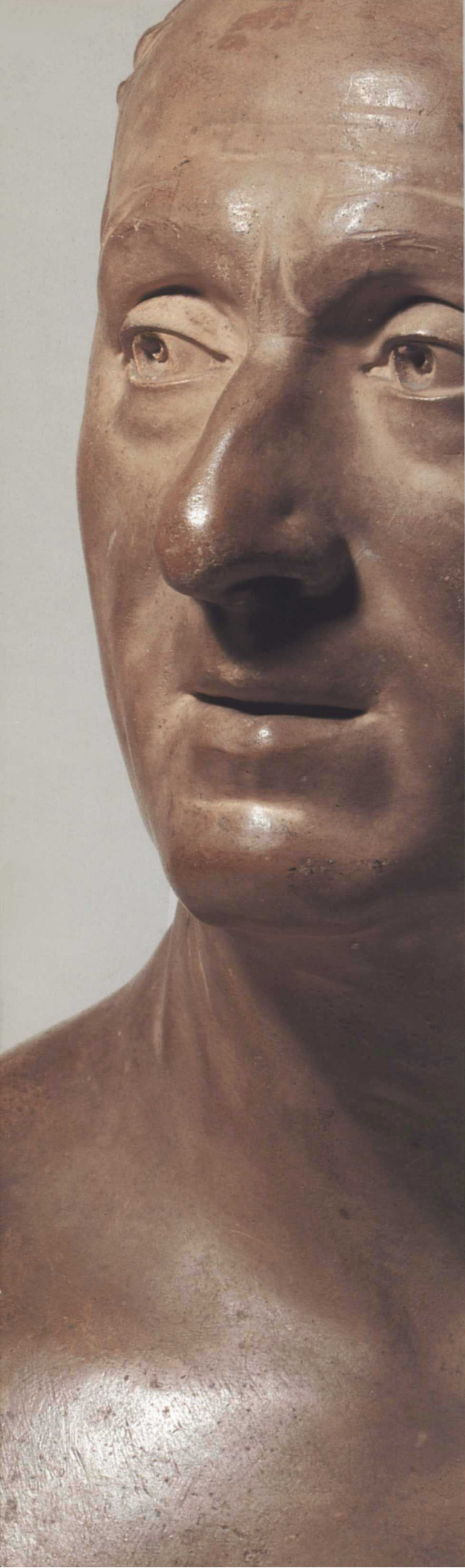
Christoph Frank

Claude Vandalle

Dean Walker

Monique Barbier

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## Directors' Foreword

Jean-Antoine Houdon (1741–1828) is generally considered to have been the greatest sculptor in Europe during the period of the Enlightenment. He is celebrated for his startlingly lifelike portraits of the most important figures of the day, including members of the courts of France, Germany, Sweden, and Russia as well as artists, aristocrats, scientists, political and military heroes, and leaders of the banking world in France and Switzerland. Soon after Thomas Jefferson began serving as representative of the new American republic in Paris in 1784, he was asked to find the best artist to execute a statue of George Washington, and he strongly recommended Houdon. For this commission Houdon crossed the Atlantic in 1785 to model a likeness of Washington, enhancing a “gallery of worthies” to rival those of ancient Rome.

Despite Houdon’s reputation as the foremost sculptor of the remarkable era that encompassed the American and French Revolutions and the Directoire and Empire in France, this is the first international exhibition devoted to his art. Organized by the National Gallery of Art, the J. Paul Getty Museum, and the Réunion des musées nationaux and l’Etablissement public du musée et du domaine national du château de Versailles, the presentation includes major sculptures spanning the artist’s entire career, borrowed from collections throughout Europe and the United States.

Through the generosity of many lenders, the exhibition ranges from Houdon’s earliest works—such as his life-size anatomical study of the human figure, the *Ecorché*, created when he was a twenty-five-year-old student at the Académie de France in Rome; and the *Morpheus*, his “reception piece” for membership in the prestigious Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture in Paris—to late works such as his beautiful portraits of Napoleon and Josephine and his imposing marble statue of Voltaire. It represents the height of his popularity with his portrait busts of Diderot, Voltaire, Rousseau, and Washington as well as d’Alembert, Lafayette, Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, and John Paul Jones. And it includes a number of his famous

mythological and allegorical statues, such as *La Frileuse* and *Diana the Huntress*. Several exciting discoveries distinguish this exhibition, among them an original plaster bust of the actress Sophie Arnould, in pristine condition, which had lain unidentified in storage for nearly a century and a half.

We would like to thank Anne L. Poulet, guest curator, for her prodigious efforts in organizing this important exhibition. She also enjoyed a fruitful collaboration on the catalogue with a group of accomplished scholars, who introduce a body of new information about the sculptor and an international perspective on the significance of his work. Scott Schaefer, curator of European painting and acting curator of European sculpture at the Getty, is responsible for the installation in Los Angeles, and Claude Vandalle, curator of sculpture at the Musée national du château de Versailles, for the presentation in France.

*Jean-Antoine Houdon: Sculptor of the Enlightenment* is made possible at the National Gallery of Art by a generous grant from the Catherine B. Reynolds Foundation. We are also very grateful for the indemnity support provided by the Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities.

Earl A. Powell III

*Director*

*National Gallery of Art*

*Washington*

Deborah Gribbon

*Director*

*The J. Paul Getty Museum*

*Los Angeles*

Pierre Arizzoli-Clémentel

*Directeur Générale*

*Musée et domaine national*

*du château de Versailles*

## Lenders to the Exhibition

Abbaye royale de Châalis—Institut de France  
Académie de France à Rome  
Akademie der Wissenschaften, Akademiearchiv, Berlin  
The Boston Athenaeum  
The Detroit Institute of Arts  
Ecole nationale supérieure des beaux-arts, Paris  
The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco  
The Frick Collection, New York  
The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens, San Marino  
Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Ithaca  
Lindenau-Museum Altenburg  
Los Angeles County Museum of Art  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York  
Musée Cognacq-Jay, Paris  
Musée d'art et d'histoire de Langres  
Musée d'art et d'histoire, Neuchâtel  
Musée d'art et d'histoire de la Ville de Genève  
Musée de la Comédie-Française, Paris  
Musée de l'air et de l'espace, Le Bourget-Paris  
Musée des arts décoratifs, Paris  
Musée des Beaux-Arts, Angers  
Musée des Beaux-Arts, Dijon  
Musée des Beaux-Arts, Orléans  
Musée d'histoire de la médecine, Paris  
Musée du Louvre, Paris  
Musée Fabre, Montpellier  
Musée municipal Ancienne Abbaye, Saint-Léger, Soissons  
Musée national de céramique, Sèvres  
Musée national des châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon  
Musée Thomas Henry, Cherbourg-Octeville  
Museu Calouste Gulbenkian, Lisbon  
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston  
National Gallery of Art, Washington  
Nationalmuseum, Stockholm  
Le Panthéon, Paris  
Philadelphia Museum of Art  
Mr. and Mrs. Stewart Resnick, Los Angeles  
Schlossmuseum Gotha  
Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz  
State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg  
Stiftung Preußische Schlösser und Gärten Berlin-Brandenburg, Potsdam  
Stiftung Weimarer Klassik Goethe-Nationalmuseum  
United States Naval Academy Museum, Annapolis  
Villa Borghese, Rome  
Worcester Art Museum  
Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven



## Preface and Acknowledgments

Jean-Antoine Houdon's career coincided with the flowering of the Enlightenment in Europe, an age when reason was seen as the avenue to the truth and scholars enthusiastically studied and wrote about the world around them. There was an explosion of interest in geology, botany, zoology, physics, aeronautics, and archeology, and their empirical study produced dramatic discoveries and inventions. Major publications were undertaken to codify the vast knowledge that was accumulated, the most famous being the *Encyclopédie* edited by Denis Diderot and Jean Le Rond d'Alembert. Philosophers, including Voltaire and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, explored issues of religion, morality, and education. Their thinking, joined by economic forces for change, led to greater focus on the individual and to enormous social, political, and judicial reforms brought about at the time of the French Revolution. Houdon, in his art, was drawn into and influenced by many of these Enlightenment ideas, including his emphasis on the scientific study of anatomy, his use of life and death masks to execute portraits, his preference for natural forms over the artificiality of contemporary French fashion. In turn, the leaders of the Enlightenment saw in Houdon's sculpture the concrete expression of their ideals and of themselves.

Educated in Paris and in Rome during the 1760s, Houdon manifested early on his ambition, independence, and innate artistic ability. Absorbing the lessons of the Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture in Paris, where he was awarded the Prix de Rome in 1761, he also studied intensively, and sometimes copied, antique classical sculptures. Unlike most of his fellow students at the Académie de France in Rome, Houdon took courses with a surgeon to learn human anatomy through the dissection of corpses and modeling of bone and muscle systems of the body, resulting in his famous figure of a flayed man, known as the *Ecorché*, in 1766. When he returned to Paris in late 1768, he had a fully formed philosophy: he believed that the role of the artist was to represent what he saw, accurately but selectively, ennobling the subject by choosing what was most beautiful or

most telling in the model; to him, what was most beautiful was most natural.

Diderot and Frédéric-Melchior Grimm were among those Enlightenment figures who most admired Houdon. Grimm was responsible for introducing Houdon to Duke Ernst II of the German court at Saxe-Gotha, an early and avid collector of the sculptor's work. Grimm and Diderot also promoted Houdon's work to Catherine II of Russia throughout the 1770s and early 1780s, acting as her agents in purchasing, among other works, portraits of Voltaire and the comte de Buffon. At the Salon of 1771 Houdon exhibited a portrait bust of Diderot, an extraordinary likeness that also embodied the subject's fiery wit and intelligence. This led to many other portraits of the great men and women of the Enlightenment, some commissioned by the sitters or sponsoring organizations, others executed at the sculptor's initiative. In his studio he displayed many of these works, and it became a regular stop for visiting statesmen as well as for French collectors and amateurs.

By the time Louis XVI ascended to the throne in 1774, Houdon had already established an international reputation. The duc d'Angiviller, who was director of the Bâtiments du Roi, disliked Houdon, perhaps because of his independence, and gave him only one official commission for the crown, that for the marble statue of the maréchal de Tourville in the series of "Great Men of France." Nonetheless, he found patrons in courts all over Europe, not only in Germany and Russia but also in Poland and Sweden, as well as prominent individuals in France, Switzerland, and the fledgling United States.

Freemasonry was of essential importance for Houdon's Enlightenment contacts. In 1778 he was invited to join the Loge des Neuf Soeurs, a masonic lodge founded in Paris in 1776 whose membership comprised philosophers, scientists, artists, clerics, and musicians. General sympathy was felt for the American war of independence and the ideals of liberty and equality that it represented. Among Houdon's commissions directly associated with the Loge des Neuf Soeurs were busts of Benjamin Franklin,

then American minister to France and elected a member of the lodge the same year as Houdon; Voltaire, who joined the lodge just before his death in May 1778; and the American naval hero John Paul Jones, all represented in this exhibition.

Thomas Jefferson, who succeeded Franklin as minister to France, regarded Houdon as a friend and greatly admired his work. He was responsible for Houdon's receiving the commissions to do a statue of George Washington and a bust of the marquis de Lafayette. He also sat for a portrait by Houdon before he left Paris in 1789 and acquired a number of other busts by the artist that he installed in his home, Monticello. Houdon's connection with the great men of America continued into the early years of the nineteenth century, with portraits of the inventor Robert Fulton and his close friend the diplomat and poet Joel Barlow in 1804.

In the period leading up to the French Revolution, Houdon executed some of his most powerful portraits, such as those of Jacques Necker and Jean-Sylvain Bailly. In pose and expression these busts reflect the spirit and strong emotion of the leaders of this time. In the aftermath of the Revolution, he continued to work with the same skill and vigor but had fewer patrons. Under Napoleon he adapted his style to suit the taste of the Empire and did receive a number of official commissions, including those for portraits of Napoleon and Josephine, works that reveal an undiminished ability to create an accurate depiction not only of his sitters' physical appearance but of their inner life. Houdon's studio remained a focus of pilgrimage for artists and collectors alike, as is recorded in two masterful paintings by Boilly that show the sculptor at work there, surrounded by myriad sculptures and busts arranged on pedestals and shelves that line the walls. The last sculpture Houdon exhibited at the Salon was the marble statue of Voltaire, shown in 1812 when the sculptor was seventy-one. Basing the face on the portrait he had done from life in 1778, he carved a standing figure of the aged philosopher, draped in a simple robe, wearing a knotted scarf at his neck and holding in his hands a sheaf of paper and a quill pen, the tools

of his profession. A comparison with Boilly's portrait of Houdon of a few years earlier shows the sculptor standing before his work, wearing a similar robe or coat while modeling clay. It would seem that in his late portrait of Voltaire, one of the greatest men of the age, Houdon was also portraying himself.

+ + +

The study of the life and work of Jean-Antoine Houdon in preparation for this exhibition has been an extremely rewarding and satisfying project, owing to the full and enthusiastic support of the National Gallery of Art, the J. Paul Getty Museum, and the Musée national du château de Versailles. I would like to express my deep appreciation to the directors of all three institutions—Earl A. Powell III, Deborah Gribbon, and Pierre Arizzoli-Clémentel—for their commitment to the exhibition. It was Alan Shestack, deputy director of the National Gallery of Art, who invited me to serve as guest curator of the exhibition. I am grateful to him for his appreciation of Houdon's work and for his unwavering support.

The goal of this exhibition and catalogue has been to show the full range of Houdon's artistic activity and to explore the circumstances that led to his recognition on an international scale. Through the generosity of many lenders, a significant number of the sculptor's finest works have been assembled for the exhibition. And through the diligent and informed research of the distinguished contributors to the catalogue, a deeper understanding of the sculptor and his patrons has been achieved.

It has been a great pleasure to work with Guilhem Scherf, who has brought his extensive knowledge of French eighteenth-century sculpture as well as his special interest in Houdon to bear not only on his essay, in which he places the sculptor in the context of the period, and on his individual entries in the catalogue, but on the preparations for the entire exhibition. His collaboration has been invaluable to its success. I especially want to thank Ulrike D. Mathies, who has worked with me as research assistant on the exhibition for four years and has written several texts for the catalogue. Her dedication, enthusiasm, and friendship

have made the project a pleasure, and the high quality of her work greatly enriches the publication. Responsible for research in German museums and archives, she has made several important discoveries, shedding new light on this aspect of Houdon's career. I am also deeply grateful to Christoph Frank for sharing his broad knowledge of Houdon's relationship with Grimm and Diderot and the writers of the Enlightenment as well as the sculptor's association with the Russian court and Russian patrons in his essay and catalogue entries. Claude Vandalle has not only written entries for the catalogue on important sculptures by Houdon in several French collections but has also been helpful with the negotiation of loans and the planning of the exhibition at Versailles. Dean Walker graciously agreed to lend the marble bust of Benjamin Franklin from the Philadelphia Museum of Art's collection to the exhibition as well as to write the entry for the catalogue.

Monique Barbier deserves special thanks for doing extensive archival research in France with admirable speed, thoroughness, and accuracy, and for compiling the chronology for the catalogue, which draws on a number of unpublished documents. I wish to thank Pascaline Allez for her assistance with organization and research in the early stages of the exhibition. I am grateful to my valued colleagues Jeffrey Munger and Ellenor Alcorn for having encouraged me to undertake the Houdon exhibition, and to John Walsh for his enduring interest, kindness, and belief in the project. I would also like to express my appreciation to the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, for its support of the initial phase of my work on Houdon and for awarding me two generous Lamb/Mellon research travel grants.

The organization of the exhibition has been facilitated throughout by the genial collaboration and expertise of D. Dodge Thompson and Ann B. Robertson, assisted by Abbie Sprague, Tamara Wilson, and Elizabeth Middelkoop in the department of exhibitions at the National Gallery of Art. Susan Arensberg and Carroll Moore have shown great perspicacity in their interpretation of Houdon's work in educational texts and in film. I wish

to thank editor in chief Judy Metro, senior editor Karen Sagstetter, and production manager Chris Vogel for their careful supervision of the catalogue's progress as well as Mariah Shay, Sara Sanders-Buell, and Ira Bartfield for their skillful handling and organization of photography for the catalogue. It has been a particular pleasure to work with Tam Curry Bryfogle, editor, whose sensitive, intelligent approach to the material and unfailing attention to detail while maintaining a vision of the whole book enhanced the contributions of each author. Antonio Alcalá and his colleagues at Studio A are responsible for the beautiful design of the catalogue.

Mark Leithauser's enthusiasm for and understanding of Houdon's sculpture are reflected in the handsome installation he designed for the exhibition in Washington, working with a talented team that includes William Bowser and Donna Kirk, while Gordon Anson provided the evocative lighting. Registrar Michelle Fondas assumed the complex task of arranging for the transportation of the works of art throughout the exhibition's tour. Merv Richard, deputy chief of conservation, and sculpture conservators Shelley Sturman, Bethann Heinbaugh, and Judy Ozone have overseen the safe packing and display of the works while also lending their expertise to the care of works that need special handling.

On behalf of all contributors to the catalogue, I would like to thank the following institutions who made their research collections and resources available: Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin; Museum of Fine Arts Library, Boston; Bibliothèque Paul Marmottan, Boulogne-Billancourt; Harvard University Libraries, Cambridge: Fine Arts Library, Houghton Library, and Widener Library; Archives départementales de la Côte d'Or, Dijon; Archives municipales, Dijon; Musée des Beaux-Arts, Dijon; Thüringisches Staatsarchiv, Gotha; Forschungsbibliothek, Gotha; Library of the Courtauld Institute, London; Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles; Archives départementales des Landes, Mont-de-Marsan; Frick Art Reference Library, New York; Archives nationales de France, Paris; Bibliothèque d'art et

d'archéologie, Jacques Doucet, Paris; Bibliothèque du Grand Orient de France, Paris; Bibliothèque historique de la Ville de Paris; Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris; Musée de la Comédie-Française, Paris; Ecole nationale supérieure des beaux-arts, Paris; Musée du Louvre, Paris; Bibliothèque et archives, Département des arts décoratifs, Département des sculptures; Landeshauptarchiv Schwerin; Bibliothèque municipale, Versailles; Musée Lam-binet, Versailles; Thüringisches Hauptstaatsarchiv, Weimar; Goethe- und Schiller-Archiv, Weimar. In addition, I wish to thank the board and members of the French Heritage Society for their moral and material support of the catalogue's publication.

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ANNE L. POULET

## Note to the Reader

### Dimensions

Measurements of the sculptures are given in centimeters, specifying height (H.)—with and without the base—width (W.), and depth (D.), when known.

### Translations

Quotations from primary, unpublished sources are given in the original language under Provenance and Related Works; English translations of similar sources are provided in the texts, with the original French or German quotations cited in endnotes. If the material has been previously published, English translations are provided by the authors and approved by Anne L. Poulet.

Texts originally written in French by Guilhem Scherf and Claude Vandalle were translated by Jane Marie Todd and reviewed by the authors and by Anne L. Poulet.

### Special terms

*agr  *—a student at the Acad  mie royale de peinture et de sculpture in Paris who has been admitted as a candidate for membership pending the approval of his reception piece.

*   l'antique*—a portrait bust in which the sitter is shown without a wig, nude or wearing an antique garment such as a toga.

*   la fran  aise*—a portrait bust in which the sitter wears contemporary French dress.

*cachet de l'atelier*—a round red wax stamp inscribed "ACADEM. / ROYALE / DE PEINTURE / ET SCULPT. / HOUDON / SC."

that Houdon applied to many of his plaster and some of his terracotta sculptures between 1776 and 1793, and perhaps later.

*cold stamp*—a stamp pounded into the surface of a bronze after the sculpture has been cast.

*cold work*—work done with a chisel, punch, or file on the surface of a bronze after it has been cast.

*death mask*—a positive mask in plaster made from an impression taken, usually in plaster, from the face of a person who has died.

*life mask*—a positive mask in plaster made from an impression taken, usually in plaster, from the face of a living person, except for the area of the eyes.

*Loge des Neuf Soeurs*—a lodge of freemasons, named for the nine muses, formed in Paris in 1776. Its membership consisted of prominent scientists, musicians, artists, clergymen, and philosophers.

*sculpteur (or peintre) du Roi*—sculptor or painter who is a member of the Acad  mie royale de peinture et de sculpture, Paris.

*t  te d'expression*—a study made by a sculptor, painter, or draftsman of a head expressing emotions such as anger, sadness, envy, or piety.

*t  te nue*—a head of a man or woman that is represented naturally, without a wig, hat, or other covering.

### Bibliographic references

Full references are given in a general bibliography at the back of the book, with short citations used in the texts and notes (including authors' surnames and dates of publication), unless a source is cited in only one essay or catalogue entry, in which case the reference is given in full the first time it appears, with short forms used for subsequent mentions. Exhibition catalogues are treated similarly (short citations include cities and dates of the exhibitions' first showing). Archival references are abbreviated throughout, and a list of abbreviations is provided below.

### List of Abbreviations

#### Journals

AAF—*Archives de l'art fran  ais*

BSHAF—*Bulletin de la Soci  t   de l'histoire de l'art fran  ais*

GBA—*Gazette des beaux-arts*

NAAF—*Nouvelles archives de l'art fran  ais*

RAAM—*Revue de l'art ancien et moderne*

SIRIO—*Sbornik imperatorskogo Russkogo istoricheskogo obshchestva*

*Institutions and Archival Sources*

ADH — Archives départementales de l'Herault, Montpellier  
AMAH — Archives of the Musée d'art et d'histoire, Geneva  
AMMF — Archives of the Musée des monuments français, Paris  
AMN — Archives des musées nationaux, Palais du Louvre  
AN — Archives nationales, Paris  
AN, Min. Cent. — Archives nationales, Paris, Minutier Central  
BHVDP — Bibliothèque historique de la Ville de Paris  
BMV — Bibliothèque municipale, Versailles, Don Frick  
BN — Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris  
BNEst — Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, cabinet des estampes  
DA — Duveen Archives, JPGM  
Deloynes — Collection of manuscripts and printed pamphlets, begun by Mariette, continued by Cochin, and completed by Deloynes (BNEst)  
FLB — Forschungs- und Landesbibliothek, Gotha  
GNM — Goethe-Nationalmuseum, Weimar  
GSA — Goethe- und Schiller-Archiv, Weimar  
GStAPK — Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin  
HAAB — Herzogin Anna Amalia Bibliothek, Weimar  
HStA — Thüringisches Hauptstaatsarchiv Weimar, Hausarchiv  
JPGM — J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles  
LACMA — Los Angeles County Museum of Art  
MFA — Museum of Fine Arts, Boston  
NAD — National Academy of Design, New York  
NGA — National Gallery of Art, Washington  
NStUB — Niedersächsische Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Göttingen  
PML — Pierpont Morgan Library, New York  
RGADA — Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi arkhiv drevnikh aktov, Moscow  
StAB — Staatsarchiv, Basel, Sarasinisches Familienarchiv, Privat-Archive  
ThStA — Thüringisches Staatsarchiv, Bestand Herzogliches Museum, Gotha  
WCA — Wallace Collection Archives, London



+ Essays





## HOUDON, “ABOVE ALL MODERN ARTISTS”

Guilhem Scherf

According to Jean-Antoine Houdon, “one of the most beautiful attributes of the difficult art of statuary is that it preserves forms in all their truth and renders almost imperishable the images of men who have brought their nation glory or happiness. That idea has followed me constantly and encouraged me in my long labors.”<sup>1</sup> For a *sculpteur du Roi* in the eighteenth century, the ultimate goal was to create an equestrian monument. That meant rising to the level of Charles-Antoine Coysevox, Martin Desjardins, François Girardon, Jean-Baptiste II Lemoyne, Edme Bouchardon, or Etienne-Maurice Falconet. For a long time Houdon believed he would create such a monument to the glory of George Washington, and he went to America in 1785 in the hope of convincing Congress.<sup>2</sup>

The economic situation in France in the two decades preceding the Revolution (1769–1789) hardly allowed for the undertaking of expensive sculptural programs, whether their costs were to be assumed by the crown or by the provinces. The only substantive project set in motion was a monument in honor of Louis XVI, to be placed in Brest facing the ocean. And in 1785 both Houdon and Augustin Pajou vied for that commission—the former supported by the bishop of Saint-Brieuc, the latter by the comte d’Angiviller. In June of that year the Estates of Brittany prudently decided to organize a formal competition, with models sent to them. Houdon submitted a proposal in 1786 before the project was definitively abandoned.<sup>3</sup> He had just triumphed over his other rival, Jean-Jacques Caffieri, winning a commission from the Commonwealth of Virginia to create a statue of Washington: his friendship with Thomas Jefferson had prevailed over earlier ties between Caffieri and Benjamin Franklin.<sup>4</sup>

If Houdon was intensely driven to obtain commissions for monuments in the mid-1780s and during the Revolution, it was not solely for his personal prestige or financial gain: he wanted to avenge himself before his colleagues in the Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture and, above all, to compensate for the ostracism of the director of the Bâtiments du Roi, the

powerful comte d'Angiviller, who was placed in charge of royal commissions when Louis XVI ascended to the throne in 1774. D'Angiviller, a personal friend of the sovereign,<sup>5</sup> had begun to commission statues of the prominent men of France from the *sculpteurs du Roi* in 1775.<sup>6</sup> These commissions were prestigious for at least three reasons: first, they were intended ultimately for the adornment of the Grande Galerie of the Louvre; second, they were to be first exhibited at the entrance to the Salon in the courtyard of the Louvre, where they would be highly visible and extensively discussed by the critics; and finally, the remuneration for them was high: 10,000 livres, with the marble provided.

As an official member of the Académie royale since 1777, Houdon was entitled to receive such a commission, but he had to wait until those with more seniority were accommodated. Professors Pajou and Caffieri, assistant professors Etienne Pierre Adrien Gois and Louis-Philippe Mouchy, and long-time members Pierre-François Berruer and Félix Lecomte therefore submitted statues for the series to the Salons of 1777 and 1779. Some preferential treatment was nevertheless obvious: Pajou was invited to create two statues, those of René Descartes and Jacques Bénigne Bossuet;<sup>7</sup> and Clodion, who was not yet a full member of the academy, received the commission for Montesquieu, the model for which he exhibited at the Salon of 1779.<sup>8</sup> Notice was taken of that injustice and presumably contributed to the poor reception of his plaster:

I don't know... why M. Houdon, already a member of the Académie, whose merit is founded on brilliant successes, was not preferred to the artist responsible for the statue of Montesquieu, M. Clodion, who is only an *agréé*, who is unknown, and who has made his debut with a work that is universally condemned. I questioned that modest man, whose only response was silence. I was confirmed in my opinion that the funds the king intended for the advancement of the arts would be diverted to reward groveling subjects who carried favor from the *premier peintre* and director. In any case, M. Houdon is vindicated in the surprise all art lovers feel in not seeing him employed.<sup>9</sup>

In 1777 and 1779 Houdon's submissions to the Salon had been numerous and spectacular, though for the most part limited to busts: "M. Houdon is hard-working and loves his art, two major sources of success; condemned for several years to do only portraits, his genius may be sadly fettered and may prevent us

from seeing all his merit. It would be desirable to provide the means of encouragement to persons who prove capable. One's soul shrivels when one does only small things; M. Houdon is very young and deserves someone to come to his aid."<sup>10</sup> D'Angiviller understood immediately and commissioned Houdon to create the *Maréchal de Tourville* (see cat. 52) a few weeks after the Salon of 1779 closed; at the same time, Pajou was asked to contribute his third "Great Man," a statue of Blaise Pascal.

This was not the first time Houdon had endured official disfavor. The catalogue for the Salon of 1775 lists his plaster model for *Woman Stepping out of Her Bath* (lost), which was probably not shown, considering the critics never mentioned it. A note from d'Angiviller to Jean-Baptiste Pierre, director of the Académie royale and *premier peintre du Roi*, on 4 July 1775, set the censorious tone he wished to see applied by members of the committee responsible for selecting the works for the Salon: "However persuaded I may be of the attention members of the committee will pay to seeing that, in [the Salon of 1775], no work slips through that may offend morals, owing to indecent nudity, I feel obliged to recommend that they carefully attend to observing that precept... and, since officers of the academy are not subject to committee review, I exhort them to be all the more severe in the judgment of their own works, in terms of the decency they ought to have in order to be exhibited before the public."<sup>11</sup> In 1779 d'Angiviller refused to have Houdon's *Bather* executed in marble for the king.<sup>12</sup> In addition, all Houdon's nude female statues were turned down for the Salon during the reign of Louis XVI,<sup>13</sup> and none was acquired by the royal administration. The artist did not display his plaster of *Diana the Huntress* (see cat. 35) or his standing *Naiad* (lost) at the Salon of 1777, nor did he display his marble of *La Frileuse* (cat. 38) at the Salon of 1783 or even a reduction of it in 1785: "Tomorrow we will examine the pieces to be admitted to the Salon. Two half-size figures by M. Houdon were brought in: one, which is draped, is not wonderful; the other might not pass because of its kind of nudity. A completely nude figure is not as indecent as those that are draped with a false modesty."<sup>14</sup> Their absence disappointed Houdon's admirers: "That rare talent makes us sorry not to see the large figures announced in the catalogue for the Louvre exhibition."<sup>15</sup> But the moral order set in place under Louis XVI, coinciding with the imprisonment of notorious libertines (such as the comte de Mirabeau and marquis de Sade),<sup>16</sup> would not stop Houdon: his marble *Diana*, dating from 1780, has very visible genitalia. No one before him had dared to depict a full-scale female nude (without

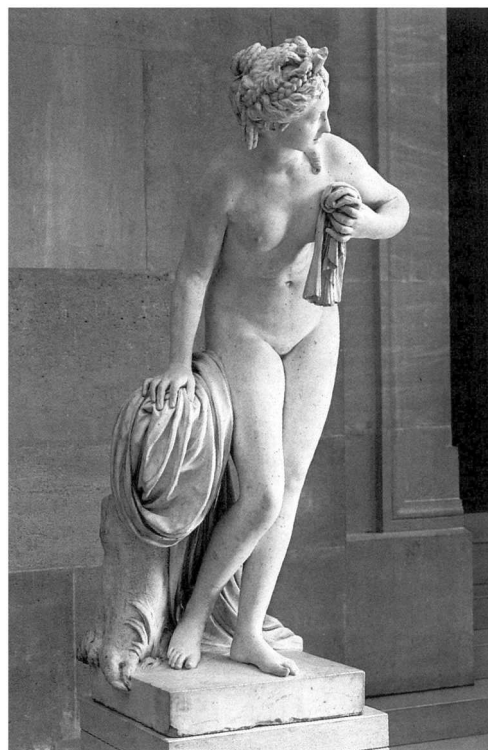
drapery) so realistically.<sup>17</sup> Christophe-Gabriel Allegrain's *Diana* (fig. 1), on view in the sculptor's studio on the outskirts of the Salon of 1777 and celebrated as "the masterpiece of modern sculpture,"<sup>18</sup> appears sexless by comparison, as does Pajou's *Psyche*, the plaster for which was withdrawn from the Salon of 1785 after a complaint from the parish priest of Saint-Germain l'Auxerrois.<sup>19</sup>

Houdon circumvented the Salon and systematically showed his rejected works, or those subject to rejection, in his studio at the Bibliothèque du Roi, prompting some to criticize: "Such innovations must have been frowned on by the Académie royale; and they display a certain spirit of charlatanism."<sup>20</sup> That last word is a strong one, but Houdon's most rancorous enemy, his eternally jealous colleague Caffieri, had used it first:

What confirms his great reputation, or rather his charlatanry, with the public is that he shows his work gratis all year long at the Bibliothèque du Roi. Nevertheless, people tip the Swiss guard, who is assigned by M. Houdon to detail at length the beauties of every figure and portrait, of which there are countless, since the artist produces a great deal of merchandise. The guard takes great care in escorting the crowd, and, after eyeing the free gift, in saying "Ladies and Gentlemen, send us your relations, your friends, your acquaintances, since M. Houdon is the most skillful sculptor in Paris."<sup>21</sup>

This act of denunciation had repercussions at the Bâtiments du Roi: Montucla, d'Angiviller's chief clerk, added a note to the letter, "This is too true in the opinion of the officials," suggesting that the openness of Houdon's studio was not appreciated in high places. The purpose of that openness in fact was not only to show works that could not be exhibited at the Salon (statuary that was censored or too heavy to be transported upstairs): everyone saw that it also served purely commercial aims.<sup>22</sup> This was a sensitive subject for d'Angiviller, who was then suppressing the Académie de Saint-Luc in an attempt to restore the authority of the Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture; he would undoubtedly not be happy about the openly commercial aims of one of the latter's members. This was obviously the result Caffieri desired.

Of course, the problems between Houdon and the king's administration in no way obscure the originality of the sculptor's art. Marginalized by d'Angiviller, he nevertheless found patrons to support his genius, beginning with the *procureur général* of



1. Christophe-Gabriel Allegrain, *Diana*, 1777, marble, Musée du Louvre, Paris.

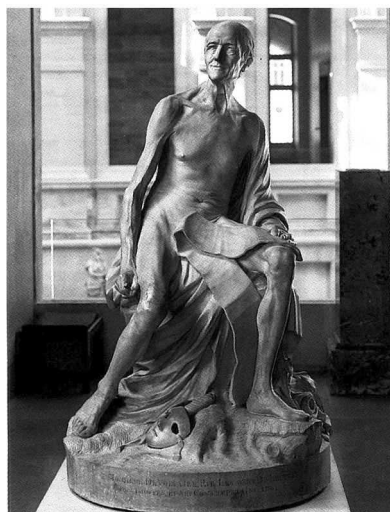
the Carthusian order in Rome, the duke of Saxe-Gotha, the comte d'Artois, the financiers Simon-Charles Boutin and Anne-Charles Modenx de Saint-Wast, the banker Jean Girardot de Marigny, the duc d'Orléans, Voltaire's niece Mme Denis, Catherine II of Russia, Thomas Jefferson and the Commonwealth of Virginia. Once a commission was obtained, the artist was driven to find new ways to treat a model or a concept. His *Saint Bruno* (cat. 4) referred to the dynamic statue of the saint by Michel-Ange Slodtz at Saint Peter's basilica but proposed an introverted stance.<sup>23</sup> His *Summer* (cat. 40) as well as *Ceres* for the château de Maisons created an original iconography, distinct from traditional interpretations. His *Diana* (cat. 35) reinvented the theme, linking a face devoid of passion to a sexual femininity. His *Bather*, accompanied by a black servant woman (cat. 42), was unprecedented, and it introduced that subject to the history of sculpture in the form of a *tableau-vivant*. Houdon's *Seated Voltaire* (see Frank essay, fig. 2) was a soothing response to those whom Jean-Baptiste Pigalle's *Nude Voltaire* (fig. 2) had angered.<sup>24</sup> Houdon deified "the old man of Ferney" by combining allusions to antiquity (the robe like a toga and the traditional philosophers' headband) with a realistic likeness of the face, illuminated

and humanized by the famous smile. With Diderot's support, Pigalle had adopted an intellectual and aesthetically radical vision, combining an emaciated, dying body with a head full of life. That type of conflict was alien to Houdon, who practiced an art of synthesis above all. One can see this also in his figure of *George Washington* (see cat. 47, fig. 3). The hero was loath to see a statue done of him in the antique style, so the sculptor depicted him in his general's uniform, his sword hung from a Roman fasces (symbolizing the thirteen federated states), with a plow at his feet alluding to Cincinnatus, prematurely returned to civilian life. That deft mixture of genres — contemporary clothing and classical symbols — also distinguishes Houdon's *Washington* from the "Great Men" in the comte d'Angiviller's series: its forceful sobriety and intellectual efficacy in some ways eclipse the *Tourville*, impeccably accurate historically in its seventeenth-century costume, but overly complicated.

+ PORTRAIT BUSTS +

Diderot once said, "The portrait is so difficult that Pigal told me he had never done one without being tempted to give it up. In fact, it is especially on the face that life, character, and physiognomy reside."<sup>25</sup> The portrait bust established Houdon's reputation. His unparalleled gallery of subjects has often been enumerated: portraits of the royal family and the court, ministers, aristocrats, magistrates, doctors, astronomers, writers, wives of bankers, and heroes of the day graced various social circles. Of these, notable examples include the influential Loge des Neuf Soeurs, Mme Necker's salon, which included Enlightenment thinkers and Swiss financiers, and the Lycée des arts.

2. Jean-Baptiste Pigalle,  
Nude Voltaire, 1776,  
marble, Musée du  
Louvre, Paris.



Although Houdon is rarely cited in memoirs of the time, unlike Lemoyne and even Pajou, who were more worldly, he was nevertheless present everywhere. His tour de force was to present his busts at a time when critics were weary of the proliferation of portraits at the Salon: "a host of busts, portraits of nameless men... What do the images of these financiers... these chief clerks or assistant clerks, these doleful marquises, these anonymous countesses, these no-account judges' wives matter to us? ... May we see the bust of an illustrious warrior or a man of genius alongside that of a pen-pusher?"<sup>26</sup> This comment, remarkably, echoes one made at the Salon thirty years earlier, referring ironically to the "mob of obscure men with no name, no talent, no reputation, no physiognomy even; all these creatures whose only merit is to be alive."<sup>27</sup> Houdon's portraits of the celebrities of his day, which were regularly discussed by the exhibition critics, stood out from the crowd of unknowns, thus flattering their sitters. The praise addressed to the busts reflected back on the subjects: "M. Houdon lacks only the means to make his portraits speak, since, as for likeness, he lacks nothing"; "It seems that the only thing missing from M. Houdon's portraits in order for them to be the people themselves is the color of the pupils and skin, parts that sculpture cannot render."<sup>28</sup>

The essential quality of the portraitist is expressed succinctly: "I believed I would be allowed to take pride in these works, whose sole merit is likeness."<sup>29</sup> To come as close as possible to the anatomical truth of his models,<sup>30</sup> Houdon employed a rigorous system of measurements using calipers: his exactitude was demonstrated when the exhumed skull of John Paul Jones was compared with the head sculpted by Houdon and the dimensions were identical (see cat. 44); for his planned equestrian statue of Washington, he boasted of having taken "the necessary measurements from the general himself."<sup>31</sup> He even took impressions from the faces of the living (Lafayette, Dumouriez, Boissy d'Anglas) and of the dead (Rousseau, Mirabeau, Méjanes, Collin d'Harleville).<sup>32</sup> The use of castings from nature had been known since antiquity,<sup>33</sup> but the practice was not widespread among portraitists in the eighteenth century, even Coysevox and Pigalle, two artists with a realist sensibility. In the absence of the sitter, Houdon wanted, whenever possible, to have at least a flesh-and-blood person in front of him.<sup>34</sup> "For more than an hour," d'Angiviller himself stood in for the minister of finance Jacques Turgot, to whom he bore a publicly notorious resemblance;<sup>35</sup> and Gouverneur Morris posed in Paris for the statue of Washington, noting that "the humble role of artist's model is rather tiring."<sup>36</sup>



3. Jean-Jacques Caffieri, Claude-Adrien Helvétius, 1772, marble, Musée du Louvre, Paris.

Houdon's naturalism was given its utmost expression in the attention he paid to his subjects' eyes, instilling in them a presence that was unanimously hailed: "M. Houdon may be the first sculptor who knew how to do eyes."<sup>37</sup> His technique first appeared on the *Diderot* at the Salon of 1771 (cat. 19), shortly after his return from Rome, where he had been able to study Bernini's busts. Carving the iris into the shape of a bowl, he evoked the pupil by hollowing out a small depression in the bottom, and he left a section of material in relief along the edge of the iris to allow for the play of light and shadow and to simulate the liveliness of the gaze. This formula, which he applied systematically thereafter, brought new life to the execution of the sculpted portrait.

At the Académie royale the comte de Caylus had been an advocate of using the uncarved white eyes seen on early Roman busts: "The sculptor must not mark the pupils, because he must not color. . . . In addition, there is more art and more advantage to letting the beholder imagine the action of the eyes."<sup>38</sup> But that radical opinion was not shared by all: "The most obstinate advocates of antiquity could not deny that the art with which the moderns give expression and life to the eyes by carving the

pupil adds a great deal of value to their heads."<sup>39</sup> The way Lemoyne and his students rendered the eyes differed from Houdon's technique.<sup>40</sup> The pupil of the eye in Caffieri's *Claude-Adrien Helvétius* (fig. 3) is hollowed but not deeply, and the contour of the iris is just incised. The same handling is evident in Pajou's *Comte de Buffon* "à la française" of 1773 and in his *Nathalie de Laborde* of 1789.<sup>41</sup> Pajou is the artist who hollows the pupil the least, probably to differentiate himself from Houdon.

Houdon also distinguished himself from his colleagues in the way he treated hair—perceived in its totality, sculpted in masses—and sometimes in his adeptness at depicting the sitter with parted lips. He shows the subject's teeth in the *Sophie Arnould* and in the portrait of his wife (cats. 8–9 and 17)<sup>42</sup> and represents the mouth slightly open in busts of Diderot, Miromesnil, Franklin (cats. 19, 30, 43), and *Mme Victoire*, subtly animating the surface of the face and using the shadow of the mouth to balance those formed by the hollows of the eyes.

Houdon explored a variety of formulas for presenting the head and torso. For portraits in the classical style he showed sitters with short hair and employed a truncation that eliminated the shoulders (see his busts of Diderot, Rousseau, and d'Alembert; cats. 19, 26, 27). For other portraits he depicted his subjects in contemporary dress or in uniform and included most of the torso (such as the duchesse de Mecklenburg or Miromesnil; see cat. 30). The head could be turned to the side or facing the viewer; there was no rule, and in this, he shared the approach of other portraitists. For large-scale compositions that did not allow a rounded truncation at the shoulders, he confronted the problem of how to represent the arms. Like his fellow sculptors, he dissimulated the limbs in flowing drapery (see the busts of Mme Girardot de Vermenoux, Louis XVI, and Mme Adélaïde; cats. 31, 50, and 51). But in his portrait of Mirabeau (fig. 4), he was bold enough to evoke an arm in motion, pointing forward; this extraordinarily powerful bust flings a magnificent stump toward the viewer. No one before Houdon had created such an audacious composition in marble. In any case, the critics at the Salon of 1791 did not let him get away with it: "It is beautiful, but it is troubling that the arms are so disagreeably cut off"; "sculptors should avoid cutting off the arm at the elbow—such a revolting image."<sup>43</sup> Now one sees the amputation of the arm more positively, as a sign of the orator's efficacious brutality.<sup>44</sup>

Houdon's genius lay in his capacity to show the individual as a whole, beyond the mimetic representation of the features, even at the risk of sometimes disappointing a model. Princess



4. Houdon, Honoré Gabriel Riqueti, Comte de Mirabeau, 1791, marble, Private Collection.

Dashkova posed for her portrait in 1780 and remarked: “When the bust was finished, I could not help but notice that the artist had too much taste to capture a resemblance; instead of the simple Ninette I was, he draped me like a smart French duchess with a lace headdress and my neck uncovered.”<sup>45</sup> Houdon’s gallery of portraits, unequalled in scope and diversity in the eighteenth century, depicts individuals with extraordinary realism, not only their characters but also their social stations. Diderot had written, “Strictly speaking, it is not individuals that must be placed onstage but conditions.”<sup>46</sup> The bust of Princess Dashkova has disappeared, thus it is not possible to have an opinion on it, but most of Houdon’s portraits clearly project a sense of their sitters’ social rank.

+ MULTIPLES +

For Houdon the creation of a portrait almost always culminated in the execution of a marble bust. In the vast majority of cases he made only one copy.<sup>47</sup> Exceptions include works that were replicated because of a flaw in the material (such as the busts of Cagliostro and Buffon; cats. 14 and 28), likenesses of certain celebrities produced in multiple versions by the studio (Diderot

and Voltaire; cats. 19–22 and 23–25)—but only in moderation, for marble was expensive—or in the case of Miromesnil (cat. 30), presumably responding to a specific request from the patron.

Different considerations arise in relation to Houdon’s exploitation of his works for commercial purposes. In such cases, he used bronze very rarely (preferring to keep this favored material in reserve) and instead cast terracotta copies or, more often, plasters. Houdon was the first modern sculptor who did not hesitate to mass produce his sculptures or to delegate production to his workshop. In this he far surpassed Caffieri, though the latter inundated academic institutions with various castings of his works. In fact, one scholar has described Houdon’s studio as a “veritable factory.”<sup>48</sup> The terms of his contracts with Sophie Arnould, John Paul Jones (cats. 8, 44), and Jacques-Antoine-Hippolyte de Guibert support this designation.<sup>49</sup> Houdon even thought of executing one hundred or two hundred plasters of Washington, “at 2 louis apiece.”<sup>50</sup> When he sent plasters of his sculptures to the Société des beaux-arts in Montpellier, he was careful to list his prices, stipulating that it was forbidden for the society to have casts made of them.<sup>51</sup> It was, in fact, an exclusive right of his studio. One ought not to conclude, however, that Houdon cast many plasters of all of his portraits: either he executed the terms of a contract or he took advantage of the fact that the features of some celebrities had, in some sense, already entered the public domain.<sup>52</sup>

On this subject, an unpublished exchange of letters sheds some light on the notions of “original” and “copyright.”<sup>53</sup> In 1785, just before his departure for America, Houdon did a portrait of the cardinal de Rohan,<sup>54</sup> and on 6 March 1788 the cardinal’s treasurer asked him to send the plaster bust to Strasbourg so that the prelate could examine it and decide whether to have it executed in marble. In the draft of his response Houdon replied that he possessed “only a single plaster of the bust of His Holy Highness Monseigneur Cardinal de Rohan, which plaster comes from a cast made from clay and then broken along with the mold.” He continued:

To accede to the request made in your letter, I would be obliged to separate myself entirely from one of my works, something I never do. In addition to those I deliver to those who honor me with their trust, I always keep an exemplar for myself. . . . The mold always belongs to the artist, unless different arrangements are made. When I had the honor three years ago of doing the

bust of His Holy Excellency, I was in an extreme rush because of my trip to America and the desire to display that bust at the Salon; to accelerate operations, I had it cast from a waste mold. A waste mold is one with only two pieces, which must be broken for the plaster to be removed; the plaster is then unique and serves as a model equivalent to the clay, which is also lost. I objected to delivering the bust only out of fear that, should it come to be broken along the way, I would have to give up any hope of executing it in marble.

Nevertheless, Houdon was ready to "pay the costs for a second mold" — that is, to recast from the original model — and provide the cardinal with several copies.<sup>55</sup> A letter dated 12 May 1788 from Lambre, "attaché" to the cardinal de Rohan, returned to the notion of who owned the mold: "It seems to me that the mold belongs to the one who employs the artist's talents, to reserve for himself the satisfaction of being able to make several plasters, even if there is a desire to have the bust executed in marble." That was a way of demanding for the patron a kind of perpetual right: the sculptor provides the master work — the bust in marble — and also the mold, leaving open the option to reproduce the object at the patron's complete discretion. This interesting exchange of letters ended there: Houdon presumably sent a plaster copy to Strasbourg (now lost or unidentified) and, with the approach of the Revolution, probably never executed a marble.

In reading these documents, one observes how closely Houdon attended to the notion of the ownership of his works. Moreover, he was the only one among his contemporaries to create a red wax seal bearing his name and title as member of the Académie royale and to place it on his sculptures for their authentication. It is difficult to determine at what date he began to use this *cachet de l'atelier*. A number of works were probably stamped at the time of the two studio sales in 1795 and 1828; for example, the terracotta of the 1771 *Diderot* (cat. 19) most likely received its *cachet de l'atelier* in the posthumous sale of 1828. But Houdon used it well before that: the plasters purchased by the duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin in 1782 bore the seal, which, by contrast, is absent from those acquired by the duke of Saxe-Gotha. A letter from the sculptor, dated 13 February 1776,<sup>56</sup> mentions, already at this date, that the *cachet de l'atelier* was placed on the small plasters of his *Ecorché* depicted with one arm raised above the head: "The fear and even certainty that the sculptors in this academy have of seeing their works

spoiled by that mob of counterfeiters, who, without any talent, occupy themselves here on a daily basis making new castings of their products, which they then sell dirt cheap... have made me put off executing this project."<sup>57</sup> He finally resolved to have a notice published announcing the sale of the statuette, specifying the existence of a "seal of the Académie [royale] and my name," and indicating that the work "may not be marketed anywhere but in the Bibliothèque [du Roi]."<sup>58</sup> It is noteworthy that Houdon was engaged in this commercial activity before he had even received full membership in the Académie royale. The above-mentioned letter from Caffieri to d'Angiviller in 1779 drew attention to the public visibility of his rival's products, which must therefore have taken on a certain magnitude by that time.

Fraudulent copies and imitations<sup>59</sup> continued to appear after Houdon's death, especially during the last third of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth. Three examples suffice to illustrate the problem. The major art collector François-Hippolyte Walferdin (1795–1880) allowed Gustave Deloye (1838–1899)<sup>60</sup> to make new casts of his terracotta bust of *Diderot* (cat. 19), which were carefully reworked with a tool and quickly became confused with old versions. In addition, around 1872 the sculptor's great-granddaughter allowed at least two busts of Mme Houdon (cat. 17) to be cast from the original sculpture. Finally, the newspaper *Le Temps* indicated on 3 July 1912 that an antiquarian named Fichet had made a cast from a bust of Michel-Jean Sedaine, executed by Deloye, and had added Houdon's signature to it.

Houdon's commercial activity was not limited to the diffusion of his plasters and terracottas. He was involved in the casting of bronzes, and in that capacity he could have played a not insignificant role in the development of sand-castings.<sup>61</sup> He also had a number of models cast by other specialists. That practice, followed by other *sculpteurs du Roi*, such as Pajou and especially Louis-Simon Boizot, is less well documented in the Houdon literature. The few objects possibly identified — a clock sold to the prince de Condé in 1770,<sup>62</sup> a writing case that Catherine II offered to Prince Orlov, executed in about 1775–1777,<sup>63</sup> and the famous *Baiser donné* (cat. 41), marketed before 1787<sup>64</sup> — indicate that such works were created over the course of the artist's entire career.

#### + HOUDON, "FIRST STATUARY IN THE WORLD" +

Houdon prevailed over his colleagues by virtue of the multiplicity of his talents, the originality of his approach to his





5. Houdon, detail of the Monument of the Comte d'Ennery, 1781, marble, Musée du Louvre, Paris.

subjects, his deftness in rendering his sitters' features and in breathing into them an inimitable touch of authenticity, his aptitude in marketing and promotion of his work, and the wide range of his social connections.<sup>65</sup> After the death of Lemoyne in 1778,<sup>66</sup> only Pajou could challenge him in statuary, and Caffieri in portrait busts.<sup>67</sup> During Louis XVI's reign, however, these sculptors did not have the same patrons: Pajou had a special relationship with the administration of the Bâtiments du Roi, and his activity as a portraitist was secondary and most often reserved for his friends; Caffieri, a more prolific creator of busts, intentionally focused on academic and institutional circles. Houdon could thus appeal to a large audience among private collectors (many of whom also patronized Clodion, the undisputed master of small terracotta sculpture).

Houdon's aristocratic clients commissioned busts of themselves, but usually without seeking to acquire other works by the artist. The duc de Brissac was an exception. When the sculptor announced he was leaving for America, there was a sense of urgency among those who wanted to sit for portraits. In a handwritten note dated 21 June 1785, the duke pressed an invitation on Houdon to come out to the country for a few days, offering him "three long posing sessions" to clinch the deal.<sup>68</sup> What is unusual, or at least little known, is that Brissac also collected sculpted portraits of his contemporaries:<sup>69</sup> he purchased a plaster of Houdon's *Prince Henry of Prussia* (see cat. 54)<sup>70</sup> as

well as one plaster and one terracotta bust of the duc de Nivernais (see Mathies essay, fig. 6). The latter two were inventoried in 1792 in the canopy room of his Paris house.<sup>71</sup> More often collectors of modern sculpture were found among the financiers. Art lovers such as Vassal de Saint-Hubert, Bergeret de Grandcourt, Bourgeois de Boynes, and Calonne collected works by both Clodion and Houdon, without commissioning portraits of themselves. The banker Girardot de Marigny, a close friend of Houdon, exhibited bronzes of *Diana* and *Apollo* in his garden (cats. 35 and 37) and had two matching versions of the *Baiser donné* in white marble in his home (see cat. 41),<sup>72</sup> along with marbles of *Anne Audéoud* (depicting the daughter of a friend, the Swiss banker Michel Audéoud) and *Sabine* (depicting the sculptor's daughter),<sup>73</sup> but did not commission a bust of himself.<sup>74</sup>

In Houdon's own lifetime his genius attracted nearly unanimous praise for iconographical inventiveness, a new approach to classical sources, the exceptional likenesses—both physical and spiritual—to his subjects. Much has been made, and rightly so, of the realism of Houdon's portraits and of his general attachment to that which is real.<sup>75</sup> But one must also recognize his sensibility. As Falconet put it, echoing an idea espoused by Diderot: "To earn universal approval, the sculptor must combine with the studies necessary to him an even greater talent. This talent, so essential and so rare, though it appears to be within reach of all artists, is feeling."<sup>76</sup> Houdon would not have disavowed this remark. One thinks immediately of the exquisite sensitivity of his portraits of children, treated with a naturalness that his contemporaries greatly admired: "Finally, artists no longer disfigure the heads of children by dusting them with white powder as was once done. . . . We no longer see on children's heads the rolled curls, the bows, the plastering, that our eyes, entranced by the practice, too long endured. . . . Childhood has once again assumed the simplicity of that pleasant age."<sup>77</sup> One thinks also of the sorrowful expressions of Pauline d'Ennery, holding a handkerchief wet with tears, and also of the comte d'Ennery's widow, with two tears carefully chiseled below her eyes (fig. 5).<sup>78</sup> Houdon did not invent this sentimental detail in sculpture,<sup>79</sup> but his use of it reveals so well the aesthetic of an age when this display of emotion was accepted. The sculptor's skill is thus also apparent in his ability to capture the spirit of his time. His art oscillates between realism and feeling, the portrait of character and the portrait of condition, unique pieces and works in series. It is this very broad range that makes him an artist "above all modern artists."<sup>80</sup>

The title of this essay derives from a report of 1779 to the prince of Stahremberg, quoted in note 8o. The author would like to thank for their help in the preparation of his contribution to this catalogue: Pierre Arizzoli-Clémentel, Joseph Baillio, Patrice Bellanger, François Borne, Yves Carlier, Alain Chevalier, Catherine Chevillot, Pascale Danté-Ballasteros, Alain Dégardin, Céline Delmar, Vincent Droguet, Jean-René Gaborit, Anne-Sylvie Guenoun, Rita Hofreiter, Pascale Klein, Jonathan Marsden, Valérie Montalbetti, Magnus Olausson, Claude Pouplard, Hélène Prax, Tamara Préaud, Nicole Quillet-Soguel, Sophie Quillier, Jean-Michel Roidot, Georges Vigne, Emmanuel de Waresquiel, Robert Wenley.

1. Handwritten note by Houdon, sold at auction, cited in Montaiglon and Duplessis 1855, 420.
2. His hope was renewed when it was proposed, at the initiative of the Society of the Cincinnati, that he do a bronze equestrian statue of Washington for a public square in New York (letter of John Trumbull to Houdon, 20 June 1805; BMV, F 946, no. 79).
3. Henri Stein, "Les Projets d'érection d'une statue de Louis XVI à Brest," *Annales de Bretagne* (Jan. 1908), 18–20, and 22–24, which mentions Houdon's model as described in a letter from the artist dated 25 Nov. 1786.
4. Florence Ingersoll-Smouse, "Lettres inédites de J.-J. Caffieri," *BSHAF* (1913), 202–222.
5. Jacques Silvestre de Sacy, *Le Comte d'Angiviller, dernier directeur général des Bâtiments du Roi* (Paris, 1953), 163–164.
6. On d'Angiviller's commission, see Scherf 1993 and references therein; on the renewed interest in illustrious men in the eighteenth century, see Jean-Claude Bonnet, *Naissance du Panthéon. Essai sur le culte des grands hommes* (Paris, 1998).
7. He also created the marble portraits of the maréchal de Turenne (Salon of 1783) and of Pascal (Salon of 1785). On Pajou and the "Great Men of France" project, see Paris and New York 1997–1998, 299–329.
8. See Paris 1992, 277–289.
9. *Mémoires secrets*, letter 3, Salon de 1779 (Fort 1999, 215). See also Dingé, *Notice sur M. Clodion* (Paris, n.d. [1814]): "Il y a tout lieu de croire que des rivaux jaloux avaient exagéré les défauts de cette figure pour écarter Clodion, et dégoûter le gouvernement de l'associer à leurs travaux."
10. M. des Labbes, *Le Miracle de nos jours, conversation écrite et recueillie par un sourd et muet... non seulement la critique des ouvrages exposés au Salon [de 1779], mais la critique de nos peintres et sculpteurs les plus connus* (Deloynes XI, no. 219; MacWilliam 1991, 303).
11. Furcy-Raynaud 1905, 45. Houdon was made an officer only in 1792, when he became an assistant professor. He was named professor at the Ecole spéciale de peinture et sculpture in 1805.
12. Réau 1964, 1:236.
13. Except for the Salon of 1791, which was open to all artists, where Houdon exhibited his bronze of *La Frileuse* (cat. 39).
14. Pierre to d'Angiviller, 9 Aug. 1785 (Furcy-Raynaud 1906, 126).
15. *La Critique est aisée, mais l'art est difficile*, review of the Salon of 1783 (Deloynes XIII, no. 287; MacWilliam 1991, 351).
16. Guy Chausinand-Nogaret, *Mirabeau* (Paris, 1982), 70: "The violent reaction that made the nineteenth century a sexual wilderness and a major time of repression was begun under Louis XVI."
17. The anatomical naturalism of the bronze *Diana* now in the Louvre was judged inappropriate when it was acquired in 1829, and the slit of the vulva was filled in with a series of rods hammered near the surface (see Scherf 2000, fig. 37). Dupont de Nemours was unable to sell a plaster miniature of the *Diana* in the U.S., "ayant paru trop nue" (letter to Houdon, [29 April 1800], BMV, F 946, no. 34).
18. Louis-Sébastien Mercier, *Tableau de Paris* [1789], ed. Jean-Claude Bonnet (Paris, 1994), 2:1160.
19. Paris and New York 1997–1998, 333–341. Although the plaster is lost, the marble, dated 1790, is at the Louvre.
20. Guiffrey 1877, 286.
21. Anonymous letter [from Caffieri] to d'Angiviller, winter 1779 (Guiffrey 1877, 288–289). Caffieri's jealousy toward Houdon is well known (see also cats. 11 and 43).
22. See von Halem (ed. 1990), 188.
23. Significantly, Antonio Canova admired the *Saint Bruno* (letter from Rome to Houdon's daughter, Anne-Ange de Villermay, dated 22 Oct. 1820, BMV, F 946, no. 63).
24. Gaborit 1985, 70–74.
25. Diderot (ed. 1995b), 448 (*Pensées détachées sur la peinture*).
26. Mercier 1994 (1783), 1:1233–1234.
27. La Font de Saint-Yenne, *Oeuvre critique* [1754], ed. Etienne Jollet (Paris, 2001), 319.
28. *Sans quartier au Sallon...de 1783* (Deloynes XIII, no. 296); and *Observations* [on the Salon of 1785] (both in MacWilliam 1991, 369, 390).
29. Letter from Houdon to president of National Assembly, 17 June 1790, offering busts of Franklin and Washington (AN, O<sup>2</sup> 488); just the reference was cited by Gaston Brière in *BSHAF* (1907), 19: "j'ai cru qu'il me serait permis de m'enorgueillir de ces ouvrages dont l'unique mérite est la ressemblance."
30. In his *mémoire* to Bachelier in 1794 Houdon said the study of anatomy had filled his "entire life."
31. BMV, F 946, no. 76.
32. The plaster mask of Boissy d'Anglas was part of Houdon's posthumous sale in 1828, under no. 46, with the remark: "ce masque a été moulé pendant la vie de ce personnage." The bust (now lost) was exhibited at the Salon of 1812.
33. Pliny, *Historia naturalis*, 35.
34. Boilly immortalized Houdon in his studio in 1804 modeling the face of Pierre-Simon Laplace in front of his whole family (cat. 66, fig. 1). After being commissioned by members of the stock exchange to sculpt a bust of Louis XVI, Houdon had to wait three years before he was allowed to see the king, a preliminary he judged indispensable (see cat. 50).
35. D'Angiviller papers; quoted in Silvestre de Sacy 1953, 145.
36. *Journal de Gouverneur Morris (1789–1792), ministre plénipotentiaire des Etats-Unis en France*, ed. with notes by Antoine de Baecque (Paris, 2002), 69.
37. Frédéric-Melchior Grimm, May 1778, on *Molière* (cat. 11); see *Corr. littéraire* 12:104.
38. Comte de Caylus, *Recueil d'antiquités égyptiennes, étrusques, grecques et romaines* (Paris, 1752), 1:155.
39. Charles-Joseph Mathon de la Cour, commenting on a bust of Louis XV by Lemoyne at the Salon of 1763. See *Lettres à Madame... sur les peintures, les sculptures... exposées dans le Salon du Louvre en 1763* (MacWilliam 1991, 153).
40. A difference can be noted depending on the material: Lemoyne and Caffieri sometimes carved the eyes on terracotta busts more deeply than those on marbles.
41. See Paris and New York 1997–1998, 277 and 271.
42. Pajou did the same for his bust of the engraver *Basan* of 1768; see Paris and New York 1997–1998, 235.
43. *La Béquille de Voltaire au Salon [of 1791]* (Deloynes XVII, nos. 438–439); and *Observations de Mr Vilette sur l'exposition des tableaux au Salon du Louvre [de] 1791* (Deloynes L, no. 1363) (MacWilliam 1991, 473, 499).
44. Sauerländer 2002, 60.
45. *Mémoires de la princesse Daschkoff, dame d'honneur de Catherine II impératrice de toutes les Russies*, ed. Pascal Pontremoli (Paris, 1989), 138.

46. Diderot (ed. 1996), 1177 ("Entretiens sur le fils naturel"): "Ce ne sont plus, à proprement parler, les caractères qu'il faut mettre sur la scène, mais les conditions."
47. This does not refer to different versions of the same subject ("à l'antique," "à la française," with drapery, in uniform, and so on).
48. François Souchal, "Situation de la sculpture en France en 1778," *Dix-Huitième siècle*, no. 11 (Paris, 1979), 125.
49. For Sophie Arnould, Houdon provided for as many as thirty to fifty plaster copies in addition to the primary marble bust; Jones ordered at least eight plasters of his bust; Houdon received payment for one marble, one terracotta, and four plasters of Guibert (see Réau 1964, 1:124).
50. Letter from Houdon to Rodolphe-Ferdinand Grand, 20 Germinal an XII [9 Apr. 1804] (BMV, F 946, no. 81). The next day Grand put off the manufacture of the busts.
51. Claparède (ed. 1993), 41. At issue were the *Ecorché* and busts of Molière, Voltaire, and Rousseau (cats. 2, 11, 23, and 26).
52. In 1780 Houdon sent five plasters of his bust of Diderot to the municipal councillors of Langres (see cat. 21), and in 1779 he gave a plaster of his bust of Voltaire to every member of the Académie française (BMV, F 946, no. 11).
53. BMV, F 946, nos. 114–118 (original letters from the cardinal de Rohan's entourage, drafts of Houdon's replies: documents preserved by the sculptor's descendants): Houdon said he possessed "qu'un seul plâtre du buste de S.A.S. Mgr le Cardinal de Rohan, lequel plâtre provient du moule fait sur la terre et que l'on brise, ainsi que le creux. . . . Ainsi d'après le contenu de votre lettre je serez obligé de me détacher entièrement d'un de mes ouvrages, chose que je ne fais jamais. Outre ceux que je livre à ceux qui m'honorent de leur confiance, j'en garde toujours un exemplaire pour moy. . . . Le moule appartient toujours à l'artiste, à moins qu'on ne prène des arrangements differens. Lorsque j'eus l'honneur il y a trois ans de faire le buste de S.E.S., j'étais extremement pressé par mon voyage en Amérique et le désir de placer ce buste au Salon : pour accélérer les opérations, je le fis mouler à creux perdu. On appelle creux perdu un moule de deux seules pièces qu'on est obligé de casser pour retirer le plâtre qui alors est unique, qui fait modèle et qui équivaux à la terre qui se trouve aussi perdu ; je n'ay fait d'objections pour livrer le buste que dans la crainte que venant à se casser en route, il fallait renoncer à l'espoir de l'exécuter en marbre."
- The letter from Lambre, dated 12 May 1788, continued in a different direction: "Il me semble que le moule appartient à celui qui emploie les talents de l'artiste, afin de se réserver la satisfaction de pouvoir donner plusieurs plâtres, même si on a la volonté de faire exécuter le buste en marbre."
54. There is no mention of the existence of this portrait in the Houdon literature.
55. The price of each plaster copy was 4 louis, that of the original model, 30 louis, "comme à l'ordinaire."
56. See BMV, F 946, no. 229. The draft, carefully copied out, names no addressee but was intended for the lieutenant general of the police, as another document indicates (F 946, no. 231 bis). That letter followed a complaint by Houdon, 8 Feb. 1776, begging Commissioner Crespy in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine "de lui prêter le secours de son autorité pour contenir les mouleurs dont il craint les contrefaçons" (F 946, no. 228).
57. This activity, as Houdon notes, flouted the decree of the Conseil du Roi made on 21 June 1676, protecting the works of sculptors of the Académie royale from casters and counterfeiters. See Katie Scott, "Authorship, the Académie, and the Market in Early Modern France," *Oxford Art Journal* 21, no. 1 (1998), 40, app. 11.
58. That is, by his studio at the Bibliothèque du Roi on the rue de Richelieu.
59. Houdon returned to this problem in his *mémoire* to Bachelier of 1794 (Réau 1964, 1:99): "In spite of the laws, under the ancien régime, some have constantly recast my works, some have disfigured them by putting my name on them, while others, even less honest, have simply copied [my works] and placed their own name on them, so that now, defying the explicit decrees of the Convention in support of the arts and property rights, they continue to sell them, to exhibit them, to promenade them in public, and thus to frustrate my labor."
60. Gustave Deloye was the venerated teacher of Georges Giacometti, a master sculptor who also wrote the first illustrated monograph in French on Houdon.
61. See Giacometti 1929, 1:136; Gaborit 1975, 244 n. 23. The bust of Rousseau at the Louvre (inv. LP 1729), acquired in 1838, from the revolutionary Bertrand Barère de Vieuzac, is a sand-cast bronze (Louvre cat. 1998, 2:421).
62. See Pierre Verlet, *Les Bronzes dorés français du XVIIIe siècle* (Paris, 1987), 35, ill. There are several known versions (château de Fontainebleau, residence of the president of the National Assembly at the Hôtel de Lassay).
63. The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg; see *Catherine the Great and Gustave III* [exh. cat., Nationalmuseum] (Stockholm, 1998–1999), 547, no. 549. The Wallace Collection in London owns a version that shows groups of children hoisting a cannon; see Peter Hughes, *The Wallace Collection, Catalogue of Furniture* (London, 1996), 3: 1228–1232, ill. For this author, the attribution of the models to Houdon is doubtful.
64. Collection of the miniature painter François Alexandre Plantier, sold to Le Brun 16 Feb. 1787: "le baiser d'après Houdon — doré d'or mat orné de socle de porphyre" (AN, Min. Cent., étude 13:445; the author wishes to thank Vincent Droguet for this information).
65. Letter of Thomas Jefferson to George Washington, from Paris, 10 Dec. 1784, in Chinard 1930, 5: "I find that a Monsieur Houdon, of this place, possesses the reputation of being the first statuary in the world."
66. The old sculptor, whose friendliness and openness to others were always hailed by contemporaries, ended his career as director of the Académie royale.
67. Pigalle died in 1785, but he had declined in influence since the *Nude Voltaire* scandal of 1770–1776.
68. BMV, F 946, no. 127. The model is mentioned in the accounts of the duc de Brissac, 11 July 1785: "Fait prix avec lui a 2400 [livres] pour le buste en marbre de Mgr dont il a vu le modèle qui est très ressemblant" (AN, T\* 564<sup>62</sup>; the author wishes to thank Yves Carlier for providing this reference). It was delivered 23 Oct. 1788, but the marble was probably never executed, as its creation had been put off because Brissac was wavering between marble and bronze (BMV, F 946, nos. 120–122).
69. See Scherf 2001, 158–160.
70. Accounts of the duc de Brissac, 11 July 1785 (AN, T\* 584<sup>62</sup>). The plaster painted a terracotta color is mentioned as having been delivered 23 Oct. 1788 (BMV, F 946, no. 121).
71. AN, Min. Cent., étude XC1:1295, 28 Dec. 1792. The author thanks Yves Carlier for this reference.
72. Girardot de Marigny's posthumous inventory, 23 Germinal an IV [12 Apr. 1796] (AN, Min. Cent., étude L:802, fols. 5 and 62).
73. See Salon cat. 1781; and the withdrawn catalogue for the Salon of 1791, which also listed a plaster of *Franklin* as having been "executed for M. Girardot" (Scherf 1997, 57).
74. Unlike other Genevans such as Necker, Tronchin, Mme de Thelluson, and Mme Girardot de Vermenoux.
75. Sauerländer 2002.
76. Etienne-Maurice Falconet, *Réflexions sur la sculpture* (1761; ed. Paris, 1808), 3:25.
77. Mercier 1994 (1783), 1:1097–1098.
78. Separated from her husband, the vicomte Chauvigny de Blot, Pauline d'Ennery was the mistress of the maréchal de Castries, minister of the navy under Louis XVI. According to Besenval (ed. 1987), 84, her sensitive and romantic spirit had been awakened by reading Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa*. She was portrayed by Houdon on the funerary monument for her brother, the comte d'Ennery (Louvre cat. 1998, 429).

79. Antoine Coysevox and François Collignon had depicted the marquise de Vaubrun with a tear flowing down her face on the mausoleum for her husband in the chapel of the château de Serrant (1677–1678).

80. A report of the advisor de Lippens to the prince of Stahremberg, Austrian plenipotentiary minister in Brussels, 21 Sept. 1779, noted: "[Il] s'est dès longtemps acquis une célébrité qui le met au-dessus de tous les artistes modernes et la plupart des gens instruits à Paris le préfèrent à Pigal" (quoted in Louis Réau, "Houdon et la Belgique," *Apollo*, no. 22 [1943], 16).



ETAT DES CHOSES:

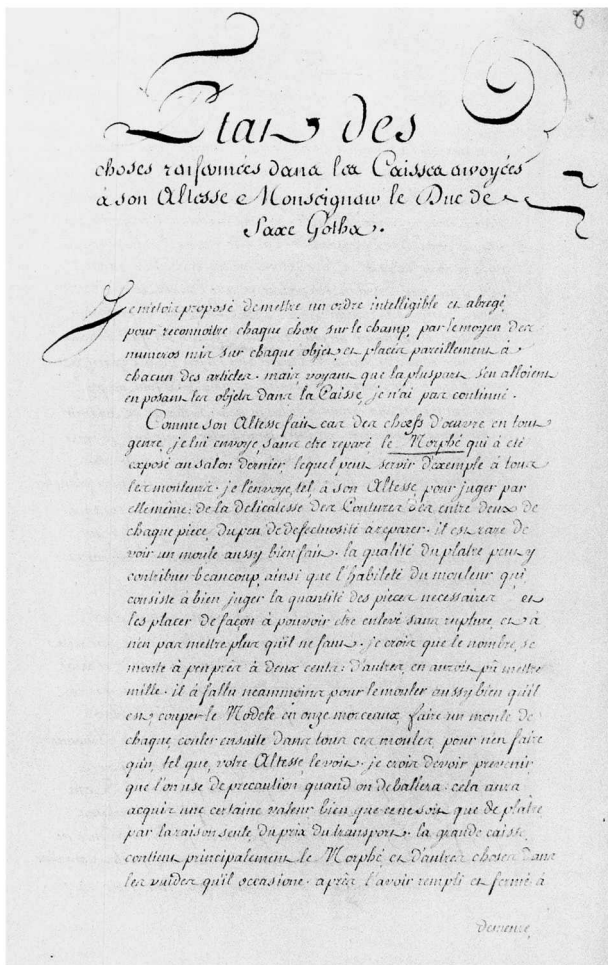
A RECENTLY DISCOVERED DOCUMENT BY HOUDON

Anne L. Poulet with Ulrike D. Mathies and Christoph Frank

Jean-Antoine Houdon first came into contact with the small German court of Saxe-Gotha in the late summer of 1771 when Frédéric-Melchior Grimm (1723–1807), the court’s advisor, who had lived in Paris for more than twenty years, proposed that Houdon take over the commission for a funerary monument to the late duchess, Louise Dorothea.<sup>1</sup> The young sculptor, who had returned from four years of study at the Académie de France in Rome at the end of 1768 and had become an *agrégé* at the Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture in Paris during the summer of 1769, traveled to Gotha and stayed at Schloss Friedenstein from 25 October to 3 December 1771, bringing with him a terracotta model for the proposed funerary monument. While there, Houdon won the admiration and confidence of the members of the court, especially that of the hereditary prince, Ernst Ludwig, who would succeed his father as Duke Ernst II in March 1772.<sup>2</sup>

The young duke, strongly influenced by his highly cultivated late mother and key figures of the Paris Enlightenment, set out to put Gotha on the map as a cultural and intellectual center in Germany. By 1771 he must have already intended to establish an art academy at his court, an integral part of which would be a collection of plaster casts of antique and modern sculptures as well as other works of art that could serve as models for the students. Although this project was not fully implemented until 1786,<sup>3</sup> Ernst’s acquisitions in the first years of his reign reveal his early aspirations. In addition, he sent his protégé, the young German sculptor Friedrich Wilhelm Doell (1750–1816), who had been referred to the court by Grimm, to Paris with Houdon to be trained in his studio and learn anatomy at the Académie royale.

Ernst II enlisted Houdon’s help in assembling an appropriate study collection and thus, as an unintended consequence, created what is still today the largest group of works by Houdon in Germany.<sup>4</sup> It was heretofore unknown when and how Houdon’s sculptures found their way to Gotha, but a recently discovered letter by Houdon to the young duke, published here for the first



1. Title page of Houdon's letter to Duke Ernst II of Saxe-Gotha, Forschungs- und Landesbibliothek Gotha, Chart A 712, fol. 8r.

time (see the Appendix to this catalogue), answers these questions and provides valuable new information. The undated, thirteen-page manuscript, which survives in the library of Schloss Friedenstien (fig. 1), bound with other papers from the duke's estate,<sup>5</sup> discusses some of the sculptor's most important compositions as well as previously unknown pieces; sheds light on his working methods; and gives a deeper insight into Houdon as a person, teacher, and artist. It was enclosed in a letter Grimm wrote to Ernst II on 20 July 1772 with the intention that it precede the arrival of several crates with works of art that Houdon had shipped from Paris.<sup>6</sup>

Although Houdon had only recently completed his training, the tone of his letter to Ernst II is didactic and avuncular. It makes clear that he had already formed strong convictions about teaching models and aesthetics (from which he did not

waver for the rest of his life). It is also evident that the young sculptor had won the full confidence of the duke, who entrusted him not only with forming a collection for his nascent art academy but also with its crating and shipping. Leaving nothing to chance, Houdon sent instructions for the unpacking, assembling, identifying, and even repairing of the works of art. The shipment contained examples of Houdon's own works in plaster as well as plaster casts after the antique, prints, drawings, and a group of medals and medal proofs by the Duviviers, father and son. The selection was made with an eye to economy. In the letter itself Houdon discusses the usefulness of sculpture for teaching purposes, and he is preoccupied by technical issues such as mold making, the quality and type of materials to be used, the proper assembling of plaster casts, and appropriate finishes and fixatives. He also addresses the issue of how art should be exhibited and the importance of lighting, framing, and placement.

+ CRATES AND CONTENTS +

In all, Houdon packed three crates, carefully filling any empty spaces and cavities with additional objects, all of which were protected by sawdust. The first and largest crate contained as a centerpiece the life-size figure of the *Morpheus* and included, among other works, the *Priest of the Lupercalia*, the *Standing Vestal*, and the *Baiser donné* as well as two frames containing medal proofs. The middle-sized crate held the statue of the *Ecorché*, under the head of which could be found a smaller box with a *Flayed Horse* in addition to the figure of the *Saint Bruno* and busts of the *Vestal*, *Saint John the Baptist*, and the *Peasant Girl of Frascati*. The smallest box, measuring only three feet, enclosed other selections, such as two wooden frames for medallions, the pastels, prints, and drawings, and a piece of wood to attach the right arm to the body of the *Ecorché*. Aiming for clarity and structure, Houdon had established "an intelligible and brief system to recognize each object on the spot by using numbers placed on each object and located in the same way on each of the articles. But seeing that most of them fell off in the process of placing the objects in the crate" (Appendix, lines 1–5), he did not continue. In general, Houdon's explanations in the letter adhere to the sequence in which he packed the crates; but they are interwoven with opinionated digressions, resulting in a rather confusing text. Immediately following the present essay is a summary of the objects shipped, listed in thematic and chronological order, with references to the letter and to Gotha inventories, where applicable.

Houdon considered fundamental for Ernst II's planned art academy a number of his own works, which represented a wide range in style, from copies after the antique to *têtes d'étude*, anatomical studies, and religious works. Particular importance was given to his life-size plaster cast of an *Ecorché*. The model sent to Gotha, inscribed "Rome 1767," is the same one that Houdon had executed in Rome as a study for the figure of *Saint John the Baptist* and had sold to the Académie de France there in 1767 (cat. 1). Houdon explains to the duke that he "had done this work to teach artists, which is the reason for the idealization of the composition" (lines 62–63). Eventually the sculptor was to give or sell casts of his *Ecorché* to art academies and schools all over Europe and America.

Included in the shipment was a selection of works that Houdon had done in Rome and then exhibited in Paris at the Salon of 1769, immediately following his return from Italy.<sup>7</sup> Among them was a beautiful plaster *Head of Saint John the Baptist* (see cat. 3, Related Works), done, like the *Ecorché*, as a preparatory study for the statue of Saint John, which had been commissioned for the Carthusian church in Rome in 1766. In one of the most revealing passages of Houdon's letter, he describes how he saw a man at Saint Peter's in Rome who was a kind of spiritual hermit living among the people, who begged for alms and gave to charity all that he did not need to live himself. Finding his head to be the perfect model for Saint John, Houdon asked the hermit to model for him: "He said to me that he was not worthy of serving as a model for a saint" (lines 350–351). Houdon then went back to the church several times without being observed: "I studied him carefully and stored it in my head as well as I possibly could. I returned to the academy, which is quite a long distance from St. Peter's, and I modeled a mass of clay already prepared for this purpose" (lines 352–355). In this early document Houdon thus emphasizes the importance of selecting from nature and observing the model first-hand, which, when necessary, can be executed later from memory. This technique would serve Houdon well as a portrait sculptor.

Houdon also sent a reduced version of the statue of *Saint Bruno* (cat. 4) that he had carved in marble for the church of Santa Maria degli Angeli in Rome in 1766–1767 as a pendant to his *Saint John the Baptist*. He states specifically that he is sending "the Saint Bruno that was exhibited at the Salon three years ago" (lines 316–317). In another crate he packed "The little head of St. Bruno, founder of the order of the Carthusians. It is a bust, and less incorrect than the one that is on the saint. That



2. Houdon, Head of Saint Bruno, 1776 or after, plaster, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Dijon.

is why I included it" (lines 448–450). There is no trace of this little bust in the collections at Gotha, but from its description, it must have resembled the delicately modeled small *Head of Saint Bruno* at the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Dijon (fig. 2).

As an example of his early experiments with an animated baroque style, Houdon sent a reduced version of the *Priest of the Lupercalia* (cat. 5), pointing out to Ernst II the priest's unusual role as an agent of the Roman god Pan in bestowing the gift of fecundity to women by striking them with leather straps and the fact that the plaster he was sending to Gotha had been both in the Salon of 1769 and submitted for his preliminary admission to the Académie royale in Paris (lines 94–101). To illustrate yet another aspect of his early work Houdon included a head called the *Peasant Girl of Frascati* (cat. 6), an idealized study of a woman with her hair dressed in a local Italian style that Houdon admired for its simplicity and enhancement of the natural human form: "This head, and that of my *Ecorché* have ears as one should have them in general" (lines 412–414). He also sent "the head of a *Cupid Crowned with Myrtle*, composed by me" (lines 302–303), which is probably identical with one of the two "Heads of Young Men; one, crowned with myrtle. . . . Free standing and life-size," shown at the Salon of 1771. These heads may be recorded in two marbles now in private collections in New York and Los Angeles (see fig. 3).

Sending a *Vestal* (fig. 4) copied after the antique, Houdon wrote to Ernst II questioning its iconography and function: "The





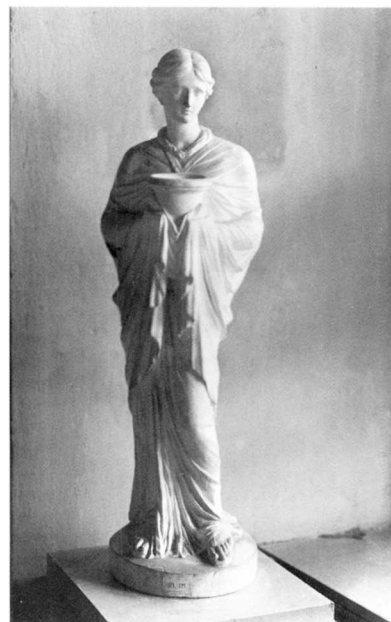
3. Houdon, Roman Youth, 1775, marble, Collection of Stewart and Lynda Resnick, Los Angeles.

name *Pandora* that one gave in Rome to the *Vestal* I did after the marble that is in the Capitoline [Museum] and larger than life doesn't seem to me to be appropriate, seeing that the vase that she holds does not resemble Pandora's box. I do not know the purpose served by the hole that is in the bottom of the vase — maybe it is modern. She is 20 to 22 inches high, stands straight, she holds the vase with both hands" (lines 295–301). Lost during World War II, this sculpture is known only through a photograph. As with other early figures, such as the *Saint Bruno* and *Saint John the Baptist*, Houdon had executed while in Rome the head of a veiled *Vestal* (see cat. 6, fig. 2), and he included this in the shipment to Gotha. Adding that "she is in my studio, sketched in marble, as is [the head of Saint John]" (lines 332–334), Houdon indicates that he waited for a specific commission before carrying out a sculpture in marble, doubtless owing to the cost of the material. The same was true of a "medallion . . . representing the Head of Minerva (fig. 5), copied after the antique, corrected by me, [and] the head of Alexander composed by me as a pendant to that of Minerva . . . I do not plan to finish them until the opportunity to find a home for them presents itself" (lines 102–107).

In a burst of generosity, along with technical and artistic pride, Houdon wrote, "Since your highness values masterpieces of all types, I am sending you, without it being repaired, the *Morpheus* that was exhibited at the last Salon, which can serve as a model for all mold makers. I am sending it as is to your highness so that you can judge for yourself: the delicacy of the seams . . . , of the minimum of defects there are to repair. It is rare to see a mold so well made" (lines 6–12). The life-size plaster *Morpheus* (see cat. 7, fig. 1), which is still in Gotha, was the model for Houdon's *morceau de réception* at the Académie royale and was shown in the Salon of 1771; it is the only life-size version known.

Unusual among his own works in the shipment was "The *Couple of Lovers* or reciprocal kiss, it is a group with two heads, half life size" (lines 304–305). Undoubtedly inspired by the marble group of *Cupid and Psyche* in the Capitoline Museum in Rome (see cat. 41, fig. 2), this group is nevertheless innovative in that the two heads rest on one base, an aspect that Houdon emphasizes in his letter (lines 305–307). As with his other sculptures, he takes particular pride in the iconographic and technical originality of this group. The fact that it is an especially decorative work and charged with erotic expression goes unmentioned.

Some of the sculptures by Houdon's own hand that were sent to Gotha remain unidentified. Among them is a "Head of Medusa" in relief taken from that on the breastplate of a bust



4. Houdon, *Vestal*, by 1769, plaster, formerly Schlossmuseum Gotha; whereabouts unknown.



5. Houdon, Head of Minerva, probably by 1771, plaster, formerly Schlossmuseum Gotha; whereabouts unknown.

of Hadrian in the Capitoline Museum (fig. 6), a further indication of the importance of that collection of ancient sculpture for Houdon's years of study in Rome. Another work that has since disappeared from the collection at Gotha was a sculpture of two little birds. In a touching personal passage Houdon writes, "A little crate about 6 inches long containing *two little birds* in terracotta that I want to give to Madame the Duchess. I found in doing them that it is difficult with an opaque material of one single color, to render the lightness of the feathers and the down, that nature presents to us. I hope that your Highness will find some truths there" (lines 397–403). While acknowledging the difficulty of modeling the delicate texture of a bird's feathers, he is also proud of his success in doing so.

Following the example of other art academies, Houdon sent a number of plaster casts after the antique for Ernst II's collection, carefully describing each of them while emphasizing how reasonably they were priced. He included busts of Homer, Demosthenes, and Caracalla (see cat. 13, fig. 1). Concerning the latter, he writes, "it is easy to recognize him with his knitted brows, his short curly hair, his frizzy beard, and his Roman cloak, held by a button on the right shoulder. The head of this emperor was badly organized, but the exterior design pleases me especially" (lines 122–126). Of particular interest in this group is the anatomical study of a flayed horse, "of which the original is in bronze and is twice the size, in the villa of the Duke Mattei. If it is not antique, it is old, in my opinion, and very beautiful" (lines 80–83). Already in the summer of 1772 Houdon

was dreaming of creating an equestrian statue. In March of that year he had moved into the du Roule foundry, where the great equestrian monuments by Jean-Baptiste II Lemoyne, Edme Bouchardon, and Jean-Baptiste Pigalle had been cast.<sup>8</sup>

Along with the copies after the antique, Houdon included bas-reliefs of antique subjects by his student Doell, a series of unattributed reliefs representing the *Four Parts of the World*, and a bas-relief of *Louis XIV as Apollo* after a model by Balin, the famous goldsmith to the king. Knowing of Ernst II's interest in the casting of commemorative medals, Houdon included a number of proofs of the works of the great French medalists Jean Duvivier (1687–1761) and his son Pierre-Simon-Benjamin Duvivier (1730–1819), writing, "Another small crate, which should be in the largest one, containing the medals that I received from Mr. Duvivier. . . my intention in including this, is to give an idea of what is done in Paris of this type and to make known the merit of the author" (lines 455–460).

The emphasis throughout the shipment was on sculpture, after or inspired by the antique, with only a scattering of later works or works on paper. The prints and pastels that were shipped were chosen more for their illustration of contemporary fashion or demonstration of techniques of preservation, such as fixatives, than for their intrinsic quality.

+ METHODS, THEORIES, AND PERSONALITY +

Houdon's letter to Duke Ernst II provides a rich variety of insights into his working methods and his knowledge of the techniques of casting, assembling, coloring, and finishing sculptures in plaster. Throughout the document the young sculptor, who had



6. Roman, Emperor Hadrian, 2nd century AD, marble, Capitoline Museum, Rome.

just turned thirty-one, writes with remarkable confidence and maturity concerning the quality of his work, his aesthetic theories, and his beliefs about teaching younger artists. In a digression that is both charming and candid, Houdon airs his personal opinions about contemporary dress and fashion. Drawing on the text of the letter, these aspects of Houdon's methods and thought are discussed below.

### Working Methods and Materials

Houdon, while very pleased with his safe and clever packing of the crates, is equally concerned with the proper unpacking of the objects to avoid any breakage. Regarding the largest crate, which he had filled from both top and bottom to take advantage of the extra space available inside the open cavity of the *Morpheus*, he warns: "In order to avoid breakage I think it would be best to open the crate from the top; then remove the sawdust that is at the level of the first plank for fear of hitting the parts that will be here and there at hand. Then saw that plank at its two extremities as far as the next layer, and take out the objects which will probably reveal themselves" (lines 42–48). He meticulously explains how to assemble the full-length figure of the *Ecorché*, the arm of which, traveling in a different crate, had to be attached and held in place by an eight-inch long piece of wood, also enclosed. In case of minor damage, he encourages that the repair be undertaken without the help of a professional sculptor: "it will suffice to apply a little lead white [prepared for painting] such as one finds at a color merchant's [shop], to grind it with a little fatty oil, and apply some on all of the parts to be rejoined. It is necessary to pay attention, in view of the fact that it takes a little time to harden, and support the pieces that would project in the air" (lines 36–42). He recommends the same self-reliance in fitting a medallion of the duchess he had executed when in Gotha to the frame he was sending: "I had taken the measurements of the medallion of Madame La Duchesse in order to make [a frame] better suited to it than the one I left behind without being finished, but I lost it on the way. If the border I am sending should not fit properly, one could remove or add plaster to the portrait so that when they are reunited they seem made one for the other. These borders, in view of my economy, only cost me [170 livres, 2 sous]" (lines 241–248).

Throughout his text Houdon gives highly valuable information on the material and finish of his works, answering questions later posed by art historians and conservators alike and revealing his taste for neoclassical simplicity. For the

*Morpheus*, the *Head of Minerva*, and Doell's reliefs he used the finest type of plaster, made of talcum powder, while the *Head of Venus* [lost], a copy requested by the duchess, is cited for its unusual degree of whiteness. In emphasizing that the little *Head of Saint Bruno* was painted a water-based terracotta color—with a little bit of gum arabic added—Houdon implies that the other works in his shipment remained unpainted. He explicitly states: "Most of my works are not varnished. That is because I do not think it appropriate to varnish something that is not absolutely perfect. I said to M. Doëll that to make these images shiny was to hide underneath [a coat of] varnish its defects in the eyes of those people who are not connoisseurs. In addition, flesh, as well as many other things, is not smooth, polished, and shiny. When that happens, it is because a greasy sweat spreads oil over the face, which is not attractive" (lines 374–383).<sup>9</sup> As for his skills as a mold maker, Houdon proudly presents the *Morpheus*, which was cast from a piece mold consisting of about two hundred parts enclosed by eleven mother molds.<sup>10</sup> He draws attention to the balanced number and sensible placement of the mold pieces, the subtlety of the mold marks, and the absence of repairs—all of them intentionally visible, as the surface of the work had not been cleaned and finished.

Even more didactic, although of somewhat confusing outcome, are Houdon's explanations of half, low, and very low reliefs and the importance of hanging these works appropriately to create the desired effect: "It is necessary with very little relief, to give the impression that the object represented is in the round, and to convince oneself of this, it is necessary (if the light be natural or artificial) to place the work a little higher or lower, more or less to the side, as I had the honor of *demonstrating to his Highness*, in regard to the portraits that I had the advantage of doing in Gotha. It is necessary, at the same time, to place oneself at an appropriate distance" (lines 250–257). Similarly, Houdon judges the impact of correct lighting: "The sculpture that is well lit is quite different from one that is not. The famous Apollo in the Vatican, does not strike me when lit from below; I see it as a statue. But lit differently, I forget the material from which it is made, and only see in him a god" (lines 257–262).

### Aesthetic Theory

Reflecting his familiarity with neoclassical art theories that he learned in Rome and at the Académie royale in Paris, Houdon expresses his personal view that achieving greatness in art results from the careful observation of nature, from which the

artist must skillfully select and blend what is most perfect and beautiful. In discussing the *Ecorché*, Houdon summarizes his theory of great art, one to which he adhered for the rest of his life: “In my view the skilled surgeon must study after nature, as defective as one might find it to be, in order to treat every infirmity. But we [artists] must study it differently. It is nature in all her nobility, her perfect state of health, that we are looking for, or if not, we are nothing but wretched imitators. He who imitates nature as she is found on a daily basis I compare to a well-organized monkey. But he who knows how to be selective, and who succeeds in doing it, approaches, in my view, what is most perfect, and raises up his soul. That is my ambition and to what I aspire” (lines 68–78). Through the copies after the antique that he sends to Ernst II as well as his own sculptures, Houdon makes clear that the standard by which one measures perfection in nature is to be found in antiquity.

Even at this early date Houdon manifests his interest in doing an equestrian statue, believing it to be the most significant work that a sculptor can create. He tells the duke, “Since I now occupy the studios of the city, and there is still to be found there the mold for the Statue of Louis XV, I am going to, depending on how much it will cost, have cast by order of the Prévost des Marchands a plaster of that statue before the mold is destroyed. This piece will greatly enhance the decoration of the interior of my studio” (lines 88–93).<sup>11</sup> Sending Ernst II the half-size copy of the *Flayed Horse* from the Villa Mattei in Rome, he comments, “But if I had to create an equestrian statue, I would want to know this animal as deeply as I flatter myself to think I know man” (lines 85–87).

#### Houdon as a Teacher

From the time Houdon was a student, he had a strong sense of his role as a teacher. Before leaving Rome, he sold a plaster cast of his *Ecorché* to the Académie de France to serve as a model for students. He was to do the same for the Académie royale in Paris in 1769. He believed in hard work and discipline with a concentration on the study of anatomy, on sculpting from the live model, and on making copies after the antique. A thorough knowledge of materials, tools, and finishes was essential (see above). His approach is made clear when he writes to Ernst II about the young German sculptor who was sent from Gotha to Paris to study with Houdon:

The copies by M. *Doëll*, sent to your Highness, will demonstrate the progress made by your student and

what use he makes of his time. It is not possible to progress more [quickly]; I beg your Highness not to tell him all of the good things that I say about him and what I hope from him; for young people think that they know everything the instant they begin. It is to be wished that your Highness demand from him as a proof of his ability that he win a medal in the Competition [Concours]. He wants to do this; I have even found him working on it. I made him withdraw his figure, and said to him that it wasn't good enough, that it was important not to tire the eyes of the judges, that that would not result in a good opinion of him, that it was necessary to hone one's skills and to make careful preparations before entering the lists, and to prevail over the others. I do not ask of him any more than I did myself, without wanting to give myself as an example. Afterward, he will do more. I am not the first who will have trained someone more gifted than himself [lines 274–290].<sup>12</sup>

Houdon is generous with his praise and with his knowledge. Throughout, he shows a preoccupation with the opinion of the critics and the public, aiming for the highest honors for himself and for his student. He also manifests absolute confidence in the fact that his own works set the highest possible standard and are worthy models for any ambitious student to follow.

#### Assessment of Contemporary Fashion

In a vivid series of personal observations, Houdon criticizes the extremes of artificiality in contemporary French fashion, including hairstyles, corsets, make-up, jewelry, and shoes. He finds anything that constrains, hides, or deforms the natural shape of the body to be unhealthy and unworthy of representation by the artist: “Women who ruin their feet and their waist as well as their face, no more than those who carry heavy burdens, are not appropriate to serve as our models, neither the one or the other” (lines 144–147). A woman is “spoiled by the paint that she applies to herself from the tip of her hair to her neck. The forehead is plucked in order to form seven points; the eyebrows are shaped, waxed, and painted. The cheeks, great God, you know about it—the white, the red, everything is permitted. The ears are ruined by... enormous earrings... The neck is often spoiled by necklaces that are too tight;... the knees... by the garters,... the feet by the shoe” (lines 148–164). Houdon even goes so far as to design and have made shoes for men or women that accommodate the natural form of the foot. He

sends Ernst II a cast of the foot of the *Medici Venus*, writing that, “it is a foot neither too small nor too large. It is the shape of a foot that has never worn shoes. I find in it something to be desired” (lines 172–175).

Incensed about women’s hairstyles, the sculptor sends four prints of mediocre quality to the duke to illustrate how outrageous they can be, saying, “I would accept dressing the hair with all of the waves and counter-waves possible as long as it was flattering to the person” (lines 183–185). Houdon goes on to observe that, in an effort to please men, French women cinch their waists so tightly that they “make themselves in their bodies like ants, almost separated in the middle” (lines 192–193): “One day I asked M. Diderot concerning women what he thought of cinched waists. What I think about it, he said to me? You are unaware then of the distinction I make between French and Italian women. Italian women are made to have children, and ours to be... he said it to me quite frankly. Your highness must understand [that] he is a man boiling, all aflame. For pleasure, said he [Diderot], that is the distinction that I make” (lines 211–218).

This discourse on fashion is consistent with Houdon’s general views of art—that what is most beautiful is most natural and that the human body in its perfection is far more healthy and desirable than when it has been painted, adorned with a wig and heavy jewelry, and reigned in with corsets and tight, high-heeled shoes. Houdon’s reference to Diderot is especially significant here, for it reveals the closeness and relaxed nature of their relationship. It is apparent that the sculptor was on intimate terms with the philosopher as well as with Duke Ernst II and that he felt comfortable telling the latter this slightly salacious story about the former. It is also an indication that the young Houdon was a part of the intellectual circle around Grimm and Diderot and that the abundance of ideas about aesthetics, sculpture, education, and the role of antiquity that are articulated in this remarkable document must have been aired before and profoundly influenced by these powerful Enlightenment figures.

#### ✦ SUMMARY OBJECT LIST ✦

The following compilation lists the works Houdon shipped to Duke Ernst II of Saxe-Gotha in July 1772, organized in thematic and chronological order. It also provides the earliest references to each work in the Gotha inventories, its mention in the most recent catalogue of the collection (Schuttwolf 1995), and, if applicable, a brief identification and reference to related works. Objects that have been identified and are extant in the collections in Gotha are indicated with an asterisk (\*).

#### ABBREVIATIONS

cat. 1804–1827: “Verzeichniss der im sogenannten Antiken-Saale befindlichen Abgüsse, Büsten pp.,” ThStA, Gotha, no. 63 [ca. 1804–1827]:

“Cap: I. An Abgüssen von Antiken—Statuen und Gruppen”

“Cap: II. An Büsten, antiken und modernen”

“Cap: III. An kleinen Modellen, antik und modern”

“Cap: V. An Büsten, Haut- und Basreliefs, nach den Lokalitäten unterschieden...”

cat. 1845: “Catalog der Sammlung der Gips-Abgüsse,” Schlossmuseum Gotha, 1845.

cat. 1857: Eduard Wolfgang, “Verzeichniss der Abgüsse antiker und moderner Bildhauerarbeiten im Herzogl: Antiken-Cabinet zu Gotha,” Schlossmuseum Gotha, 1857.

#### Works by Houdon

\**Ecorché*, Rome 1767

Klebe 1796, 87, in “Antiken-Sammlung”: “ein anatomisches Stück von Houdon zu Paris”; cat. 1804–1827, “Cap: I,” fol. 3v, no. 29: “Ein Anatomie von Houdon”; cat. 1845, “Statuen,” no. 18: “Anatomie / von Houdon”; cat. 1857, no. III.60; cat. 1869, no. IV.38; Schuttwolf 1995, 130–131, no. 45. Related Works: see present cat. 1.

\**Head of Saint John the Baptist*, Salon of 1769

Cat. 1804–1827, “Cap: II,” fol. 4v, nos. 3–4: “Maria und Christus”; cat. 1845, “Büsten,” no. 38: “Christus / von Houdon”; cat. 1857, no. III.69; cat. 1869, no. IV.46; Schuttwolf 1995, 129, no. 44. Related Works: see present cat. 3.

\**Saint Bruno*, Salon of 1769 (present cat. 4)

Cat. 1804–1827, “Cap: III,” fol. 5v, no. 17: “Der heilige Bruno”; cat. 1845, “Kleinere Statuen,” no. 54: “St. Bruno / von Houdon”; cat. 1857, no. III.61; cat. 1869, no. IV.37; Schuttwolf 1995, 132, no. 46.

*Small Head of Saint Bruno*

Possibly one of the reduced heads in cat. 1804–1827, “Cap: III,” fol. 6r, nos. 24–28: “Fünf kleine Köpfe.” Identification and Related Works: see present cat. 4.

\**Priest of the Luperalia*, Salon of 1769 (present cat. 5)

Cat. 1804–1827, “Cap: III,” fol. 6r, no. 21: “Ein Silen die Becken schlagend”; Rathgeber 1835, 49; cat. 1845, “Kleinere Statuen,” no. 44: “Ein Priester des Bachus”; cat. 1857, no. III.91: “Männliche laufende Figur”; cat. 1869, no. IV.49; Schuttwolf 1995, 133, no. 47.

*Vestal* (see fig. 4)

Lost in WWII; cat. 1804–1827, “Cap: III,” fol. 6r, no. 23: “Vesta”; cat. 1845, “Kleinere Statuen,” no. 52: “Eine Vestalin, welche das heilige Feuer trägt”; cat. 1857, no. III.121: “Hydrophore, Copie nach einer antik. [Bronze]”; cat.

1869, no. III.74: "Weibliche Figur, heiliges Wasser tragend. Kleine Copie einer im Capitol befindlichen Marmorstatue"; Schuttwolf 1995, 14, ill.

*\*Head of a Vestal*

Cat. 1804–1827, "Cap: II," fol. 4v, nos. 3–4: "Maria und Christus"; cat. 1845, "Büsten," no. 37: "Maria / von Houdon"; cat. 1857, no. III.70; cat. 1869, no. IV.47; Schuttwolf 1995, 134–135, no. 48.

*\*Peasant Girl from Frascati, Salon of 1769*

Possibly cat. 1804–1827, "Cap: II," fol. 5r, no. 27: "Eine moderne Büste von Houdon"; possibly cat. 1845, "Büsten," no. 21: "Eine Büste von Houdon, unbekannt"; cat. 1857, no. III.68: "Kopf einer Italienerin, von demselben [Houdon]"; cat. 1869, no. IV.45; Schuttwolf 1995, 136–137, no. 49. Related Works: see present cat. 6.

*\*Morpheus, Salon of 1771*

Klebe 1796, 87, in "Antiken-Sammlung": "Morpheus"; cat. 1804–1827, "Cap: I," fol. 3r, no. 12: "Morpheus, schlafende Figur von Houdon / modern"; cat. 1845, "Statuen," no. 21: "Morpheus / von Houdon"; cat. 1857, no. III.58; cat. 1869, no. IV.36; Schuttwolf 1995, 138–139, no. 50. Related Works: see present cat. 7.

*Head of Minerva (see fig. 5)*

Lost in WWII; cat. 1804–1827, "Cap: V," fol. 8v, no. 19: "[Bas-relief] der IV.20 or 48; Schuttwolf 1995, 14, ill.

Related Works: Salon cat. 1777, 49, no. 251, marble medallion, pendant to *Head of Apollo* (see Dacier 1909–1921, 4:59; and Vitry 1907b, 205); marble relief offered in posthumous sale of contents of Houdon's studio, Paris, 15–17 Dec. 1828, 13, no. 1: "destiné à être appliqué sur un fond."

*Head of Alexander*

Possibly cat. 1804–1827, "Cap: V," fol. 8v, no. 17: "Haut Relief, den Griechischen Kaiser Alexander vorstellend." Possibly in Salon cat. 1771, 49, no. 283: "La Tête d'Alexandre. Médaillon plus grand que le naturel, pour faire pendant à une tête antique de Minerve de même grandeur & de même relief."

*Le Baiser donné*

Related Works: see present cat. 41.

*Head of a Cupid Crowned with Myrtle ("Roman Youth")*

Possibly cat. 1804–1827, "Cap: II," fol. 4v, no. 11: "Eine mit Wein bekränzte Büste." Possibly in Salon cat. 1771, 49, no. 284: "Deux Têtes de jeunes Hommes; l'une, couronnée de Mirte....De ronde bosse & de grandeur naturelle."

Related Works: marbles in collections of Peter Guggenheim, New York, and Stewart and Lynda Resnick, Los Angeles; Houdon's studio sale, Paris, 8 Oct. 1795, 13–14, no. 73: "Une Tête d'Amour, il est coëffé en cheveux naturellement bouclés & couronné de branche de myrthe, posé sur piédouche & socle de même matière; hauteur totale 19 pouces" (4,950 livres); Houdon's posthumous sale, 15–17 Dec. 1828, 19, no. 59: "Marbre blanc. — Buste de jeune homme couronné de myrte."

*Head of Medusa*

Probably a copy after a head on the breastplate of a bust of the *Emperor Hadrian*, Capitoline Museum, Rome (see fig. 6).

Related Works: Salon cat. 1775, no. 262: "Une Tête de Méduse, imitée

de l'Antique"; a marble version was sold in Houdon's studio sale, 8 Oct. 1795, 14, no. 76: "Méduse, coëffée en cheveux, mêlés de serpents, Médailon demi-relief, de 6 pouces 9 lignes de haut, sur 6 pouces de large" (2001 livres).

*Relief of a Priestess of Diana*

Possibly cat. 1804–1827, "Cap: V," fol. 9r, no. 17: "Ein Ovale Medaillon einer opfernden Figur."

*Two little terracotta birds*

Unidentified.

**Copies**

*Bas-relief of Hercules Farnese, by Friedrich Wilhelm Doell*

Cat. 1804–1827, "Cap: V," fol. 8r, no. 2: "[Ein Hautrelief] des farnesischen Hercules"; cat. 1845, under "Relief," no. 7; cat. 1857, no. III.103; cat. 1869, no. IV.74.

*Bas-relief of Ecorché, by Friedrich Wilhelm Doell*

Cat. 1804–1827, "Cap: V," fol. 8r, no. 3: "Anatomie von Houdon."

*Homer*

Cat. 1845, "Büsten," no. 25; cat. 1857, no. II.51; cat. 1869, no. III.52. Probably after the *Blind Homer* in the Capitoline Museum, Rome, a Roman copy in marble of a ca. 200 BC Hellenistic original.

*Demosthenes*

Cat. 1845, "Büsten," no. 9; cat. 1857, no. II.52; cat. 1869, no. III.54. Probably after the original Greek bronze by Polyuktos of 280 BC, documented in several Roman copies, including a marble bust in the Louvre.

*Caracalla*

After the 3rd century AD Roman marble bust in the Museo Nazionale, Naples.



7. Equestrian Statue of Louis XV, in Bordeaux, medal engraved by Jean Duvivier, 1733 (Nocq 1911, 172–173, no. 119).



8. Henry IV, prize of the Academy of La Rochelle, medal engraved by Pierre-Simon-Benjamin Duvivier, 1768 (Nocq 1911, 187-188, no. 157).

#### Foot of the Venus de Medici

Possibly one of the antique feet in cat. 1845, "Kleinere Statuen," nos. 88-96: "8 antike und moderne Füße"; cat. 1857, nos. II.III – II.4: "Antike Füße. drei davon colossal mit Sandalen."

Related Works: possibly documented by Louis-Léopold Boilly in a preparatory study for his painting of *Houdon in His Studio* (see cat. 66, fig. 2).

#### Bust of an Unknown Man (with drapery)

Unidentified; from an antique group representing a wedding scene; full copy in plaster formerly in the Palazzo Mancini, Rome (Académie de France).

#### Small Flayed Horse

Cat. 1804–1827, "Cap: III," fol. 5v, no. 11: "Anatomie eines Pferdes"; cat. 1845, "Kleinere Statuen," no. 50: "Eine Anatomie von einem Pferd"; cat. 1857, no. 138; cat. 1869, 25, no. 107. Unidentified half-size model of a bronze original, formerly in the Villa Mattei, Rome.

#### Head of Venus

Unidentified; plaster "repaired" by Houdon and noted for its outstanding whiteness.

#### Four bas-reliefs representing the Four Parts of the World

Cat. 1845, no. 5: "Vier Stück Basreliefs, die Weltheile bedeutend"; cat. 1857, III.72–75; cat. 1869, no. IV.16–19: "Die vier Weltheile Europa, Asien, Africa und America, durch weibliche Figuren versinnbildlicht. Reliefs von grosser Schönheit aus dem 16. Jahrhundert." Unidentified; after Balin, as below.

#### Relief of Louis XIV as Apollo

Unidentified; after the lost table service of Louis XIV by Balin, goldsmith to the king; copper reliefs belonging to the engraver Duvivier.

#### Drawings, Paintings, and Prints

Four mediocre prints illustrating hairstyles and fashion.

"Mme Boucher, holding a brochure in her hand," by Marie-Anne or Madeleine-Pélagie Houdon, pastel with fixative by M. Lorient.

Several pastels and drawings by Marie-Anne or Madeleine-Pélagie Houdon, without fixative.

"A Vestal" and "Two Naiads," by an unknown artist, pastel drawings under glass.

"Triumph of P[an]," engraving by Comte de Caylus (1692–1765), after the antique.

"Turned vases," engraving by Comte de Caylus (?).

#### Medal proofs

By Jean Duvivier

Coronation of Louis XV, 1722 (Nocq 1911, 153–154, no. 62).

Saint Michael Striking Down the Angels, 1723 (Nocq 1911, 157, no. 70).

Mr. le Maréchal de Villars and its reverse.

Mr. le Duc de Bourbon and its reverse, 1724 (Nocq 1911, 159, no. 77).

Equestrian Statue of Louis XV, in Bordeaux, 1733 (Nocq 1911, 172–173, no. 119) (see fig. 7).

Medals of different dates with the history of the king, measuring 18 *lignes* in diameter.

#### By Pierre-Simon-Benjamin Duvivier

Equestrian Statue of Louis XV with a reverse for the six merchants' guilds, 1763 (Nocq 1911, 183, no. 147).

The King in Formal Dress, done five years earlier, the resemblance of which is striking; with two reverses remarkable for the delicacy of the workmanship, and the regularity of the buildings.

Henry IV, prize of the Academy of La Rochelle, 1768 (Nocq 1911, 187–188, no. 156) (see fig. 8).

Duc de Villars, prize of the Academy of Marseilles; reverse with a genius holding crowns to reward Agriculture, Commerce, and Navigation, 1766 (Nocq 1911, 186–187, no. 154).

Medal cast by the city of Lyons for the same purpose.

Different subjects from the history of Louis XV.

Octagonal *jeton* in the new fashion, representing Mr. l'Evêque de Rheims and its reverse, 1771 (Nocq 1911, 299, no. 570).

In the course of doing research for the present catalogue, Ulrike D. Mathies (Boston) discovered the document discussed in this essay. Christoph Frank (Rome) discovered the same document independently. Anne Poulet wishes to thank Ms. Mathies for having compiled the Summary Object List, with its inventory references, and to thank both Ms. Mathies and Mr. Frank for their collaboration throughout the study of this document.

1. For a full discussion of this project see Frank, Mathies, and Poulet 2002a, 213–221; Frank, Mathies, and Poulet 2002b, 475–484.

2. On Houdon's portraits of the ducal family see the essay "Houdon and the German Courts" and the entries for cats. 55–56 in the present catalogue.

3. For details see Rau 2000, 56–68.

4. Schuttwolf 1995, 14–16, 129–157, nos. 44–65.

5. FLB, Chart A 712, fols. 8r–14r. Its script is that of a professional copyist, whose services Houdon occasionally used for important documents.

6. Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, Handschriftenabteilung, Autogr. IX, A; published in Grimm (ed. 1972), no. 140, 215–216.

7. Réau 1923, 41–52.

8. Bresc-Bautier 1994, 372–373.

9. Before he joined Houdon's studio, Doell had been experimenting with a kind of glossy finish for plasters ("Gipsglanz"), which he hoped would lend durability to the figures. See Rau 2000, 22–23.

10. A mother mold is a larger piece into which the smaller pieces are fitted to hold them in place.

11. This was the mold for the bronze *Equestrian Statue of Louis XV* by Edme Bouchardon that had been cast in one piece on 6 May 1758 in the studio later occupied by Houdon. The bronze statue was installed in what is now the Place de la Concorde but destroyed at the time of the Revolution. See Bresc-Bautier 1994, 373, 376 nn. 6–10.

12. Doell writes about his experiences in Paris and his opinion about the academy in a series of letters to his friend Bertuch, discussed in Rau 2000, 28–32.





ERNEST DUX SAXO-COTHANUS

Goudon 1773

HOUDON AND THE GERMAN COURTS:  
SERVING THE FRANCOPHILE PRINCES

Ulrike D. Mathies

Most of the approximately seventy extant works by Houdon in Germany were acquired in the eighteenth century by German noble families,<sup>1</sup> a historical link still reflected in the locations of the main collections in Gotha, Schwerin, Berlin (with Potsdam and Rheinsberg), and Weimar. For the approximately three hundred sovereign territories within the German Empire, as for nearly all courts throughout Europe, France was the ultimate cultural and political model, relentlessly copied in its fashion, literature, architecture, and language.<sup>2</sup> French was universally spoken and written by the German aristocracy, and an educational journey to Paris, the heart of intellectual and court life, belonged to the well-rounded upbringing of young noblemen or princes. In this context it is less surprising that one of those small Francophile German principalities, the court of Saxe-Gotha-Altenburg, became Houdon's first major patron at a time when the gifted sculptor was just beginning his career in Paris after his student years in Rome. Although Houdon's two visits to Gotha in the early 1770s were his only trips to Germany, his oeuvre and his reputation drew Germans as clients throughout his life.

Central to almost all of Houdon's German commissions was the expatriate Frédéric-Melchior Grimm (1723–1807),<sup>3</sup> a prominent figure of the Paris Enlightenment who served as advisor and cultural attaché to several members of the German nobility. A native of the imperial city of Regensburg, he had settled in the French capital in 1749 and became a close friend of the influential critic Denis Diderot and his collaborator on the *Encyclopédie*.<sup>4</sup> With the publication of the *Correspondance littéraire*, a semiprivate cultural newsletter distributed in manuscript form to an exclusive circle of ruling foreign families, Grimm had a compelling tool to gain the favor of the powerful and to shape their opinions.<sup>5</sup> His subscribers included King Frederick II and his brother Prince Henry of Prussia, Duchess Louise Dorothea of Saxe-Gotha and her son Duke Ernst II, Duke Carl August of Saxe-Weimar, and Margrave Alexander of Ansbach, in addition to the courts of Russia, Sweden, and Poland.

*Detail of Ernst II, Duke of Saxe-Gotha, cat. 56*

Coedited by Diderot and Grimm's long-standing confidante, Mme d'Épinay (1726–1783), the *Correspondance littéraire* was a valuable means of communication between the French philosophes and the European authorities, with the implicit intent to aid the political realization of Enlightenment ideas by educating its influential readership.<sup>6</sup> On a more concrete level the newsletter was an excellent source of uncensored information on Parisian intellectual life. It also helped promote select authors, composers, or artists, which often resulted in the increased acquisition of the works reviewed. By the mid-1770s Grimm withdrew from his activities as a literary critic in favor of working directly for those in power. He received official appointments as minister plenipotentiary (Geheimer Rat) for the duke of Saxe-Gotha in 1775 and councillor of state for Catherine II of Russia in 1777. Until his final departure from Paris in 1792, his responsibilities ranged from important diplomatic missions to art transactions to escorting foreign visitors through Paris. Both Grimm and Diderot were already on very friendly terms with Houdon by 1772, when they are recorded as casually stopping by his house.<sup>7</sup>

+ HOUDON AND GOTHA +

From his early days in Paris, Grimm was attached to the court of Saxe-Gotha,<sup>8</sup> which in spite of its limited financial resources had acquired a taste for French splendor and *joie de vivre*. Duchess Louise Dorothea (1710–1767), the highly cultivated wife of Duke Friedrich III (1699–1772), was one of the first subscribers to Grimm's *Correspondance littéraire* and played a key role in bringing the Enlightenment to Gotha.<sup>9</sup> Her son Ernst Ludwig (1745–1804),<sup>10</sup> who reigned as Ernst II, focused on the arts and sciences and, while economically prudent, added considerably to the ducal collections in Schloss Friedenstein. Apparently, as part of an ambitious plan to turn Gotha into a major center of Enlightenment activities in Germany, he initiated the foundation of an art academy at his court and established a collection of plaster casts for educational purposes.

In 1771, thanks to Grimm's intervention, Houdon was engaged to take over the design and execution of a funerary monument for the late duchess of Saxe-Gotha, a project that had already been in the works for several years.<sup>11</sup> Houdon traveled to Gotha twice—from 25 October to 3 December 1771, and again, after the duke's death, from 2 May to 15 June 1773, when the plans for the mausoleum were changed to commemorate both husband and wife. During his first visit Houdon not only studied the location for the projected tomb but also rendered

the portraits of several members of the ducal family and befriended Ernst Ludwig and his spouse, Charlotte Amalie of Saxe-Meiningen. In anticipation of his cultural plans for Gotha, the hereditary prince spontaneously decided to send his protégé Friedrich Wilhelm Doell (1750–1816),<sup>12</sup> a former model maker for porcelain figures, to Paris with Houdon to be trained as a sculptor in Houdon's studio.<sup>13</sup> In July 1772, following Ernst's ascension to the throne, Houdon mailed an assortment of sixteen of his early works in plaster to Gotha, including the figures of the *Saint Bruno* and the *Priest of the Lupercalia* (cats. 4 and 5) as well as copies after the antique, drawings, and medals, all of which were intended to be study objects in the duke's planned art academy. The shipment was accompanied by a recently discovered letter, in which the sculptor gives a detailed account of the pieces in the crates, explains or defends some of his compositions, and articulates his opinions, granting insight into his beliefs both as an artist and as a person.<sup>14</sup> Despite his dismissal from the ill-fated tomb project in 1775 and the court's failure to keep the marble statue of *Diana the Huntress* (see cat. 35), Houdon continued his cordial relationship with the ducal family for decades and was highly respected for his skills as a portraitist. Over the years the plaster version of the *Diana* and several representative portraits were acquired, including busts of Voltaire, Diderot, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Benjamin Franklin, and Jean-Sylvain Bailly (see cat. 33). Originally displayed in the halls of Schloss Friedenstein or incorporated directly into the collection of plaster casts that from 1786 onward was overseen by Houdon's former student Doell, most of these sculptures have been preserved until today, forming the largest collection of works by Houdon outside of France.<sup>15</sup>

As shown by recently published documents, Grimm and Diderot were instrumental in the planning of the funerary monument for the court of Gotha.<sup>16</sup> Their deliberations as *donneurs d'idées*, or iconographic advisors, took the form of a vivid epistolary correspondence and involved the above-mentioned Mme d'Épinay in Paris as well as her Neapolitan friend, Abbé Ferdinando Galiani (1728–1787); Grimm acted, as usual, as intermediary for the court. Whereas the long-debated mausoleum was never realized, the visible results of another instance of such intellectual patronage can be studied in the portrait medallions of Friedrich III and Ernst II of Saxe-Gotha (cats. 55–56), the earliest known works executed by Houdon for a German patron. Although smaller in scale, they illustrate the immense influence the philosophes had in the early 1770s on both the young Duke Ernst II in Gotha and the emerging sculptor in Paris.

Soon after the death of Friedrich III on 10 March 1772, and amid renewed discussions concerning the mausoleum, Ernst II decided to issue a medal in memory of his father. As usual in such matters he consulted his advisor Grimm, explicitly asking for the input of the “men of letters and of taste,” especially the “charming abbot of Naples,” Galiani.<sup>17</sup> This distinguished diplomat and economist, an intimate of the Enlightenment circle surrounding Diderot, was a personal acquaintance of Ernst and had helped design a celebratory medal for him in the past.<sup>18</sup> As a connoisseur and collector of ancient coins, Ernst had a clear concept of what his medal should look like. In his letter to Grimm he suggested that the obverse show his father’s bust truncated at the neck, “copied after the plaster by Houdon, hair in the antique style,” and that it be inscribed with his father’s name. For the reverse he imagined a standing *génie*, an allegorical figure of mourning, supported by an extinguished torch that pointed at two shields bearing the names “Gotha” and “Altenbourg,” and inscriptions reading “moeror publicus” and “D. X. MARS. MDCCCLXXII.” Immediately taking on the organization of the project, Grimm arranged for the shipment of Houdon’s plaster from Gotha to his own address in Paris, warning that every possible precaution should be taken to avoid transport-related damage.<sup>19</sup> Indicating that the medal was to be struck in Paris, Grimm promised the duke to assure personally its high quality, in regard both to the importance of the subject and to the high standards of Gotha’s mint.

In late June Grimm forwarded Ernst’s proposal to Abbé Galiani in Naples, specifying that the medal “must have an antique appearance, like the ruins of Herculaneum.”<sup>20</sup> An expert in ancient art and history, renowned for his Latin skills, and a serious coin collector himself, Galiani responded with a comprehensive and witty lecture on the subject.<sup>21</sup> The ancient Greeks and Romans, he noted, never mourned their dead princes, and if there was one country that had no reason to grieve over their new ruler it was Saxe-Gotha. Thus, one could not find a suitable prototype for a commemorative medal among the ancient coinage until after the Romans had ended the practice of deifying their emperors. From those later examples Galiani chose two bronze medals honoring the emperors Claudius Gothicus and Maximianus and bearing the words “Requies optimor: merit” (Repose of the highest merits),<sup>22</sup> both identifiable as part of a series struck posthumously under Constantine the Great (fig. 1). “Here is my medal,” Galiani rejoiced, explaining that the obverse was to display the head of the Friedrich III “hair in the antique style,” as required by Ernst, but with the royal head-



1. Commemorative bronze coin for Claudius Gothicus, drawing published in Henry Cohen, *Description historique des monnaies frappées sous l'empire romain*, 8 vols. (Paris, 1880–1892), 6:154, fig. 243.

band, the sign of sovereignty worn by all ancient kings, plus the inscription “Divo Frederico Gothico, optimo principi.” For the reverse Galiani imagined the seated and elegantly dressed figure of the duke; in front of him a palm tree, symbol of eternity, with the coats of arms of Gotha and Altenburg hanging down and fasces lying at the bottom; and as inscriptions the cited “Requies optimor: merit” as well as the date of the duke’s death in the exergue. If, however, the duke insisted on his own ideas, the abbot mockingly stated, he should consider that such a *génie* with his torch upside down pointing at the shields would imply that the late duke set his states on fire, just as a similar figure on the reverse of Hadrian’s medals represents the burning of old debts. Galiani also recommended that the duke limit the number of *génies* to one, as they embody the soul of the deceased, whose spirit is symbolized by the extinguishing torch. He then corrected the Latin of Ernst’s proposed inscriptions.<sup>23</sup>

Galiani’s design for the medal was well received in Paris.<sup>24</sup> By the end of 1772 Houdon’s plasters arrived in Paris from Gotha, and Grimm notified the duke: “Since the medallions have arrived here in sad shape, they are in the hands of M. Houdon, who does not allow anyone to readjust them. I also informed him about all the ideas your Serene Highness had in regard to the medal: because it is he again who wants to arrange the head of the late Monseigneur le Duc in plaster so that the medallist can just copy it; he already consulted the medals indicated for that purpose. . . . I hope that your Highness will see the fruits of our conversations on this subject.”<sup>25</sup> In January 1773 Grimm announced more meetings with Houdon and made clear that although everyone was doing their best the medal could not be finished before the end of the official mourning for Friedrich III in March.<sup>26</sup> Ten months later, on 16 November



2a-b. Houdon, obverse and reverse of commemorative medal for Friedrich III of Saxe-Gotha, 1773, silver, Schlossmuseum Gotha.

1773, the completed medal, engraved by the famous medallist Pierre-Simon-Benjamin Duvivier (1730–1819), entered the ducal collection in two versions, silver and bronze (see fig. 2a–b; and cats. 55–56, fig. 1a–b).<sup>27</sup> Grimm confirmed the duke’s satisfaction, “I am delighted that Your Serene Highness is pleased with the medal,” while Galiani proudly reported to Mme d’Epinay: “The duke of Saxe-Gotha sent me the medal in gold, engraved after my design, accompanied by an extraordinary letter.”<sup>28</sup>

Houdon’s medallion of Friedrich III (cat. 55) represents the front of this commemorative medal and follows Galiani’s iconographic advice in all details. Its companion piece, the portrait of Ernst II (cat. 56), is a congenial adaptation and shows how the sculptor employed the same artistic principles for the younger sitter. The accomplished inscriptions on both medallions, with their abbreviations and complex cases, are also typical of Galiani’s command of Latin. On the other hand, Ernst II’s purposeful choice of ancient prototypes and his desire to recreate “the purest antique style”<sup>29</sup> reveal a certain propensity for the highly refined neoclassicism practiced in Italy by followers of Johann Winckelmann. The same year he became duke and commissioned the medal, Ernst II appointed Johann Friedrich Reiffenstein (1719–1793), Winckelmann’s successor in Rome and an ardent critic of the French style, as councilor to the court of Gotha. In part through the increasing influence of this antiquarian, the court of Gotha eventually withdrew from the Parisian aesthetics represented by Houdon and abandoned the mausoleum project.

+ VISITORS TO PARIS +

As a result of Houdon’s growing popularity, his studio in Paris, which was by 1775 situated at the prestigious address of the Bib-

liothèque du Roi in the rue Richelieu (see cats. 10 and 23), became a veritable tourist attraction. While his name must have already been familiar at a number of courts in Germany that were related to that in Gotha, it was again Grimm and his circle who made an active effort to introduce visiting foreigners to the sculptor’s work. For Grimm’s Francophile charges, Houdon’s studio became one of the customary stops during their stay in the French capital, along with monuments, museums, and private collections.

The seventeen-year-old hereditary prince of Saxe-Weimar, Carl August (1757–1828),<sup>30</sup> a cousin of Ernst II of Saxe-Gotha, traveled to Paris with his younger brother Constantin at the beginning of 1775.<sup>31</sup> As their cicerone, Grimm was entrusted with organizing the details of their itinerary as well as their accommodation at the residence of the duc de Chartres in the rue Richelieu, near Houdon’s studio.<sup>32</sup> Carl August’s trip, following his engagement to Princess Louise of Hesse-Darmstadt, was intended to improve his diplomatic connections and to enlarge his cultural horizons before he became duke at eighteen. As was customary for such an educational journey, or “Kavaliersreise,” the young men were guided by their tutors, Johann Eustachius Graf von Görtz and the literary Baron Karl Ludwig von Knebel, in touring the sites, participating in the most fashionable salons, and being introduced to scientists, intellectuals, and artists.<sup>33</sup> On 3 March they attended a performance of Gluck’s opera *Iphigénie en Aulide*, and five days later they met the much-acclaimed composer in person, just before his departure for Vienna.<sup>34</sup> Apparently Knebel took a preliminary look at Houdon’s studio with Diderot<sup>35</sup> before the whole group went there on 15 March, as Graf von Görtz wrote in a letter to his wife.<sup>36</sup> In the studio they were able to admire, among other works, the portraits of singer Sophie Arnould and composer Christoph Willibald Gluck (cats. 8–10), which Houdon was to exhibit in the Salon of that year. Carl August was so pleased with the resemblance of these busts to the illustrious personages he had just met that he immediately acquired them in plaster.<sup>37</sup> Almost ten years later he bought the newly finished portrait of Prince Henry of Prussia (cat. 54), probably without ever having seen it. Carl August’s awakened interest in French art in general and Houdon’s works in particular continued after his return to Weimar and his ascension to the throne. In September 1775 the Paris-based Hellenist J.-B. Gaspard d’Ansse de Villoison,<sup>38</sup> a friend of Knebel who aspired to become the Weimar court’s literary correspondent and business advisor, enclosed in his letter to Carl August an account of the sculptures



3. Houdon, Friedrich Franz I of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, 1782, terracotta, Staatliches Museum, Schwerin.

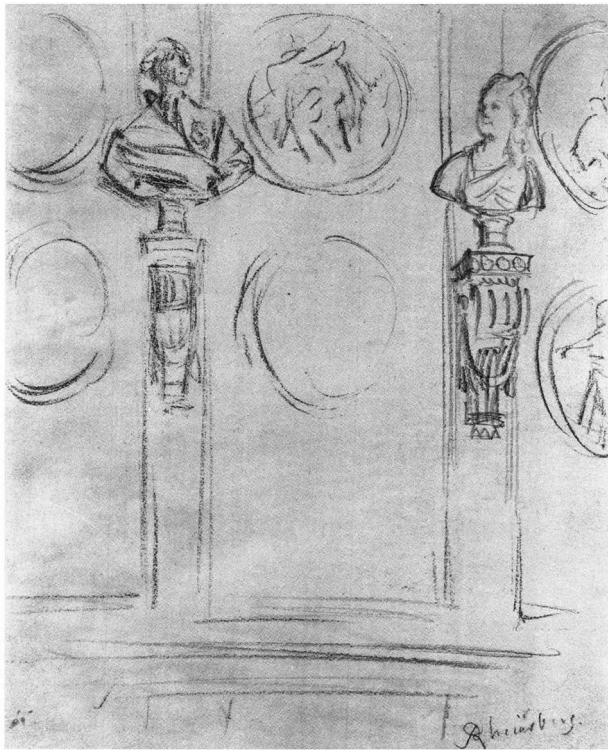


4. Houdon, Louise of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, 1782, terracotta, Staatliches Museum, Schwerin.

in the latest Salon: "As I know your taste for sculpture, my lord, I asked M. Houdon to write a report on the finest pieces by him as well as by other artists who exhibited at the Louvre."<sup>39</sup>

On a comparable journey to Paris in the winter of 1782 the hereditary prince of the northern German duchy of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, Friedrich Franz (1756–1842),<sup>40</sup> and his wife, Louise, commissioned their own portraits from Houdon (figs. 3–4). Although in this instance all arrangements were made by their minister in Paris, the comte Diodati, Grimm was in contact with the princely couple and dined with them at least once.<sup>41</sup> Handwritten travel journals by two members of the entourage, the lady-in-waiting Juliana Marianne von Rantzau and chamberlain August Georg von Brandenstein,<sup>42</sup> recount the visits to Houdon's workshop and are testimony to the sculptor's speedy work. As part of their sightseeing program the Germans toured the Bibliothèque du Roi on 2 December 1782, when Rantzau wrote: "in the large block occupied by the library is the studio of M. Houdon, great sculptor in marble and

other materials, where we saw some very beautiful statues. The prince and princess were so tempted to have their busts done that they will begin their sittings tomorrow."<sup>43</sup> Brandenstein observed: "Their Highnesses saw there the busts of several of their acquaintances and were so astonished at their likenesses that they resolved to have their own busts done as well."<sup>44</sup> Princess Louise had her first sittings on the mornings of 4 and 5 December, after which Brandenstein already noticed considerable resemblance in the advancing portrait.<sup>45</sup> Following a three-day excursion to Versailles, the princess resumed her sittings on 10 December, and Friedrich Franz went in three days later; by that time Louise's bust was almost finished, "at least the features were formed and waited only for the hand of the master to perfect them."<sup>46</sup> Only six days later the prince and his entourage left the French capital carrying several boxes of souvenirs and artwork, with more shipments to come. A significant part of Schwerin's large collection of fifteen busts by Houdon, most of them made of terracotta-colored plaster



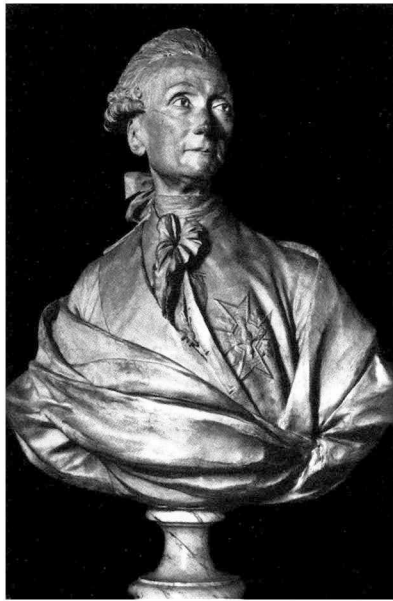
5. Adolf Menzel, "Weißlackierte Kammer" in Schloß Rheinsberg (showing Houdon's busts of the duc de Nivernais and the comtesse de Sabran), 1860, graphite on paper, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett.

and predating 1782, must have been acquired on this trip.<sup>47</sup> Many works represent personalities that Friedrich Franz and Louise had encountered in Paris, in one way or another—including Gluck, one of whose operas they attended; Voltaire, Rousseau, and d'Alembert as the acknowledged philosophes; and the comte de Buffon as the owner of the Cabinet d'histoire naturelle they visited. A description of Schloss Ludwigslust in 1803 refers to "several busts by Houdon in terracotta,"<sup>48</sup> installed in a small room next to the paintings gallery, while the busts of Friedrich Franz, by then the reigning duke, and his wife would have been displayed in a more prominent location.<sup>49</sup>

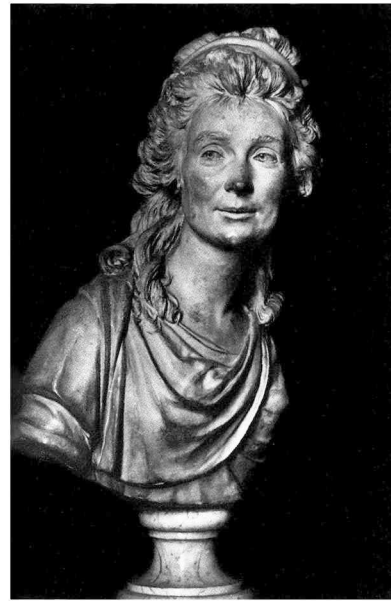
Another sizable collection of works by Houdon in Germany was assembled by Prince Henry of Prussia (1726–1802), the younger brother of King Frederick II. Henry was already fifty-eight years old when he traveled to Paris for the first time in 1784; a second trip followed in 1788–1789.<sup>50</sup> The Francophile prince, introduced by his longtime correspondent Grimm, befriended numerous amateurs and members of the enlightened aristocracy and participated in the usual mix of intellectual, social, and cultural activities, including a visit to Houdon's stu-

dio. In a letter to Frederick II of 5 October 1784 Henry lauded the sculptor's extraordinary skills and the stunning exactness of his portraits.<sup>51</sup> He failed to mention, however, the sittings for his own bust, which survives in two variants and apparently was intended as a gift to family members and friends (see cat. 54). Over time the prince purchased a number of other works from Houdon for his palace in Rheinsberg near Berlin, portraits of sitters that ranged from the famous *encyclopédistes* to his personal friends and acquaintances.<sup>52</sup> Although dispersed today, the collection can be largely reconstructed<sup>53</sup> thanks to the inventories of the contents of Schloss Rheinsberg taken after Henry's death<sup>54</sup> as well as pictorial documents, especially two graphite drawings by Adolf Menzel (see fig. 5).<sup>55</sup> This famous German painter and illustrator visited Rheinsberg in 1860, capturing views of the palace and its decoration in more than twenty sketches before it fell into neglect in the later nineteenth century. Evidently all of the busts by Houdon were placed on matching brackets and mounted high up on the walls, their former location within the palace suggesting an installation date after 1786, when the rooms were newly decorated. It was supposedly here, surrounded by the images of his old French friends, such as the comtesse de Sabran and the duc de Nivernais (figs. 6 and 7), that the aging Henry preferred to stay in the last years of his life.

Houdon's German clientele in the eighteenth century consisted primarily of visiting members of smaller courts, who were interested in portrait busts of public figures or of people they knew. Owing to their financial limitations, they preferred the low-cost versions in plaster or terracotta, reinforcing the souvenir- or memento-like character of their acquisitions. An exception is Margrave Alexander of Ansbach's "bust of Voltaire by Houdon, in white Carrara marble," which by 1786 he exhibited in his bedroom "on the oriental marble table."<sup>56</sup> Even more extraordinary were Henry of Prussia's commission of his own likeness in bronze and his brother Frederick II's earlier purchase of a marble bust of Voltaire in 1781 (cat. 24). Although the latter was not associated with a personal visit to Paris by Frederick but negotiated in written correspondence over a period of two and a half years, the transaction was again initiated by a member of Grimm's circle of philosophes, Jean Le Rond d'Alembert (1717–1783), coeditor with Diderot of the *Encyclopédie*. D'Alembert's involvement is characteristic of the way Houdon was systematically supported and promoted by the proponents of the Paris Enlightenment, both inside and outside of France, and it indicates that the sculptor had been chosen to represent in concrete form



6. Houdon, Duc de Nivernais, ca. 1787, terracotta, Stiftung Schlösser und Gärten Potsdam-Sanssouci, Rheinsberg.



7. Houdon, Comtesse de Sabran, ca. 1785, terracotta, Stiftung Schlösser und Gärten Potsdam-Sanssouci, Rheinsberg.

their appearance and their ideas. To help Houdon multiply and spread these images, especially among independent foreign rulers, was a logical consequence of the philosophes' larger aspiration to educate those in power and transform them into enlightened monarchs. Even long after the French Revolution, Houdon's studio remained a magnet for traveling Germans, including the Prussian King Frederick William III (1770–1840), as the

*Moniteur universel* reported in September 1815: "His Majesty the King of Prussia, accompanied by the famous traveler, M. de Humboldt, visited the day before yesterday the studio of M. Houdon. His Majesty seemed to be satisfied above all with the bust of Molière, in which the artist succeeded in conveying the creative personality and at the same time faithfully rendered the features of the creator of our comic theater."<sup>57</sup>



The author wishes to express her gratitude to all individuals and institutions that facilitated her research in Germany, particularly those mentioned in this contribution. Most heartfelt thanks are due Mr. and Mrs. Jeffrey E. Marshall (Boston) for their generous support. In appreciation of their unflinching interest and belief in the Houdon project, this essay is dedicated to Peter and Christa Mathies and Lorenz Willmann.

1. The most complete account of Houdon's sculptures in Germany is Mansfeld 1955.

2. Cf. Jochen Schlobach, "Französische Aufklärung und deutsche Fürsten," *Zeitschrift für historische Forschung* 17, no. 3 (1990), 327–349.

3. On Grimm see Kafker and Kafker 1988, 157–163, and references therein; still the standard monograph is Scherer 1887.

4. See Schlobach 1980, 47–63, and references therein.

5. The *Correspondance littéraire* was edited by Grimm from 1753 to 1773 and continued by Jacques-Henri Meister until 1813. See Ulla Kölving and Jeanne Carriat, *Inventaire de la Correspondance littéraire de Grimm et Meister*, Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century 225–227 (Oxford, 1984); Maria Moog-Grünwald, *Jakob Heinrich Meister und die "Correspondance littéraire."* Ein Beitrag zur Aufklärung in Europa, Komparatistische Studien 13 (Berlin and New York, 1989).

6. See Jochen Schlobach, "Literarische Korrespondenzen," *Aufklärungen. Frankreich und Deutschland im 18. Jahrhundert*, ed. Gerhard Sauer and Jochen Schlobach (Heidelberg, 1985), 221–233.

7. See Diderot's letter to Grimm of 2 September 1772 in Diderot (ed. 1955–1970), 12:115: "Si nous revenions un peu de bonne heure, nous nous ferions descendre à la porte de Houdon" (the author is grateful to Christoph Frank, Rome, for this reference).

8. See E. Charavay, "Grimm et la cour de Saxe-Gotha (1763–1767)," *Revue des documents historiques* 5 (1878), 8–76.

9. See Wolfgang Ranke, ed., *Europäische Literatur am Gothaer Fürstentum* [exh. cat., Universitäts- und Forschungsbibliothek Erfurt/Gotha] (Gotha, 1999), and references therein.

10. August Beck, *Ernst der Zweite, Herzog zu Sachsen-Gotha und Altenburg, als Pfleger und Beschützer der Wissenschaft und Kunst* (Gotha, 1854); Hans von Thümmel, *Beiträge zur Geschichte des Herzogthums Altenburg* (Altenburg, 1818), 69–94.

11. See Frank, Mathies, and Poulet 2002a, 213–221; and Frank, Mathies, and Poulet 2002b, 475–483.

12. On Doell, who was referred to Gotha by Grimm, see Rau 2000.

13. Doell stayed in Paris for fourteen months, from Dec. 1771 to Jan. 1773, before studying in Italy and return to Gotha in 1782.

14. See Appendix in the present catalogue.

15. The recently discovered, oldest known inventory of the plaster cast collection, "Verzeichniss der im sogenannten Antiken-Saale befindlichen Abgüsse, Büsten pp." (ThStA, no. 63), written between the death of the duke in 1804 and that of the duchess in 1827, lists fifteen identifiable works by Houdon. On the present collection see Schuttwolf 1995, 14–16, 129–157, nos. 44–65.

16. As in note 11.

17. The content of Ernst's letter to Grimm is known from the excerpt quoted by Grimm in his letter to Galiani of 28 June 1772 (Grimm [ed. 1972], 192, no. 127).

18. A medal celebrating Ernst's wedding in 1769 that was never struck.

19. Grimm's letter to Ernst II from the end of May 1772 (Grimm [ed. 1972], 213–214, no. 139).

20. Grimm's letter to Galiani of 28 June 1772 (Grimm [ed. 1972], 193, no. 127).

21. Galiani's letter to Grimm via Mme d'Épinay of 18 July 1772 (Galiani and d'Épinay [ed. 1992–1997], 3:83–85).

22. Henry Cohen, *Description historique des monnaies frappées sous l'empire romain*, 8 vols. (Paris, 1880–1892), 6:154 and 545, nos. 243–244 and 495–498, fig. 243; *The Roman Imperial Coinage*, ed. Harold Mattingly, Edward A. Sydenham, et al. (London, 1923–1981), 5.1:237, no. 298.

23. Galiani's proficiency in Latin was celebrated by Grimm in *Corr. littéraire*, 8:150.

24. See Mme d'Épinay's letter to Galiani of 15 Aug. 1772 reporting that Grimm "finds your medal very beautiful"; Galiani's response of 5 Sept. 1772: "I am very glad that [Grimm] is pleased with my medal" (Galiani and d'Épinay [ed. 1992–1997], 3:91–93, 103); and Grimm's letter to Galiani of 28 Sept. 1772 confirming that although the wedding medal for Ernst had never been struck owing to the prince's modesty, the medal for his father was guaranteed to be executed (Grimm [ed. 1972], 194, no. 128).

25. Letter of 31 Dec. 1772; published in Seznec 1959, 113–114.

26. Grimm's letters to Ernst of 9 and 16 Jan. 1773 (Grimm [ed. 1972], 218–220, nos. 142–143).

27. Listed in the handwritten inventory book "Verzeichnis der neu angeschafften Medaillen (1723–1794)" (FLB, Chart A 1241, fols. 223r and 270v). The medal is still kept in the Schlossmuseum Gotha,

Münzkabinett (inv. 4.1/1368: silver, diam. 48 mm; and inv. 4.1/1369: bronze, diam. 47.5 mm); see Karl Wilhelm Dassdorf, *Numismatisch-historischer Leitfaden zur Übersicht der sächsischen Geschichte* (Dresden, 1801), 332, no. 2506; Georg Rathgeber, "Gothaische Münzen und Medaillen aus den Jahren 1772 bis 1837," *Numismatische Zeitung* 15 (July 1840), col. 113. There is another version in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, cabinet des médailles (inv. 664: bronze, diam. 47 mm); see Nocq 1911, no. 169, 193, pl. XV; and L. Forrer, *Biographical Dictionary of Medallists* (London, 1902–1930), 6:297, no. 29.

28. Grimm's letter to Ernst of 3 Feb. 1774 (Grimm [ed. 1972], 222, no. 145); and Galiani's to Mme d'Épinay of 2 Apr. 1774 (Galiani and d'Épinay [ed. 1992–1997], 4:131; see also 4:135 and 202).

29. As in note 19.

30. Carl August became duke in Sept. 1775; see Jochen Klaus, *Carl August von Sachsen-Weimar-Eisenach. Fürst und Mensch* (Weimar, 1991), and references therein.

31. From 27 Feb. to 12 May 1775 (dates deduced from documents listed in note 33).

32. Although Grimm officially reported to the princes' mother, Duchess Anna Amalia of Saxe-Weimar, about their stay, the plan to appoint him Weimar's diplomatic representative in Paris was not carried out (Joret 1895, 530).

33. Their activities were recorded by Graf von Görtz in his letters to his wife, published in Othmar Freiherr von Strotzingen, "Beiträge zur Jugendgeschichte des Herzogs Karl August," *Jahrbuch des Freien Deutschen Hochstifts* (Frankfurt, 1909), 311–371, and in his official reports to Duchess Anna Amalia (HStA, A XVIII 41). See Carl August's own description in his letters to his mother, published in Alfred Bergmann, ed., *Briefe des Herzogs Carl August von Sachsen-Weimar an seine Mutter die Herzogin Anna Amalia* (Jena, 1938), 15–19, nos. 15–20.

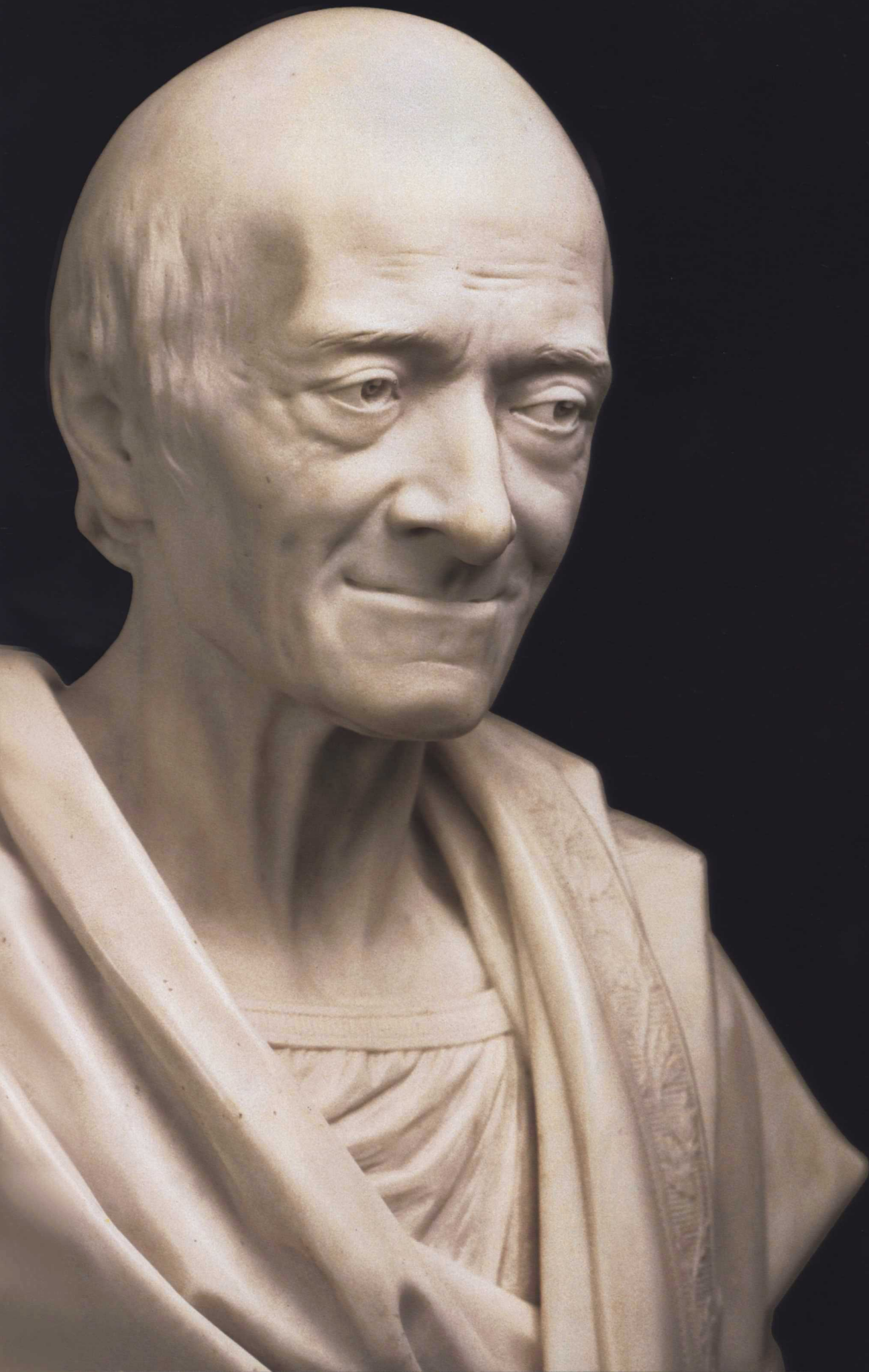
34. Letter from Graf von Görtz to his wife (Strotzingen 1909, 350 and 352).

35. "Mit Diderot war ich im Atelier eines Bildhauers zusammen"; see K. L. von Knebel's *literarischer Nachlass und Briefwechsel*, ed. K. A. Varnhagen von Ense and Th. Mundt (Leipzig, 1840), 1:XXVIII.

36. Strotzingen 1909, 354 (the author is grateful to Dr. Ulrike Müller-Harang, Nationalmuseum Weimar, for this reference); see also Graf von Görtz's letter to Anna Amalia: "Ajourd'hui ils ont vu l'Atelier de M. Houdon Sculpteur" (HStA, A XVIII 41, fol. 73v).

37. These purchases were possibly recorded by Graf von Görtz in his lost "Compte de dépenses," which listed all expenses of the trip in detail; see Charles Joret, "Rapport sur une mission scientifique en Allemagne. Les Français à la cour de Weimar (1775–1806)," *Nouvelles archives des missions scientifiques* 9 (Paris, 1889), 7.

38. Joret 1895, 523–549.
39. “Comme je sçais, Monseigneur, le goût que vous avez pour la sculpture, j’ai prié M. Houdon de me donner une notice des pièces les plus remarquables de sa composition, de celles des autres artistes qui ont été exposées au Louvre . . .” (BN, MS suppl. grec 943, fol. 60r; published in Charles Joret, *D’Anse de Villoison et l’hellénisme en France pendant le dernier tiers du XVIIIe siècle* [Paris, 1910], 501).
40. Friedrich Franz became duke in 1785, and grand duke in 1815; see Jürgen Borchert, *Mecklenburgs Großherzöge 1815–1918* (Schwerin, 1992), 8–29. He and Louise were in Paris from 23 Nov. to 19 Dec. 1782 as part of a longer journey through England, France, and Holland. The documents regarding this trip were discovered and discussed in Mansfeld 1955, 144–150, 166–171; cf. Steinmann 1911, 207–210.
41. Mansfeld 1955, 148.
42. Juliana Marianne von Rantzau, “Journal, fait par une des dames de la suite de S. A. Madame la Princesse Frederic de Mecklembourg du voyage quelle fit, par la Holande, l’Angleterre, la France, et l’Allemagne, en 1782 et 83” (excerpts cited in Mansfeld 1955, nn. 113–117); and August Georg von Brandenstein, “Voyage de Son Altesse . . . le Prince Frédéric François Duc de Mecklenbourg-Schwerin (Aout-Dec. 1782) par Mr. de Brandenstein, Cavalier de sa suite” (both in the Landeshauptarchiv Schwerin: 2.26–1 Großherzogliches Kabinett I, 4280, Fürstenhaus E Friedrich Franz I; and 2.12–1/7 Reisen mecklenburgischer Fürsten, 340). Brandenstein’s journal ends prematurely after 9 Dec. 1782.
43. “Dans le grand quaré destiné à la bibliothèque, est l’atelier de Mr. Houdon, grand pousseur en marbre, et autres compositions, ches le quel nous vimes de très belles statues. Le Pr[ince] et la Pr[incesse] furent si tentés de faire faire leurs bustes qu’ils comencerent leurs seances dès le lendemain” (Rantzau 1782, 150).
44. “Les Altesses y virent les bustes de plusieurs personnes de leur connoissance, et furent si frappées de leur ressemblance, qu’elles resolurent de faire faire les leurs également” (Brandenstein 1782, 134).
45. Brandenstein 1782, 136 and 137.
46. “. . . du moins les traits etaient formés et n’attendaient que la main du maitre pour se perfectioner” (Rantzau 1782, 169 and 173).
47. On the collection see Steinmann 1911, 207–223, pls. 42–49; Mansfeld 1955, 149–166; Schwerin 2000, 166–200.
48. Johann Christian Friedrich Wundemann, *Mecklenburg, in Hinsicht auf Kultur, Kunst und Geschmack*, (Schwerin and Wismar, 1803), 2:283.
49. Slightly larger copies in plaster were given to the court’s relatives in Rudolstadt, today in the Thüringer Landesmuseum Heidecksburg (inv. P36 and P37).
50. On the collection see Seidel 1892, 55–68; on Henry’s trip to Paris see Krauel 1901.
51. Letter in GSTAPK, I. HA Rep. 96, no. 108, fol. 30r-v; quoted in German translation in Rita Hofreiter, “Französische Bilwerke in der Sammlung des Prinzen Heinrich,” in Rheinsberg 2002, 442.
52. About a year after his first trip to Paris, on 8 July 1785, Henry wrote to his brother Ferdinand that an expected delivery of several busts and medallions by Houdon would be delayed because of the sculptor’s trip to America (GSTAPK, BPH Rep. 56 II, J 15, folder 7, fol. 22r); quoted in German translation by Hofreiter in Rheinsberg 2002, 443.
53. In the Weißlackierte Kammer (white lacquered room) on the ground floor were the terracotta busts of the duc de Nivernais, the comtesse de Sabran, and the marquis de Bouillé; in the Lange Kammer (long room) on the first floor were Buffon and Franklin; in the Turmkabinett (tower room) were Voltaire “tête nue,” Diderot, and Rousseau. Most of these busts were transferred to Berlin and Potsdam in the 1890s and are lost except for the first two and Buffon. The busts of Molière, Condorcet, and Lafayette in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin are said to have entered the collection together with Prince Henry’s library. Also formerly in Rheinsberg were Houdon’s portrait of Washington and possibly that of the so-called Bailli de Suffren; see Rheinsberg 2002, 442–444.
54. Particularly, “Special Inventarium vom Schloß und Garten in Rheinsberg nebst Catalogus von Gemälden und Kupferstichen 1802 . . .” and “Inventarium von den im Schloße zu Rheinsberg und Cavalierhause vorhandenen Mobilien 1823” (GSTAPK, I. HA, Rep. 133, nos. 190 and 783).
55. Staatliche Museen Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Kupferstichkabinett, Berlin (inv. SZ Menzel Kat. 1555 and Kat. 1559); published in *Menzel in Rheinsberg* [exh. cat., Stiftung Preußische Schlösser und Gärten Berlin-Brandenburg and Schloss Rheinsberg] (Berlin, 1998), nos. 16 and 21.
56. The bust has since disappeared (see Fischer 1786, 44).
57. “(Nouvelles de) Paris, le 17 septembre,” *Le Moniteur* (18 Sept. 1815), 1032.



“A MAN MORE JEALOUS OF GLORY THAN OF WEALTH”:

HOUDON’S DEALINGS WITH RUSSIA

*Christoph Frank*

Although she was to live for another two decades, the empress of Russia providentially composed her own epitaph on 2 February 1778, not long before the death of her favorite author and correspondent, François-Marie Arouet de Voltaire. This gave her enough time, she said, to correct it. In it she aimed not only to sum up her life but also to pay homage to the importance of literature in her political formation: “Here lies Catherine the Second, born at Stettin on 21 April [2 May] 1729. She came to Russia in 1744 to marry Peter III. At the age of fourteen she conceived the triple project to be pleasing to her husband, to [the empress] Elizabeth, and to the nation. She overlooked nothing to achieve this. In eighteen years of boredom and solitude she read many books. Once she had reached the throne of Russia, she wanted only the good and sought to procure for her subjects happiness, freedom, and property. She forgave with ease and did not hate anyone; indulgent, happy to be alive, of a cheerful nature, with a republican soul and a good heart, she had friends; work was easy for her, company and the arts pleased her.”<sup>1</sup> At the height of her power, no other statement by Catherine II described more succinctly how she preferred to be seen at home, abroad, as well as eventually by posterity.

Having come to the throne in 1762 by toppling her demented husband, who died in confinement shortly afterward, she immediately styled herself as the political and dynastic heir to Peter I, with the aim of expanding the Russian Empire, reforming and modernizing its society and institutions, and thereby creating a European power to be taken seriously.<sup>2</sup> She regarded herself as the pupil of the leading Enlightenment philosophers, foremost of Voltaire, whose books she read as soon as they were published and appreciated for their outstanding literary quality, polemical wit, and linguistic clarity.<sup>3</sup> She established a vital correspondence with Voltaire, Jean Le Rond d’Alembert, Denis Diderot, and other French intellectuals, whom she had previously known only through their works. The most prominent of the Russian elite to exchange ideas with the philosophes, she was eager to give her country a new, more liberal code of laws

and legal system. In 1767 she formulated the *Nakaz*, an important set of instructions for the Legislative Commission of Russia, based on key texts of enlightened political philosophy, such as Montesquieu's *De l'esprit des lois* (1748), Cesare Beccaria's *Dei delitti e delle pene* (1764), and articles in the *Encyclopédie* (1751–1780). She sought the advice of the philosophes in establishing regulations for new educational and welfare institutions, including the Smolny Institute for Young Noble Women in St. Petersburg and the Moscow Foundling Hospital. The very month of her coronation she invited Diderot to Russia to complete the *Encyclopédie* after he encountered trouble with the French king and his censors.<sup>4</sup>

Catherine II was extremely conscious of the public significance of her patronage, knowing that it was closely watched throughout Europe, by rulers as well as intellectuals. Among the first modern heads of state to understand the power of the printed media, she used her relationship with the philosophes to promote and publicize her policies. In consequence, the impact on Russia of the philosophes and French culture in general was never stronger than in the decades leading up to the French Revolution. Literature and the arts were influenced most profoundly. In the realm of politics, such issues as slavery and the arbitrary practices of the administration changed very little, making clear that, whatever theoretical concessions the empress may have made in her correspondence with the philosophes, she was not willing to risk losing her power, or even her life. Diderot's disillusionment with his imperial patron after his return to Paris is legendary. He eventually denounced

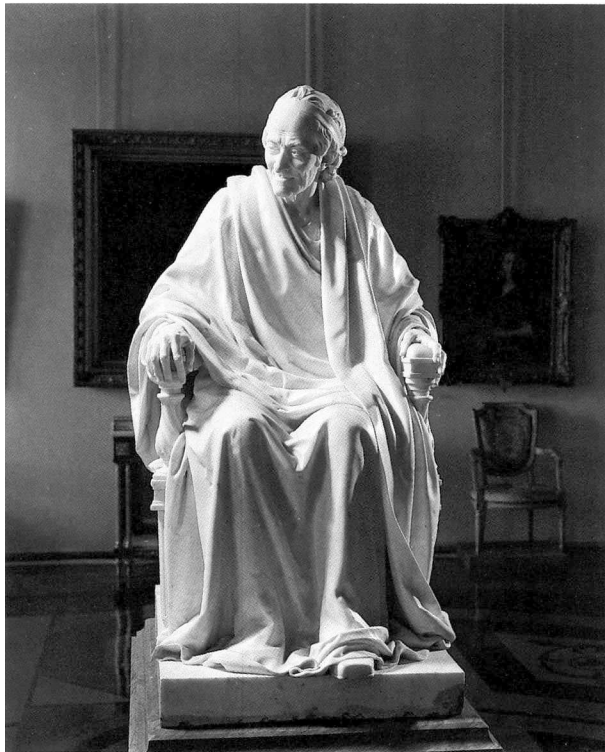
Catherine's interest in enlightened philosophy as manipulative myth-building, which, however successful in its time, some historians have come to describe as "le mirage russe," the great Russian illusion.<sup>5</sup>

From 1764 until her death in 1796, Catherine II subscribed to the Parisian *Correspondance littéraire*, edited by Frédéric-Melchior Grimm (fig. 1) from 1753 to 1773. This bimonthly manuscript journal covered the literary and artistic news from Paris, at that time considered the capital of enlightened Europe. It was sent to select members of the European nobility, including Duchess Louise Dorothea of Saxe-Gotha, King Gustav III of Sweden, King Stanisław Augustus II Poniatowski of Poland, and Archduke Leopold of Austria.<sup>6</sup> Reading the *Correspondance littéraire* and other diplomatic and literary reports, Catherine II could justifiably regard herself as among the best informed of her time with respect to cultural developments in Paris. And Grimm, a native of Regensburg in south Germany and a friend of Diderot and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, made an exceptional career for himself providing news of Paris to the courts on the northern and eastern periphery of Europe: "after all, it is an advantage of no little consideration to have the right to talk twice a month to all the great and enlightened princes of Europe."<sup>7</sup> The *Correspondance littéraire* also offered detailed commentary on the Salon exhibitions, with Diderot as the principal critic from 1759 to 1781.<sup>8</sup> It thus exerted significant influence on the constitution of art collections outside France, particularly in Russia. In March 1773, however, Grimm passed on the laborious and time-consuming task of editing the journal to Jacques-Henri Meister of Zurich, who assured its continued appearance until 1814. Grimm's decision was very likely prompted by his invitation from Catherine II to become her principal literary and artistic advisor in Paris. The empress and her agent left behind an extraordinary correspondence that extensively documents the mechanics and intentions of her cultural and artistic patronage.<sup>9</sup>

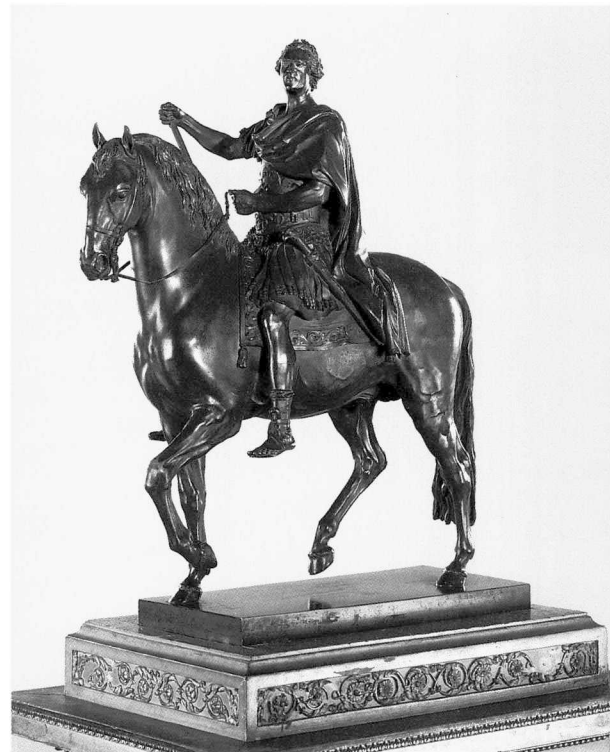
The 1770s and early 1780s in St. Petersburg marked a period of intense efforts to build art collections superior to any in western Europe. This emerging interest in the visual arts on a national level supported a comprehensive cultural publicity campaign, instigated and partly directed by the Paris philosophes with the aim of proving to the civilized world the high level of sophistication the Russian Empire had attained under the rule of the enlightened empress. Sometimes to the envy and sometimes to the derision of the keenly media-conscious audiences of eighteenth-century Europe, this was closely monitored abroad.

1. Pierre-Simon-Benjamin Duvivier, Frédéric-Melchior Grimm, charcoal, Musée Carnavalet, Paris.





2. Houdon, Seated Voltaire, 1781, marble, The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg.



3. Louis-Claude Vassé after Edme Bouchardon, reduced version of the Equestrian Monument of Louis XV, 1759–1763, bronze, Musée du Louvre, Paris.

Nearly all of the sculptures by Houdon that are associated with Russia reached St. Petersburg during the sculptor's lifetime, and they constitute some of the most remarkable works in his oeuvre, including the *Seated Voltaire* (fig. 2) and a marble *Diana* (sold in 1930 by the Soviet government to Calouste Gulbenkian, now in Lisbon).<sup>10</sup> It has been noted that Catherine's relationships with contemporary artists have not been studied as thoroughly as they deserve—with the possible exception of Etienne-Maurice Falconet, with whom she corresponded at a high philosophical and artistic level throughout his stay in St. Petersburg (1766–1778); or her one-time favorite draftsman Charles-Louis Clérisseau, who procured for her the views of Rome with which she decorated her personal quarters at the Winter Palace and at her country residence at Tsarskoye Selo.<sup>11</sup> The wealth of her personal correspondence and the diplomatic dispatches of the period testify to considerable knowledge on the part of the empress and her advisors, through whose offices such artists as Jean-Baptiste Greuze, Anton Raphael Mengs, or Joshua Reynolds were either commissioned to do works for Russia or enticed to go there. Whether this stemmed from a

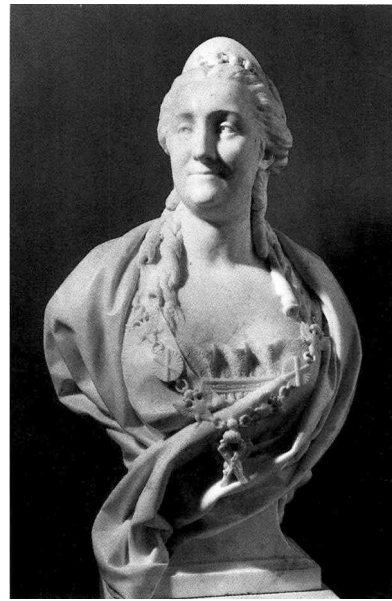
genuine interest in the arts or from strategic and propagandistic reasoning remains to be determined.

There are indications that in September 1777 Diderot and his friend Prince Aleksandr Mikhailovich Golitsyn, formerly Russian ambassador to France, tried to convince the director of the Academy of Fine Arts in St. Petersburg, Ivan Ivanovich Betskoi, to nominate Houdon as professor of sculpture at the academy after the departure of Nicolas-François Gillet. In a recently discovered letter of March 1778, Golitsyn wrote to Diderot expressing his regret that their interventions had not led to the appointment: "Undoubtedly, if one were in need of a capable sculptor in Russia, one could hardly find better than in the person of M. Houdon, his merit being already known through several beautiful works."<sup>12</sup> Nonetheless, it must be emphasized that Houdon counted his Russian patrons and the empress in particular among his most important clients. He worked on Russian commissions from 1773 to 1783 and again in 1814, when he carved the portrait bust of Emperor Alexander I (untraced), thought to be his last work, after which he disappeared from the art world in Paris.<sup>13</sup> Catherine commissioned

from Houdon a portrait bust of Voltaire in 1778 (cat. 25), the *Seated Voltaire* soon thereafter, and a bust of her second most favored author, the naturalist Georges-Louis Leclerc, comte de Buffon, in 1781 (see cat. 28); in 1783–1784 she acquired the full-scale marble *Diana* that had been done for Duke Ernst II of Saxe-Gotha (see cat. 35). Yet one of the great ambitions of Houdon's life remained unfulfilled: he had desired to create equestrian statues that would rival those by Edme Bouchardon (unveiled in Paris in 1763; see fig. 3) and Falconet (unveiled in St. Petersburg in 1782; see fig. 6).<sup>14</sup>

Presumably Houdon's first work for a Russian patron was a marble portrait bust of Catherine II wearing the chain of the Order of Saint Andrew and a *kokoshnik*, the national headdress (fig. 4).<sup>15</sup> The artist, never having seen the empress in person, had to rely on portrait drawings and miniatures, which, in addition to his following Roman imperial prototypes, may account for the detached and overall uninspired quality of this work.<sup>16</sup> The commission came from Count Aleksandr Sergeevich Stroganov, a highly cultivated member of the Russian aristocracy. Stroganov had spent much of his youth in western Europe, where he had come under the influence of the philosophes and freemasonry; he later joined Voltaire and Houdon as a member of the Loge des Neuf Soeurs — a masonic lodge dedicated to the Nine Muses and hence to the arts — to which many prominent artists and writers belonged.<sup>17</sup> In 1771, after a brief sojourn in Geneva, Stroganov returned to Paris, where he remained until 1778–1779; he moved back to St. Petersburg only to return again to Paris in 1781, staying until 1783. He was thus a witness and participant during some of the most active years of the Paris art scene and built one of the largest private collections in Russia at that time. Back in St. Petersburg, he installed his collection in the ostentatious family palace, situated on Nevski Prospect and designed by Bartolomeo Francesco Rastrelli for Stroganov's father, Sergei Grigorievich. This is where sometime around 1790 a French traveler, Fortia de Piles, saw two more busts commissioned from Houdon, one of Diderot and the other of Voltaire.<sup>18</sup>

It has been argued that Stroganov's commissions of the bust of Catherine II and, to some extent, those of Diderot and Voltaire should be read as carefully calculated acquisitions by a prominent Russian living in Paris, who was clearly aware that his actions were scrutinized not only by the Parisian public but by the empress, who received regular dispatches about the conduct of her envoys.<sup>19</sup> This reading is supported by the fact that the date of the bust of Diderot coincides with the latter's jour-



4. Houdon, Bust of Catherine II, 1773, marble, The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg.

ney to St. Petersburg in 1773, and the Voltaire bust was ordered at the same moment the empress was looking for one herself. Moreover, the Stroganov *Voltaire* corresponds closely to one of the two busts that Catherine received from Houdon in the summer of 1778 (cat. 23): the one in which the philosopher is rendered naturally, bare-headed and without drapery — in some ways the purest and most classically restrained version — which Catherine, in her letters to Grimm, repeatedly claimed to prefer to all the other renderings.<sup>20</sup>

The widespread awareness of these busts, and that of the empress in particular, can be demonstrated by the extensive coverage they received in reviews of the Salons; and Stroganov's decision to exhibit the works publicly further suggests that he was indeed trying to make an impression on his sovereign with the commissions. Pidansat de Mairobert, who had assumed responsibility for Bachaumont's *Mémoires secrets*, a periodical that competed with Grimm's *Correspondance littéraire*, wrote in his criticism of the Salon of 1773: "The same artist [Houdon] has also exhibited the bust of the empress of Russia. This beautiful head, stronger than the ordinary form, appears to announce that nature has made an effort to conceive the immortal sovereign that she represents."<sup>21</sup> The obvious flattery was directed toward the person depicted rather than the sculptor, though Houdon received praise at the same Salon for another important Russian commission, the model of the funerary monument for field marshal Mikhail Mikhailovich Golitsyn (cat. 57).<sup>22</sup>

By the late 1770s Houdon's rendering of Catherine II, which some felt was lacking in expressiveness, had become nonetheless one of her official portraits, as can be deduced from the proliferation of copies in plaster. Clérisseau in 1779 had wanted to place one copy on an "altar of gratitude" as part of a public exhibition of his drawings, just before shipping them to St. Petersburg:

This devil Clérisseau promenades around everywhere, his head twice as big as before. "So, the Empress of Russia has made him prodigiously rich?" asks the comte d'Angiviller, director of the Bâtiments du Roi, that is to say, the Betskoi of this country. "In fact, so rich," replies Clérisseau to him, "that it is no longer in your power to do me any good." Note that the court never gave him any encouragement. From there he goes to Houdon's studio and commissions from him the bust of Your Imperial Majesty. "Make me the bust of the Empress, so that it can be placed in my home on the altar of gratitude; all those who come to me must know that everything I have I owe to her."<sup>23</sup>

Clérisseau's conscious *mise-en-scène* set a new standard for fawning, which was imitated a few weeks later by the poet and dramatist Michel-Jean Sedaine, who received a pension from Catherine in recognition of his talent, well before the French king had been inclined to do so: Sedaine ordered "one of the portraits of Your Majesty... to be placed at his house, as Clérisseau had commissioned his bust from Houdon. Thus finally there are two of them placed at the Louvre, as Sedaine and Clérisseau reside there because of their academic positions. I do not despair to see the portraits *der wohlthätigen Kaiserin* [of the charitable empress] multiplied in the Louvre, in the Capitol, or anywhere there are rewards to bestow on real and modest merit."<sup>24</sup> Obviously Catherine's liberal patronage was meant to impress where the monarchs of the civilized West might fail.

Houdon's marble bust of the empress, before leaving Paris with Stroganov in 1783, was put to work one more time during the visit of Catherine's son Paul and his second wife, Maria Fedorovna, in 1782.<sup>25</sup> Traveling incognito as the "comte and comtesse du Nord" at the insistence of the empress, the royal couple undertook what was in effect a Grand Tour through several European countries, supposedly with the aim of establishing closer ties with neighboring powers, the Habsburgs in particular. Catherine made sure that her estranged son would

not interfere in her politics, however, by sending him to all the great sites with the means to buy luxury goods and works of art on a lavish scale for his summer residence at Pavlovsk. On 2 June 1782 the couple visited the Bibliothèque du Roi and Houdon's studio, where they saw not only the almost finished *Seated Voltaire* and the bust of Buffon, both commissioned by Catherine, but also the bust of the empress herself, probably moved there for the occasion from Stroganov's Paris residence at the prompting of Grimm and Stroganov. Charles-François de Lubersac de Livron, a poet and self-styled specialist in royal monuments, described the visit: "Their Imperial Highnesses, who at this moment seem to do themselves honor by showing no interest in anything but the sciences, the arts, and the talents, come here and recognize in the same instant, but not without surprise, the marble bust of their August Mother. Flattering and deserved eulogies emerged immediately from the mouths of their graces, becoming for the artist present [Houdon] at that moment an honorable reward, befitting his talents."<sup>26</sup>

Lubersac de Livron's publication of 1782 included the description of a projected public monument to the glory of the enlightened empress, which the author seems to have sent to Catherine in manuscript form as early as August 1778, according to a surviving presentation copy at the National Library of Russia in St. Petersburg.<sup>27</sup> The second part of the book focused on the journey of the "comte and comtesse du Nord," as if pursued solely to serve the interests of the state, and it cites the examples of other "enlightened" rulers such as Peter the Great, Gustav III of Sweden, Christian VII of Denmark, and Joseph II of Austria. Yet despite the dedication to Paul, first in the imperial line of succession, the extravagant publication gives more than one indication that Catherine is the real subject of its panegyric discourses. For example, Lubersac had commissioned for the frontispiece an engraving of Houdon's bust of the empress shown in profile (fig. 5), with the highly potent inscription: "Catherine II. Impératrice des Russies. Mère de ses peuples. Née le 2 May 1729." The title *mater patriae*, or "Mother of the Fatherland," had been officially offered to the empress on 12 August 1767 by the deputies of the Legislative Commission gathered in Moscow to write the new code of laws.<sup>28</sup> She accepted this title in recognition of her divine right to power, on the basis of which, it was understood, her people had been entrusted to her. Moreover, this print, by Charles-Etienne Gaucher, one of the leading engravers in Paris, was executed after a drawing by Greuze, one of Catherine's favorite artists; another telling inscription emphasized that Greuze had drawn





5. Charles-Etienne Gaucher, Catherine II, 1782, engraving after drawing by Jean-Baptiste Greuze of bust by Houdon, BNESt.

the bust after the original and implied that this had happened under the guidance of the sculptor himself: “Greuze del. sub Stat. Houdon.”<sup>29</sup> This may represent the artistic network that was trying to persuade the empress to commission her own monument; the visits by her son and his wife to the studios of Greuze and Houdon were particularly stressed in a separate note to Meister’s account in the *Correspondance littéraire*.<sup>30</sup>

According to Lubersac de Livron’s program, the monument would be erected in the center of St. Petersburg, between the River Neva and the Winter Palace, the latter being the official seat of government.<sup>31</sup> A statue of the empress in the guise of the sea goddess Thetis, leader of the Nereides who had the gift of prophecy, would stand in a temple surrounded by a moat that would prevent anyone from coming near her. The temple would be situated at the center of a giant semicircular Doric colonnade, which would eventually be completed with colossal images

of illustrious Russians, each placed on a high pedestal. The temple would be decorated with allegorical representations of the virtues, talents, and achievements of the sovereign. The key element in this rather baroque composition was the proposed statue of the empress: “Catherine II clothed in her imperial garb, the crown on her head, holding the imperial sceptre in her right hand, will have a retinue of various *genii* representing the great worthies of the empire. . . . this statue of the Empress made of white marble, of a stature larger than life, will appear standing, supported by Minerva who will accompany her; approaching with a majestic and proud air from the side of the port where her fleet lies will be Neptune, sovereign of the sea, aboard his chariot and landing at the base of the temple.”<sup>32</sup>

The image was thus intended to commemorate Catherine’s directions to the commission drawing up the new law code for Russia in 1767 as well as her military exploits at sea—that is, Alexei Orlov’s victory over the Turks at Chesme in 1770. It is probably not a coincidence that such a sculptural program was proposed to Catherine at the moment Falconet’s unrivaled chef-d’oeuvre, the equestrian statue of Peter the Great, was being installed in front of the Russian senate building in August 1782 (fig. 6). Famous for its daring composition and the ingenious simplicity of its inscription, “Petro Primo / Catharina Secunda,” this was a monument that celebrated the person who was represented as much as the person who had commissioned and dedicated it. Catherine’s contemporaries understood this incongruity. The English envoy to Russia, Sir James Harris, wrote only two days after the unveiling: “I could not avoid, during this ceremony, reflecting how impossible it was that any successor of Her Imperial Majesty who might, in some future day, erect a statue in commemoration of Her great Actions, ever should be so much superior to Her, as she Herself is superior to Peter the Great, both in the art of governing, and in that of making Her People respected and happy.”<sup>33</sup>

The idea of a monument to Catherine II was not new. Voltaire had written to Falconet on 17 June 1772: “Your quill gives me a very good idea of your chisel. I see ingenuity in everything you write, and I judge that this genius will breathe life into the statue of Peter the Great. If I were not an octogenarian, and if I were in good health, I would go to see this masterpiece. But this would be on the condition that I would find a statue of Catherine the Second in front of that of Peter the First.”<sup>34</sup> Voltaire’s letter shows that the concept of a full-scale statue dedicated to Catherine II, juxtaposed with Falconet’s equestrian statue of Peter I, had been a subject of

discussion among the philosophes for some time. Falconet himself had suggested such a monument to the empress as early as 1768, but it never got further than a model, which appears to have been lost: "I have made a sketch which I will not show to anyone until Your Majesty shall have seen it. *Catherine the Second gives the laws to her Empire. She deigns to lower her sceptre to suggest to her citizens the means to render them happier.* If this simple idea is not suitable, I do not know of anything that might be more so, or more glorious."<sup>35</sup> Despite these early initiatives and the endorsement of Lubersac de Livron's project of 1778–1782 by prominent philosophes like the comte de Buffon, the empress could not be convinced to commission her own monument.<sup>36</sup> The last and presumably most forceful proposal, clearly stating that the assignment should be given to no one but Houdon, was made by Grimm, Catherine's confidant in literary and artistic matters.



6. Etienne-Maurice Falconet, Equestrian Monument of Peter the Great, 1766–1782, bronze, Senate Square, St. Petersburg.

An unpublished letter of June 1785 from Grimm to Catherine reveals the extent and complexity of the situation.:

It is in every way suitable and appropriate that at the moment the Duke of Saxe-Gotha sees a plaster of the Hercules Farnese issued from the Imperial Academy [of Fine Arts] arrive in his quarters, they will send me a marble of the Hyperborean Minerva, who, despite having had the same father, was a lady of a completely different rock than the lord Hercules, courageous knight that he was. In truth I would have preferred to own [one] from the chisel of Houdon rather than from anyone else; but as one is not a lady of such extraction, without suffering from terrible disadvantages in one's character, I recognize that I lose hope in my influence to make her understand that the first Praxiteles or Phidias of this century would not be good enough to conserve her traits to the admiration and veneration of the loyal of all ages. . . .

Houdon will spend four or five months in America to do the portrait of Washington, then return to France to execute his statue for the United States. Is it not deplorable that an emerging republic, which has hardly reached the age of puberty that the Adolescent Hercules by Shchedrin has already passed, whose means are in consequence so new and so limited, could demonstrate its gratitude toward the greatest of its citizens, and that it should not be permissible to the senate of Russia to consecrate its own [gratitude] in a similar monument for its first citizen [the empress], in recognition of twenty-three years of favors and services? One shrugs one's shoulders when one thinks of it with a clear head. Surely Houdon would not be any more ill going to Russia than crossing the sea to look for Washington on his estates in Virginia, and one would find enough strength and courage to undertake the two most [beautiful] monuments, when a long succession of centuries will not produce anything comparable. But set yourself to preach to the deaf, says the Apostle Saint Paul to the Thessalonians, and you will have your rewards. Shchedrin thus makes the bust of Minerva through the [mediation of the] people of Grimm, who desire passionately for the people of Petersburg her [Catherine's] statue by Houdon, once he comes back from America; that will be in any case undone and badly paid, one draws from that whatever one can.<sup>37</sup>

In 1782 Grimm had written Catherine II to secure a number of commissions for Feodosy Fedorovich Shchedrin, and by 1785 he was expressing the desire to own a bust of the empress by that artist for himself, which he would place on the altar of an imaginary cathedral dedicated to Catherine in the imaginary town of "Grimma."<sup>38</sup> Despite his efforts to promote Shchedrin's work,<sup>39</sup> it is obvious that Grimm's primary goal was to convince Catherine to commission her statue from Houdon. He applied his considerable argumentative skills to move the empress in that direction, not least by comparing their initiative to that of the Assembly of the Commonwealth of Virginia, whose members had invited Houdon to come to America to create a full-scale statue of George Washington (cat. 47, fig. 3). Houdon had accepted this project on the understanding that he would receive another, more prestigious commission for an equestrian statue of Washington to be placed at the center of the as-yet-unbuilt capital of the United States.<sup>40</sup>

In 1784 Thomas Jefferson, then ambassador to France and a friend of Grimm, had recommended Houdon, whom he considered "the first statuary in the world," to execute the statue for Richmond. But two days before Jefferson officially informed the Virginia delegates on 12 July 1785 that Houdon would come to America,<sup>41</sup> he had written to Washington that the artist had had to decline an offer from the empress of Russia in order to accept their commission; this offer presumably amounted to nothing more than an invitation to work on a statue to be placed opposite the monument of Peter the Great: "He has had difficulty to withdraw himself from an order of the Empress of Russia, a difficulty however which arose from a desire to shew her respect, but which never gave him a moment's hesitation about his present voyage which he considers as promising the brightest chapter of his history."<sup>42</sup>

The correspondence suggests that Houdon tried to use his health as a pretext to turn down Catherine's monument in favor of Washington's. As Grimm acrimoniously hinted in his letter of June 1785, the artist apparently claimed to be too ill to travel to Russia but was fit enough to cross the Atlantic Ocean; he thought that Houdon suffered from delusions about the unlimited possibilities that should present themselves to him in the New World.<sup>43</sup> According to Grimm, not even the meager pay he could expect there had discouraged the artist. Houdon, who strongly preferred to work from life (especially after his bust of Catherine II in 1773), spent the first two weeks of October 1785 at Mount Vernon in Virginia, making a clay bust of Washington's head and taking measurements for the full

figure, then returned to Paris to work on it over the following decade. Yet, famously, despite Houdon's insistence that he could cast an equestrian statue at relatively little expense, as he still possessed the furnaces and molds that had been used for Bouchardon's statue of Louis XV, nothing came of the Washington project, nor indeed of Catherine's.

According to his letter to Catherine in June 1785, Grimm was well informed of all the details, to the point of spelling out what price might entice Houdon to come to Russia after all. It is most likely that Grimm received this information from none other than Thomas Jefferson, with whom he interacted nearly every day in the same intellectual and diplomatic circles of Paris. But although the network that operated behind the scenes can be largely reconstructed, Houdon left no reliable evidence of his own thoughts and intentions. It seems unlikely that he would have relinquished a contract with Russia because of republican sympathies; he had worked primarily for the European nobility up to this point in his career. In the end, however, Houdon may have simply preferred to be acknowledged as the first sculptor in America capable of producing such a statue rather than the second in Russia, where such undertakings could end rather badly, as demonstrated by Falconet's abrupt departure from St. Petersburg in 1778 after the failed first cast of his equestrian monument.

Yet presumably following ancient and humanistic topoi, according to which human beings are not meant to commission or even consecrate a monument to themselves during their own lifetimes, the empress informed her agent in response to his initiative: "As regards those gentlemen from America, I believe them to be taken to talk senselessly; the old and the young republics of this century are inclined toward these kinds of things. As far as my statue is concerned, it will not exist in my lifetime."<sup>44</sup>

The title of this essay derives from a recently discovered letter from Diderot to Aleksandr Mikhailovich Golitsyn, 16 May 1777, published in Karp 1998, 77–79, no. 20. The author gratefully acknowledges the support of the German Research Foundation (DFG) and the Bibliotheca Hertziana—Max-Planck-Institut für Kunstgeschichte (Rome); also the invitation of Sergei Karp, Institute of Universal History of the Russian Academy of Sciences (Moscow), and Georges Dulac, Université Paul-Valéry (Montpellier), to contribute to the new edition of the correspondence of Frédéric-Melchior Grimm and Catherine II. In view of the persistence of political mirages, Russian and other, this contribution is dedicated to Paul Frank (Breitnau).

1. In letter of 2 Feb. 1778 to Grimm (*SIRIO* 1878, 77 n. 1). All translations from French are the author's own. Catherine II (1729–1796), of German origin, was the daughter of Prince Christian August of Anhalt-Zerbst and Johanna, princess of Holstein-Gottorp, whose brother became king of Sweden in 1751. Selected as bride for her second cousin Karl Peter Ulrich of Holstein-Gottorp, heir of the childless Empress Elizabeth of Russia, she was married on 21 August 1745. With no legitimate claim to the Russian throne, she overthrew her husband just six months after his accession as Peter III to rule in her own right. The two ciphers often given for Russian dates relate to the coexistence of the Julian calendar (widely applied in Orthodoxy) and the Gregorian calendar (adopted by Pope Paul III in 1582). In the eighteenth century the difference amounted to eleven days.
2. For a survey of the period in English see Isabel de Madariaga, *Russia in the Age of Catherine the Great*, 2nd ed. (London, 2002).
3. The most recent monographic analysis of Franco-Russian cultural relations under Catherine II (in Russian) is Karp 1998; for the wider eighteenth-century context see the excellent catalogue Paris 1986a; and Dulac 1997, 961–967.
4. Maurice Tourneux, *Diderot et Catherine II* (Paris, 1899; reprint, Geneva, 1970).
5. *Le Mirage russe au XVIIIe siècle*, ed. Sergei Karp and Larry Wolff, Publications du Centre international d'étude du XVIIIe siècle, vol. 10 (Ferner-Voltaire, 2001).
6. Jochen Schlobach, "Diderot und Grimms *Correspondance littéraire*," in *Diderot und die Aufklärung*, ed. Herbert Dieckmann, Wolfenbütteler Forschungen 10 (Munich, 1980), 50.
7. Grimm to Caroline of Hesse-Darmstadt, 20 July 1771 (Schlobach 1972, no. 85, 138). See also Scherer 1887; and Schlobach 1997, 274–277.
8. Sez nec and Adhémar 1957–1967; Paris 1984–1985; and Jacques Chouillet, "Grimm critique d'art. Le Salon de 1757," in *La Correspondance littéraire de Grimm et de Meister (1754–1813)*, colloquium at Saarbrücken, 22–24 Feb. 1974, ed. B. Bray, J. Schlobach, and J. Varloot (Paris, 1976), 191–199.

9. See *SIRIO* 1878; and *SIRIO* 1885. See also Sergei Karp and Sergei Iskul, "Les Lettres inédites de Grimm à Catherine II," *Recherches sur Diderot et sur l'Encyclopédie*, no. 10 (Apr. 1991), 41–55; and Sergei Karp, "Der Briefwechsel Friedrich Melchior Grimms mit Katharina II," *Europa in der Frühen Neuzeit. Festschrift für Günter Mühlppfordt*, ed. Erich Donnert (Weimar, Cologne, and Vienna, 1997), 3:151–176.
10. For surveys based on research prior to the October Revolution see V. Vereshchagin, "Proizvedeniya Gudona v' Rossiyy," *Starye Gody* (June 1908), 333–341; Réau 1914; Réau 1917; and Réau 1924a, 189–196.
11. See Claus Scharf, *Katharina II., Deutschland und die Deutschen* (Mainz, 1996), 186; with regard to Catherine's relationship with contemporary artists see *SIRIO* 1876 and Charles-Louis Clérisseau (1721–1820), *Dessins du musée de l'Ermitage Saint-Petersbourg* [exh. cat., Musée du Louvre] (Paris, 1995). See also Martin Postle, "Sir Joshua Reynolds and the Court of Catherine the Great," *British Art Treasures from Russian Imperial Collections in the Hermitage*, ed. Brian Allan and Larissa Dukelskaya (New Haven and London, 1996), 56–67; and Christoph Frank, "Plus il y en aura, mieux ce sera" — Caterina II di Russia e Anton Raphael Mengs. Sul ruolo degli agenti 'cesarei' Grimm e Reiffenstein," *Mengs. La Scoperta del Neoclassico*, ed. Steffi Roettgen [exh. cat., Palazzo Zabarella] (Padua, 2001), 86–95.
12. Aleksandr Mikhailovich Golitsyn to Diderot, 12 [23] March 1778; Moscow, RGADA, Fonds 1263, opis 1, no. 1243a, fols. 10–11; Karp 1998, 96–97, and 92 n. 1.
13. Réau 1914, 51; Réau 1924a, 196; Réau 1964, 1:400–401.
14. See Houdon's "Tableau de ce qu'on[t] coûté plusieurs statues en bronze et le nom des artistes qui les ont exécutées," in Chinaro 1930, 15–16; and an unpublished note in English about the equestrian statue by Falconet in his estate papers (BMV, F 946, no. 46).
15. Exhibited at the Salon of 1773, no. 231.
16. See Frankfurt 1999–2000, 252–254, no. 147.
17. See Hecht 1994, 28–35; and Réau 1964, 1:396–397.
18. Fortia de Piles 1796, 3:42. These two busts are now at The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. The *Diderot* is signed and dated 1773 (inv. 1974.291); the *Voltaire* is signed and dated 1778 (inv. 1972.61). Both were in the legendary Stroganov sale at the Rudolph Lepke auction house: *Sammlung Stroganoff Leningrad* (Berlin, 1931), 222–225, nos. 224–225, ill.
19. Hecht 1994, 31.
20. *SIRIO* 1878, 104, 107–108.
21. Bachaumont 1780–1789, 13:148, letter of 21 Sept. 1773.

22. Bachaumont 1780–1789, 13:147–148.
23. Grimm to Catherine, Paris, 6 [17] Sept. 1779 (*SIRIO* 1885, 61) [quotation marks added to set off dialogue]. One contemporary copy of the bust in plaster, acquired from the artist by the prince of Mecklenburg-Schwerin in 1782, has survived at the Staatliches Museum, Schwerin (inv. Pl. 277); see Schwerin 2000, 170–171, no. 1.
24. Grimm to Catherine, 27 Oct. [7 Nov.] 1779 (*SIRIO* 1885, 73).
25. See A. N. Guzanov, "The Grand Tour of the Comte and the Comtesse du Nord," in *Pavlovsk: The Palace and the Park*, ed. Emmanuel Ducamp (Paris, 1993), 17–38; also Réau 1924a, 225–256.
26. Lubersac de Livron, *Premier discours sur l'utilité et les avantages que les princes peuvent retirer de leurs voyages* (St. Petersburg and Paris, 1782), 78 (copy at BN, R. 6334). Lubersac seems to have accompanied the royal couple throughout their stay in Paris. See also Alexandre Jacques Louis Du Coudray, *Le Comte et la Comtesse du Nord. Anecdote russe* (Paris, 1782), 76. The imperial visit led to two more commissions from Houdon: for marble busts of Ivan Petrovich Saltykov, signed and dated 1783 (The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg; inv. H. ck. 1441); and his son Nicolai Ivanovich (untraced); see Paris 1986a, 259, no. 398.
27. See MS Erm. fr. 116, esp. fols. 441–48v. Lubersac de Livron signed and dated the dedication "L'abbé Cte de Lubersac, le 22 aoust 1778." The description of the monument is identical with that published four years later in Lubersac 1782, 43–48. The volume does not contain any illustration of the projected monument. The author would like to thank Natalia Yelagina, curator of manuscripts, National Library of Russia, for her gracious assistance.
28. See Madariaga 1982, 139–163. The epithets "great" and "most wise" were already attached to her name, although Catherine did not like the former.
29. The ambiguity derives from the fact that the abbreviation cannot be easily expanded: thus "Stat." could refer to the bust (*statua*) or the sculptor (*statuarius*).
30. *Corr. littéraire*, 13:146.
31. Lubersac 1782, 43–48.
32. Lubersac 1782, 46–47.
33. Communication to Lord Grantham, 9 [20] Aug. 1782 (London, Public Record Office, FO 65/8, n.p.).
34. BN, MS n.a.fr. 24.983, fols. 332–333 (Bestermann D 17784). The famous letter concluded with the words: "Vous faites, Monsieur, beaucoup d'honneur à notre nation dans les pais étrangers; nous en avions besoin."
35. Falconet to Catherine II, 13 June 1768 (RGADA, Fonds 5, no. 143, fol. 28); first published by Polotsov in *SIRIO* 1876, 42–43, no. 24.

36. Lubersac de Livron had sent his description as well as a drawing to Buffon, who replied on 15 April 1782 that it had given him the greatest pleasure. Buffon's letter was included in the prospectus of Lubersac 1782, iii.

37. Archives of the St. Petersburg branch of the Institute of Russian History of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Fonds 203, opis 1, no. 151, fols. 9r-10r. The complete text of these letters will be published for the first time in the forthcoming volume of correspondence compiled and edited by Sergei Karp, Georges Dulac, and the present author.

38. See *SIRIO* 1878, 258, 260–261, 262–263, 265, 284, 297, 332, 339, 371, 405; *SIRIO* 1885, 256–257, 267, 281, 283, 313, 335, 342. The cathedral idea is expressed in Grimm's letter to Catherine of 19 [30] June 1785 (see preceding note). What has become of the bust, as indeed of Grimm's art collection, remains unknown.

39. Shchedrin was at the time an impecunious Russian *pensionnaire* at the Academy of Fine Arts in St. Petersburg. After a brief period in Rome (1773–1774), he had worked for nearly ten years in the Paris studio of Christophe-Gabriel Allegrain before returning to Russia in 1785. See A. Kaganovich, *Feodosy Feodorovich Shchedrin* (Moscow, 1953); and Elena F. Petinova, *F. F. Shchedrin* (Leningrad, 1977).

40. See David Bindman, "King of the New Republic: Houdon's equestrian monument to George Washington," paper given at the conference on "Royal Monuments and Urban Public Space in Eighteenth-Century Europe," Henry-Moore-Institute, Leeds, 8–9 Mar. 2002 (forthcoming).

41. George Washington Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, DC, ser. 4, general correspondence, 1697–1799; see Chinard 1930, 5, 13–15.

42. Thomas Jefferson Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, DC, ser. 1, general correspondence, 1651–1827, Jefferson to Washington, 10 July 1785; see Chinard 1930, 10–11.

43. Grimm here mocks Houdon's elevated rhetoric in connection with his American commissions, which seems to have antagonized the Paris art community. In a review of the 1785 Salon in the *Correspondance littéraire* (14:297), presumably written by Meister under the direct influence of Grimm, it is claimed that Houdon's absence served as a pretext to exclude most of his works from the exhibition: "One has thought to owe this all too small consolation to rivals depressed by the glory conveyed upon him [Houdon] by being called to consecrate for future centuries the august image of the hero of America and of liberty."

44. Catherine II to Grimm, 21 Sept. 1785 (*SIRIO* 1878, 362). It is not entirely clear whether she meant that she did not want a monument as a matter of principle or that she simply could not get one. See also Christoph Frank, "Das Denkmal des Großen Kurfürsten von Andreas Schlüter im Spiegel seiner öffentlichen Rezeption," *Preußen 1701. Eine europäische Geschichte* [exh. cat., Schloss Charlottenburg] (Berlin, 2001), 2:341–352. There were full-scale statues of the empress commissioned and erected in her own lifetime, although not by her personally. Prince Grigory Aleksandrovich Potemkin commission at least two, both representing her as a lawgiver: one from Wilhelm Christian Meyer in 1782, erected in Ekaterinoslav in 1846 (melted down during the German occupation in 1941), and one from Fedot Ivanovich Shubin in 1789–1790 (Russian Museum, St. Petersburg). See Sibylle Badstübner-Gröger, "Die Zeichnung eines Standbildes von Katharina II. und das Schicksal eines Denkmals—Der Beginn einer Untersuchung," *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Vereins für Kunstwissenschaft* 43, pt. 2 (1989), 21–30; Sibylle Badstübner-Gröger, "Ein Denkmal Katharinas der Großen für Ekaterinoslav," *Russische Aufklärungsrezeption im Kontext offizieller Bildungskonzepte (1700–1825)*, ed. G. Lehmann-Carli, et al. (Berlin, 2001), 3–17; Sergei Konstantinovich Isakov, *Fedot Shubin* (Moscow, 1938); and Olga Pavlovna Lazareva, *Russkij skul'ptor Fedot Shubin* (Moscow, 1965).

+ Catalogue



## ✦ L'Écorché (*Figure of a Flayed Man, Right Arm Extended Horizontally*)

Dated 1767

White plaster with self-base

H. (with base) 181 cm (base: H. 8.5 cm, W. 59 cm)

Inscribed on tree trunk: *houdon / f. Romæ / 1767.*

Académie de France, Rome (inv. 319)

Houdon's figure of an *Ecorché* is one of his earliest, most famous, and most widely reproduced works. The twenty-five-year-old sculptor first executed a life-size figure of a flayed man as a preparatory study for his statue of *Saint John the Baptist* (cat. 3), commissioned in 1766 by Dom André Le Masson, the French *procureur général* of the Carthusian order of friars in Rome for the church of Santa Maria degli Angeli. He was already deeply interested in the study of human anatomy when he received the commission. One of his friends, the German artist Johann Christian von Mannlich, who was a visiting *pensionnaire* at the Académie de France in Rome, recounts in his memoirs: "At dawn, my neighbor and friend Houdon came to get me to go to Saint-Louis des Français where M. Séguier, professor of surgery, gave us a lesson in anatomy on cadavers for which the king paid. We were the only people from the academy to follow this course, and we profited all the more for it."<sup>1</sup> Mannlich goes on to say that Houdon was doing a statue of Saint John the Baptist at this time and that he had "the idea to do the model in clay... first as an *écorché*, and every day he used our [anatomy] lesson and my drawings in order to study the system of muscles thoroughly. This work had the complete approval of M. Séguier, who often came to see it, making observations and

criticisms. It also had [the approval] of all the artists and amateurs who urged Houdon to have a mold made of his *écorché* before he transformed it into a Saint John, and they judged it to be the best anatomical statue ever to have been created."<sup>2</sup> That the *Ecorché* was immediately recognized as an important work of art in its own right and one that would be useful for study in art academies is echoed by Charles Natoire, director of the Académie de France in Rome, in a letter of early 1767.<sup>3</sup> The sculpture quickly became a key work in the academy's plaster collection. By 1775 Vien, who succeeded Natoire as director of the academy, included as part of the rules he wrote for the students' curriculum, "One will learn anatomy from the study of the *écorché* that M. Houdon made for the academy."<sup>4</sup>

Already in this youthful work several of the dominant characteristics of Houdon's mature style are evident. His preoccupation with the accurate observation and depiction of the bones and muscles as well as the exterior surface of the human body eventually led him to use life and death masks for his closely observed portraits. At the same time, he transformed his studies of stiff, dissected corpses into an animated, graceful figure of classical proportions. This blend of an almost scientific recording of nature with its abstraction and idealization is explained



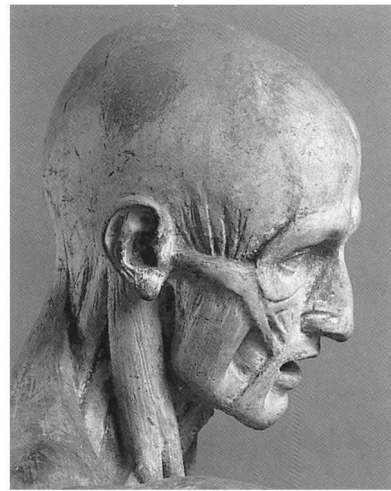
by Houdon in a letter of July 1772 written to Ernst II of Saxe-Gotha, to whom he was sending a plaster cast of the *Ecorché*:

If some skilled surgeons find something with which to find fault in this work, I wouldn't be surprised, in spite of the fact that all those to whom I showed it in Rome as well as here seemed to me to be very satisfied. The few whom I forced to find something to criticize about it, persuaded that men do not all see alike, said to me that they wanted a certain thing in such and such an area. But... I had done this work to teach artists, which is the reason for the correction of the design... Surgeons, as skilled as they may be, are not artists, and artists are not surgeons. In my view the skilled surgeon must study after nature, as defective as one may find it to be, in order to be able to treat every infirmity. But we [artists] must study it differently. It is nature in all her nobility, her perfect state of health, that we are looking for, or if not, we are nothing but wretched imitators.<sup>5</sup>

Houdon was also aware of the long tradition of sculptors' representations of flayed figures, and he consciously set out to compete with them.<sup>6</sup> There was a growing interest in the study of anatomy among artists in Paris in the 1750s. M. Süe, associate professor of anatomy and a central influence in this trend, began teaching a course for artists in 1755. The sculptors Jean-Baptiste Pigalle and Guillaume Coustou were among his students. Houdon would also have known Edme Bouchardon's illustrations of an *écorché* for *L'Anatomie nécessaire pour l'usage du dessein*, engraved by Jacques-Gabriel Huquier and first published in 1741 (fig. 1).<sup>7</sup>

In the present *Ecorché* it is evident that Houdon was planning to do his statue of *Saint John the Baptist* in marble, as he included a tree trunk that would be necessary to support the weight of the figure in marble or stone. Following the enthusiastic reception of the sculpture by his professors and colleagues, he seized the opportunity to duplicate and sell his *Ecorché*, beginning at the Académie de France in Rome. Once he returned to Paris and began to distribute the work, he eliminated the tree trunk, as it was not needed to support the lighter-weight figure when executed in plaster or in bronze.

The *Ecorché* is an early example of Houdon's self-interested, entrepreneurial temperament. In an unpublished letter of 13 February 1776 the sculptor proudly wrote of the enthusiastic reception this youthful work had met.<sup>8</sup> His motives in pro-



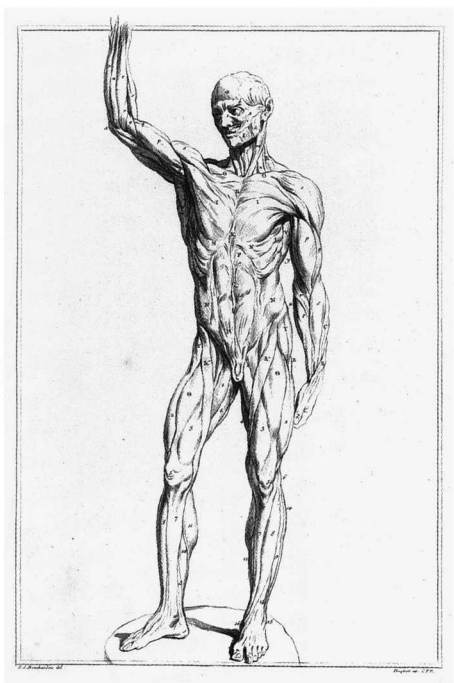
Detail of cat. 1



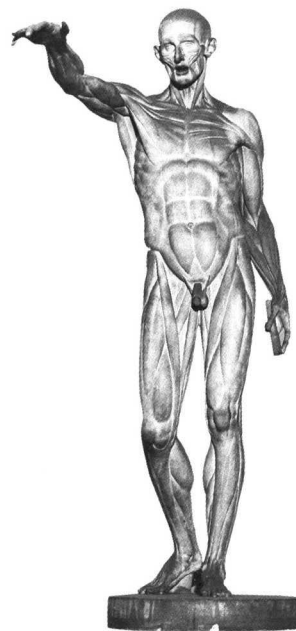
Signature on cat. 1

moting it seem to have been in part didactic, as he believed his sculpture was an ideal figure from which art and medical students could study anatomy, a belief that has been borne out by its enduring popularity. He also saw that reproducing the sculpture in plaster would both enhance his reputation and bring him a substantial income. He was to continue this practice of making and selling plaster casts of his sculptures throughout his career. Listed in the sale held after Houdon's death in 1828 (see Related Works) was the plaster mold for the large *Ecorché*. The catalogue specifies that the acquisition of the mold would transfer ownership of the figure to the buyer. Thus the work continued to be reproduced after Houdon's lifetime.

ANNE L. POULET



1. Jacques-Gabriel Huquier, *Ecorché*, engraving after Edme Bouchardon, for *L'Anatomie nécessaire pour l'usage du dessein*, first published in 1741.



2. Houdon, *Ecorché*, 1769, white plaster, *Ecole nationale supérieure des beaux-arts*, Paris.

#### PROVENANCE

Completed by 11 Feb. 1767, as indicated in a letter of that date from Charles Natoire, director of the Académie de France in Rome, to the marquis de Marigny, director of the Bâtiments du Roi (*Corr. directeurs*, 12:140, no. 5946; Réau 1964, 1:40, publishes all of this correspondence). Marigny approved the purchase in a letter to Natoire, 9 Apr. 1767 (*Corr. directeurs*, 12:146, no. 5952); Natoire confirmed Houdon's agreement to the academy's purchase of the *Ecorché* in a letter of 6 May 1767 (*Corr. directeurs*, 12:151, no. 5959). Listed in an inventory of the Académie de France in 1781 prepared by M. Vien, then director, and verified 9 July 1796 (*Corr. directeurs*, 16:440); moved in 1803 with the rest of the academy's collections from the Palazzo Mancini to the Villa Medici, where it remains today.

#### REFERENCES

Bachamont 1780–1789, 11:103; Montaignon and Duplessis 1855, 160–165; Duval and Cuyer 1899, 202, 204–205; 203, fig. 74; *Corr. directeurs*, 12:119, 122, 140, 146, 151; 13:158; 15:186; 16:440; Lami 1910–1911, 1:413; Giacometti 1918–1919, 1:28–34; 3:140–144; Calosso 1922, 290–300, 306 nn. 10, 11, 12; ill. p. 91; Vitry 1923, 77; Giacometti 1929, 1:8–9, 180, 207; 2:246–248; Réau 1934, 36, 39; Réau and Vallery-Radot 1938, 176, ill. p. 78 (wrong photo); Réau 1945, 95–96, 114; pl. 18; Mansfeld 1955, 25–28, 33–34; Puech 1960, 30–32; Réau 1964, 1:39–41, 50, 93, 94, 99, 142, 169, 180, 204–209; 2:15–16, no. 16A; Worcester 1964, 18, 20; London 1972, 251–252, no. 389; Arnason 1975, 13–15, 107 nn. 12, 13; Paris 1993–1994, 104; Luisa Somaini, “Due celebri statue anatomiche del settecento. Gli *écorchés* di Lelli e di Houdon,” *Due secoli di anatomia artistica. Dalla macchina corporea al corpo vissuto* [exh. cat., Accademia di belle arti di Brera] (Milan, 2000), 78–88; ill. pp. 80–81.

#### RELATED WORKS

No thorough study has yet been made of the life-size casts of Houdon's *Ecorché*, the institutions that acquired them during his lifetime, or the institutions in which the early casts survive. Réau and Vallery-Radot 1938, 176–181, establishes a preliminary list of documented figures of the *Ecorché*, which is repeated in Réau 1964, 1:40–41. A partial list of known life-size plasters of the model with the arm extended in front of the figure follows. For the model with the right arm raised over the head see cat. 2.

##### Life-size plaster with tree trunk

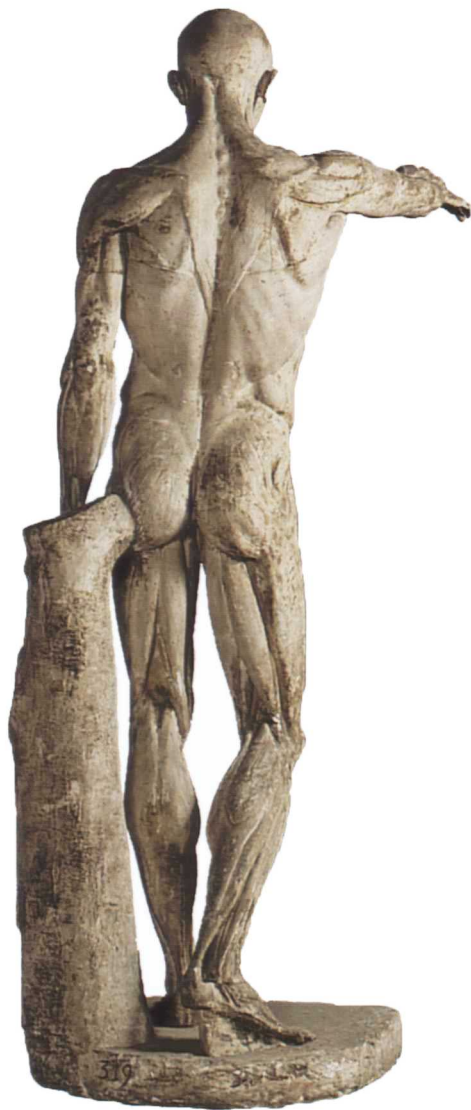
Schlossmuseum Gotha (inv. P 25); H. (with base) 184 cm, W. 79 cm; painted white; inscribed on tree trunk: “houdon / f. Romæ / 1767”; slightly larger than the plaster in the Académie de France in Rome and in better condition, but otherwise identical; perhaps cast while Houdon was in Rome or soon after his return to Paris in 1768; shipped to Duke Ernst II of Saxe-Gotha in July 1772 (see Appendix, lines 49–55) and installed in Schloss Friedenstein where it has remained ever since. See Schuttwolf 1995, 130–131, no. 45, ill.

##### Life-size plasters without tree trunk

Ecole nationale supérieure des beaux-arts, Paris (inv. MU-12193) (see fig. 2); H. 170 cm, W. 56 cm; white plaster; offered by Houdon to the Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture, 30 Sept. 1769. See *Procès-verbaux*, 8:24; Fontaine 1910, 71; Arnason 1975, 14, fig. 58.

Formerly Académie de chirurgie, Paris; destroyed. See Pierre-Thomas-Nicolas Hurtaut and Abraham Magny, *Dictionnaire historique de la Ville de Paris* (Paris, 1779), 1:163; and Legrand 1911, 307.

Ecole régionale des beaux-arts, Rouen; H. 170 cm; given to the Académie de Rouen by M. de Cideville in Feb. 1776. See Houdon's letter of 29 Feb. 1776



Back view of cat. 1

to J.-B. Descamps, reproduced in Réau 1964, 1:40; see also Rouen 1977, 44, no. 6.

Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia; H. 182 cm; purchased in 1805; listed in 1807 catalogue as “The First Set of Muscles in the Human Subject.” See Frank H. Goodyear Jr., “Tolerable Likenesses: The Portrait Busts of William Rush,” *William Rush: American Sculptor* [exh. cat., Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts] (Philadelphia, 1982), 51.

#### Undesignated life-size plaster

According to a document sent to Mr. De Heyderveydt & Co., Philadelphia, dated 26 Oct. 1785, a life-size plaster *Ecorché* was sent by Houdon to the “Etats de Virginie” (BMV, F 946, no. 49 bis). Present location unknown.

#### Plasters in sales catalogues before 1828

Dandré-Bardon, “peintre du Roi,” Paris, 23 June 1783, 6, no. 21: “L’Ecorché de M. Houdon. Quelques figures et Médailles en plâtre.”

Posthumous sale of Macret, engraver, Paris, 13 Jan. 1784, no. 6: “Plusieurs morceaux de sculpture en plâtre dont l’écorché de M. Houdon.”

Brenet, professor at the Académie royale, Paris, 16 Apr. 1792, no. 70: “30 figures et animaux en plâtre dont le grand écorché vif d’après M. Houdon.”

Posthumous sale of Suvée, painter, Paris, 4 Nov. 1807, no. 153: “Deux figures et un buste d’Ecorché par M. Houdon et 15 autres études de même genre, plusieurs sont moulés sur nature et 6 petits torsos” (66 livres).

Posthumous sale of contents of Houdon’s studio, Paris, 15–17 Dec. 1828, 19–20, nos. 64–66: “Plâtre— Le grand Ecorché, épreuve peinte à l’huile et offrant les couleurs des muscles vines et tendons”; “Plâtre— Le moule de la figure précédente. L’acquisition de ce moule confèrera la propriété de la figure, l’une des plus estimées de notre école”; “Tête de l’Ecorché, peinte à l’huile.”

1. Mannlich (ed. 1989–1993), 260.

2. Mannlich (ed. 1989–1993), 260.

3. *Corr. directeurs*, 12:141, no. 5946.

4. *Corr. directeurs*, 13:158.

5. Appendix in present catalogue, lines 55–73.

6. For a discussion of Houdon’s place in this tradition see Réau and Vallery-Radot 1938, 170–184.

7. See Duval and Cuyet 1899, 186–192.

8. BMV, F 946, no. 229: “J’ai fait à Rome en qualité d’élève de l’Académie royale de peinture et sculpture

une figure anatomique de grandeur naturelle communément appelée *Ecorché*, cette figure dont il se trouve des plâtres dans les académies de Rome, Paris, Toulouse, Flandres et Bordeaux qui y ont donné leur agrément, est utile et même nécessaire pour l’étude du dessin. J’ai l’avantage aussi de voir des Cours souveraines et étrangères posséder de ces plâtres et y donner leurs applaudissemens, telles que celle de Pologne, Parme, Russi et Gotha.”

## ✦ L'Écorché (*Figure of a Flayed Man, Right Arm Raised above His Head*)

1790

Bronze H. (to tip of right arm, with self-base) 203 cm; H. (to top of head, with base) 178 cm (diam. of base: 63 cm)

Inscribed on edge of base: *houdon f.*

Ecole nationale supérieure des beaux-arts, Paris (inv. MU11974)

This imposing life-size figure of a flayed man with his right arm raised above his head is one of Houdon's finest works in bronze. A variant of the famous *Ecorché* created in Rome in 1767 (cat. 1), it was cast in Paris in 1790. Houdon may well have created this version of his *Ecorché* while still in Rome as a study for an alternative pose for his statue of *Saint John the Baptist* (cat. 3); but the first mention of this later model appears in an unpublished letter of 13 February 1776 in which Houdon wrote of the enormous success of the first version of his life-size *Ecorché* and the fact that casts of it had been acquired by academies and courts all over Europe. He continued, "When I returned from Rome in 1769 and had the honor to be a candidate for membership in the Académie [royale], several of my colleagues requested that I undertake making a small version of this figure in order to make it easier and less expensive to acquire."<sup>1</sup> He explained that he had postponed doing this because there were so many unauthorized casts and copies being made of sculptors' works and sold at low prices, "depriving artists of the esteem and the glory to which they aspire, as well as robbing them of the fruits of their labor." He then wrote that, with the assurance that the police would provide protection against counterfeiters, he had just finished the sculpture and

that it would be available for sale in his studio in the Bibliothèque du Roi, "a figure of an *Ecorché* in plaster 19¼ pouces [48.9 cm] high, including the arm, which is raised above the head, and the base on which the figure is posed, where the seal of the Académie [royale] and my name is applied."

Houdon does not explain why he chose to change the pose. It may be in part because the raised arm shows the muscles and tendons of the torso, shoulder, and arm in a different configuration from those of the extended arm, making it more useful as a model for artists. The pose is very similar to that of the *Ecorché* drawn by Bouchardon and engraved by Huquier, with which Houdon was certainly familiar (see cat. 1, fig. 1). It also may have been easier to cast and less likely to break than its predecessor. Because Houdon was already so preoccupied with the counterfeiting of his sculptures, he also may have wanted to change the model in order to better control its sale and distribution. It is significant that in this document Houdon mentions for the first time his use of the *cachet de l'atelier* on his works, another device by which he sought to distinguish his authentic production from unauthorized copies. Houdon's concern about controlling the distribution of images of his *Ecorché* is further evident in an unpublished contract of 1814



between the print dealer “Jean” and Mme Houdon acting on her husband’s behalf, in which permission to make and sell prints of three engravings by Pariseau after Houdon’s bronze *Ecorché* is given for 300 francs, with the stipulation that the plates will be returned either to Mme Houdon or to the Académie des beaux-arts upon Houdon’s death.<sup>2</sup>

Life-size plaster casts of this second model were being made at least by 4 December 1778, when Houdon wrote to M. Fontanel, curator of the cast collection at the Société des beaux-arts in Montpellier, concerning the acquisition of a large plaster *Ecorché* of this type for 300 livres (see Related Works).<sup>3</sup> On 26 February 1779 the sculptor wrote again to say that he had finished (*réparé*) the *Ecorché* himself and was sending it, along with some other plaster casts, for the use of the students.

My goal, in devoting myself to this arduous work, is to offer to the young and to amateurs a representation of nature without flaws, each part of the study that I am sending to you having been made after a large number of models, from which I did not copy exactly and in the tiniest detail the one which at first glance seemed to be the most beautiful, having as a principle to defy this deceptive appearance. For a simple copy, as of a head, a foot, an ear, the model I use is the object itself that I have decided to copy. But when it is a question of a beautiful statue, I must review all of the models of the age that I am to represent without focusing on any one of them, and at the same time imitate and unite them into one whole, that Monsieur, is the spirit in which I have made my *Ecorchés*, my skulls, and the other pieces that I have the honor of sending you.<sup>4</sup>

In April 1790 Houdon asked the members of the Académie royale to choose one of the two models of his *Ecorché* for their collection. They voted unanimously for the earlier model, even though he had already given them a plaster of it in 1769.<sup>5</sup> They then must have changed their minds, because in the fall of the same year Houdon made the present bronze cast of the second model of the *Ecorché* for them. In a letter dated 1 November 1790 Gerhard Anton von Halem wrote:

I was at Houdon’s last Sunday [31 or 22 October] in very brilliant company. He had distributed quite a few tickets for people to come and see the bronze cast of the *Ecorché*, destined for the Académie [des beaux-arts].



Back view of cat. 2

Thanks to the generosity of a friend, I had one of these tickets, and in the evening when I made my visit, I found myself in a throng of aristocrats among whom I recognized only Mme d’Orléans and M. de Chartres. To tell the truth, one doesn’t see much of the bronze. It only seems to be an occasion for the artist to show his works in a brilliant light to high society. The vast room in which his works are displayed was lit from above in a very flattering way.<sup>6</sup>

The bronze *Ecorché* unites the two aspects of his work that Houdon considered most important, and he was enormously proud of it. In a *mémoire* addressed to Bachelier on 11 October 1794, he wrote, “I can say that I devoted myself to only two types of study that filled my entire life, and to which I sacrificed all that I earned... *anatomy* and the *casting [in bronze] of statues*.”<sup>7</sup> The cast is of very high quality and beautifully chased. It remains an important model for the study of anatomy at the Ecole des beaux-arts today.

ANNE L. POULET



1. Louis-Léopold Boilly, *A Painter's Studio*, ca. 1800, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington.

#### PROVENANCE

Cast in Paris Oct. 1790 (see text above and von Halem [ed. 1990], 188); offered by Houdon to the Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture and accepted 27 Oct. 1792 (*Procès-verbaux*, 10:187); following suppression of the academy 8 Aug. 1793, the movements of the sculpture are not clear. It does not appear in the inventory of the academy's holdings ordered by the Convention nationale and completed 9 Dec. 1793 by Naigeon and LeBrun, published in Fontaine 1910, 141–269. The academy's collections officially became the property of the Museum National on 2 Aug. 1794 (Fontaine 1910, 88 n. 1). The sculpture may have remained in the Ecole des beaux-arts in the Salle du Laocöon at the Louvre until 1807, when it may have been moved to the Musée des monuments français in the Petits Augustins until the Restoration of the monarchy in 1814. The bronze does not appear in nineteenth-century inventories of the school's holdings.

#### EXHIBITIONS

Paris 1928, 81–83, no. 78; P. Lavallée, *Art français des XVII<sup>e</sup> et XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècles. Exposition de dessins de maîtres, livres, pièces d'archives et sculptures faisant partie des collections de l'Ecole* [exh. cat., Ecole nationale supérieure des beaux-arts] (Paris, 1933), 59–60, no. 199; *Les Artistes français en Italie de Poussin à Renoir* [exh. cat., Musée des arts décoratifs] (Paris, 1934), 116, no. 774; W. Bouleau-Rabaud, *L'Art français au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle* [exh. cat., Ecole nationale supérieure des beaux-arts] (Paris, 1965), no. 131; Bernard Mahieu, Ariane Ducro, and Odile Dresch, *Rome à Paris* [exh. cat., Musée du Petit Palais] (Paris, 1968), no. 586, ill.; London 1972, 251–252, no. 389; Rouen 1977, 45, no. 8, ill. p. 142; Paris 1993–1994, 108, no. 66, ill. p. 108.

#### REFERENCES

Duval and Cuyer 1899, 202, 204–205, fig. 75; Dilke 1900, 130–131; Lami 1910–1911, 1:413; Giacometti 1918–1919, 1:124–125; 3:145–146; Calosso 1922, 295, 306 n. 14, ill. p. 301; Giacometti 1929, 1:180, 188, ill. opp. p. 10; 2:248–249; “Ecole des beaux-arts. Exposition d’art des XVII<sup>e</sup> et XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècles,” *Bulletin des musées de France*, no. 7 (1933), 109; Rabaud 1938, 112–113, fig. X; Réau and Vallery-Radot 1938, 181–182, ill. p. 181; Mansfeld 1955, 34–35; Eveline Schlumberger, “Les Ecorchés, plus que des études anatomiques. De rares oeuvres d’art,” *Connaissance des arts* (July 1959), 74–79, fig. 4; Réau 1964, 1:99; 2:16, no. 16, pl. XX, 16c; Arnason 1975, 15, 20, 68, 88, 92, 93, 117 n. 215, 118 n. 227, pls. 4a, 5; Gaborit 1975, 243, 246 n. 20; von Halem (ed. 1990), 188 n. 221; Bresc-Bautier 1994, 373.

#### RELATED WORKS

A complete study of Houdon's *Ecorchés* has not yet been made. Below are listed the sculptures documented as being of the second model, with the right arm held above the figure's head. For a list of other related works see cat. 1.

#### Life-size plasters

Musée Fabre, Montpellier (formerly the Société des beaux-arts) (inv. 806.32); white plaster; H. 185 cm, W. 80 cm; damaged. Recorded in minutes of society's meeting, 7 Mar. 1779, that Houdon had sent them “un *Grand Ecorché*, réparé par lui-même,” at a cost of 300 livres, and “son *Petit Ecorché*” (Stein 1913, 379).

Ecole des beaux-arts, Paris; painted in polychrome by Süe fils, 1792–1793; lost and presumed destroyed (see *Procès-verbaux*, 10:197, 210–211, 213).

**Reduced-size terracotta**

Houdon's studio sale, Paris, 8 Oct. 1795, 16, no. 90: "L'Ecorché, figure de petite proportion; hauteur 18 pouces [45.7 cm]" (4000 francs).

**Reduced-size plaster**

According to a document sent to Mr. De Heyderveydt & Co., Philadelphia, dated 26 Oct. 1875, a "petit écorché" was given to Robert Edge Pine by Houdon (BMV, F 946, no. 49 bis).

**Reduced-size bronzes**

Houdon's studio sale, Paris, 8 Oct. 1795, 12, no. 65: "Une Figure d'Homme écorché le bras droit élevé, il est posé sur terrasse; hauteur 18 pouces [45.7 cm]" (14,600 francs).

[Lucien-François] Feuchère père sale, Paris, 29 Nov. 1824, 11: M. Houdon, no. 15 bis: "un écorché fait avec soin — H.: 20 pouces [50.8 cm]" (201 francs, to Emmerson).

Feuchère and Fossey sale, Paris, 12 Dec. 1831, no. 2: "L'Ecorché de Houdon — 16 pouces [33 cm] de proportion. Bronze très soigné par M. Thomire" (80 francs).



Signature on cat. 2

Odiot père sale, Paris, 1 Mar. 1847, no. 23: "L'Ecorché de Houdon. Bronze fondu et ciselé par Thomire en 1776" (62 francs, to Rolin).

Posthumous sale Comte [de Imécourt], Paris, Hôtel Drouot, 23 May 1872, no. 117: "L'Ecorché de Houdon. Beau bronze portant l'inscription 'Houdon f. fondu ciselé par Thomire, 1776'" (200 francs).

Formerly Edmond Courty collection, Châtillon-sous-Bagneux; H. 58.42 cm; inscribed on base: "Houdon F. Fondu cisele par Thomire 1776" (see Arnason 1964, 18–20, ill.); differs from large bronze in that the figure's right arm is raised and bent so that the fingers touch the top of the head; probably identical with bronze in Comte [de Imécourt] sale, 23 May 1872 (see above).

**Boilly paintings**

Small-scale plaster of the *Ecorché* depicted in *A Painter's Studio* by Boilly (fig. 1), on the artist's table to the right. Both of Boilly's paintings of *Houdon in His Studio* (see cat. 66) show a life-size figure of the *Ecorché* with arm raised above his head at the extreme left. The figures appear to be bronze, or plaster painted to resemble bronze.

1. BMV, F 946, no. 229.

2. BMV, F 946, no. 227, contract for making prints after the *Ecorché*: "Entre les soussignés Marie Ange Cécile Houdon, chargée de pouvoir de monsieur le chevalier Houdon, sculpteur, membre de l'Institut royal de France, et Jean, marchand d'estampes, demeurant rue St.-Jean de Beauvau à Paris, a été convenu ce qui suit: Que la dame Houdon, du consentement de M. Houdon, son mari, avait et passait la propriété au sieur Jean, marchand d'estampes, des trois planches de cuivre gravées en 1781 par le sieur Pariseau d'après la statue de l'Ecorché en bronze de M. Houdon, pour en faire le nombre d'épreuves qu'il jugera convenable pendant la vie durant de M. Houdon. De laquelle propriété le sieur Jean jouira moyennant la somme de 300 francs qu'il payera à la dame Houdon lors de la remise des dites planches gravées.

"Que le sieur Jean s'engage à payer la dite somme de 300 francs à la dame Houdon pour la jouissance et propriété des dites planches pendant la vie

de M. Houdon. Qu'en outre, il s'oblige à remettre formellement les dites planches gravées entre les mains de la dite dame Houdon où à l'Académie de France, selon qu'il ne sera requis un mois après la mort de M. Houdon, époque où se feront la jouissance et commission qui lui seront faites par le présent." Signed and dated 29 Dec. 1814. Examples of these engravings have not yet been found.

3. ADH, in records predating 1790, Archives civiles, ser. D 233: "j'ai l'honneur de vous faire part qu'ayant désir de mettre des plâtres de mon ÉCORCHÉ dans toutes les académies j'y ai mis un prix fort modique relativement à toutes les peines et les dépenses que j'ai été obligé de faire à ce sujet. La somme est de trois cent livres."

4. ADH, Archives civiles, ser. D 233: "Mon but, en me livrant à ces travaux pénibles est d'offrir à la jeunesse et aux amateurs la représentation de la nature sans défauts, chacune des parties d'étude que je vous

envoie, ayant été faite d'après un grand nombre de modèles, dont je ne me suis point asservi à copier juste et dans la plus mince exactitude celui qui au premier coup d'oeil paraissait le plus beau ayant pour principe de me défier de cette trompeuse apparence. Pour une imitation simple, telle que d'une tête, d'un pied, d'une oreille le modèle dont je me sers est l'objet même que je m'assujettis à copier. Mais lorsqu'il s'agit d'une belle statue, je dois passer en revue tous ceux de l'âge que j'ai à représenter, de me fixer sur aucun, et cependant les imiter et les réunir pour ainsi dire tous en un seul, voila Monsieur, l'esprit avec lequel j'ai fait mes Ecorchés, mes têtes de mort et les différentes pièces que j'ai l'honneur de vous envoyer."

5. *Procès-verbaux*, 10:58.

6. Von Halem (ed. 1990), 188.

7. Reproduced in Réau 1964, 199.





## + Saint John the Baptist

1766–1767

Plaster, painted white

H. 169 cm (with self-base: 178 cm) (base: H. 9 cm, W. 58.74 cm, D. ca. 50.8 cm)

Galleria Borghese, Rome (inv. CCLXXI)

In 1766 Houdon, who was a student at the Académie de France, Rome, was given the very prestigious commission for two over-life-size statues—one of *Saint Bruno* (see cat. 4) and the other of *Saint John the Baptist*—by Dom André Le Masson, the French *procureur général* of the Carthusian order of friars.<sup>1</sup> These sculptures, the former representing the patron saint of the Carthusians, the latter the prototype of the virtues and ideals of the order, were to occupy facing niches in the church of Santa Maria degli Angeli, the seat of the Carthusian order in Rome. Built into the ancient baths of Diocletian,<sup>2</sup> the church had been designed by Michelangelo in 1561 and had undergone a number of subsequent transformations. In 1749 the architect Luigi Vanvitelli was asked to regularize the plan of the building and to make its decoration harmonious throughout. Both he and Michelangelo had kept the two large niches in the walls between the vestibule and the nave of the church, which had been part of the original Roman baths.<sup>3</sup> The renovation work was not completed until 1765, and the commission for the two statues followed shortly thereafter.<sup>4</sup> In 1767 Houdon installed the colossal marble statue of *Saint Bruno* in its niche, where it remains today. For reasons that are not entirely clear—possibly lack of money or lack of time—Houdon executed the large pendant

figure of *Saint John the Baptist* only in plaster, placing it in its niche before he left Rome at the end of 1768. This enormous plaster (H. 315 cm) remained in position until the night of 3–4 June 1894, when it fell and broke into small pieces.<sup>5</sup> Unfortunately, no photographs of the statue have survived, so its exact composition is unknown.

The present life-size plaster statue of *Saint John the Baptist* was discovered in 1921 in the storerooms of the Museo Nazionale in Rome. Like the church of Santa Maria degli Angeli, the museum is built directly on the site of the ancient Roman baths of Diocletian. Despite the sculpture's damaged condition, Achille Bertini Calosso recognized it as Houdon's model for the statue commissioned by the Carthusians in 1766.<sup>6</sup> It is the only known surviving version of the full statue. In striking contrast to the *Saint Bruno*, Houdon's *Saint John the Baptist* is shown in an animated pose and is represented nude except for an animal skin draped around his loins and held in place by a strap that runs diagonally across his chest. His right arm is extended horizontally in front of him in a gesture of blessing, while his left arm falls at his side. The saint's weight rests on his left foot, and his right leg is bent behind him as though he is about to step forward. An indication that Houdon intended to



1. Houdon, Head of Saint John the Baptist, 1766–1767, plaster, painted white, Schlossmuseum Gotha.

execute the sculpture in marble is found in the support that appears at his side, which would have been necessary to sustain the weight of the figure in marble.

In preparation for the execution of this first major commission, Houdon modeled a figure of a flayed man in the same pose (see cat. 1). Johann Christian von Mannlich, Houdon's friend and fellow student at the Académie de France in Rome, wrote in his diary, "My friend Houdon, who at that time was doing a statue representing Saint John the Baptist for the Church of the Carthusians, had the idea to do the model in clay that he had at hand, first as an *écorché*, and every day he used our [anatomy] lesson and my drawings in order to study the system of muscles thoroughly."<sup>7</sup> A comparison with Houdon's plaster *Ecorché* of 1767 reveals how closely his statue of *Saint John the Baptist* follows it in proportions and pose.

Among the sculptures that Houdon sent to Duke Ernst II in Gotha in July 1772 was a plaster *Head of Saint John the Baptist* (fig. 1). In the letter of explanation that he sent with the shipment, Houdon revealed the model he used for the head of the saint as well as valuable information about his working methods.

I found a kind of hermit living among the people, bare feet, wearing a sort of cape of a Capuchin friar, and with a head that suited me fairly well . . . I approached him as he left [St. Peter's] and asked him to serve as the model for the Head only. Neither gold nor silver nor even prayers would make him agree to do it. He said to me that he was not worthy of serving as a model for a saint. I decided to use him without having any obligation to him.

I studied him carefully and stored it in my head as well as I possibly could. I returned to the academy, which is quite a long distance from St. Peter's, and I modeled a mass of clay already prepared for this purpose. I returned the next day and the day after that to see him again and finished my head in fact without obligation to him.<sup>8</sup>

Just as he had with the *Ecorché*, Houdon worked selectively from nature, choosing a model that corresponded to his idea of Saint John, then perfecting it.

This letter also reveals that the young sculptor was anxious to win the approval of his teachers and friends:

I showed [the head of Saint John] to my superior and to my colleagues, who found it to be very good. But there were several minds who . . . said to me that it would be even better if there were more spiritual fire, in a word more action. . . . I wanted to satisfy everyone, but I also feared that I would undo what I declare now to have never done better. . . . In order to have no reason to reproach myself, I had it cast, and on the clay I did what one wanted me to do. The two heads placed next to each other were generally found to be good, but most people preferred the first one. It wouldn't have taken much so that in wanting to do too well, I would have ruined a good head if I hadn't taken the measure of preserving it by means of a mold.<sup>9</sup>



2–3. Gabriel de Saint-Aubin, two drawings of Saint John the Baptist in Salon catalogue of 1769, 38 and 7e garde/verso (detail), BNEst.

It is significant that Houdon did a second, more baroque head (lost) to please his critics, but that he and they preferred the quieter, more classical version in the end. Already in the early part of his career the artist was preserving his compositions in plaster through the use of piece molds, a practice he would continue for the rest of his life.

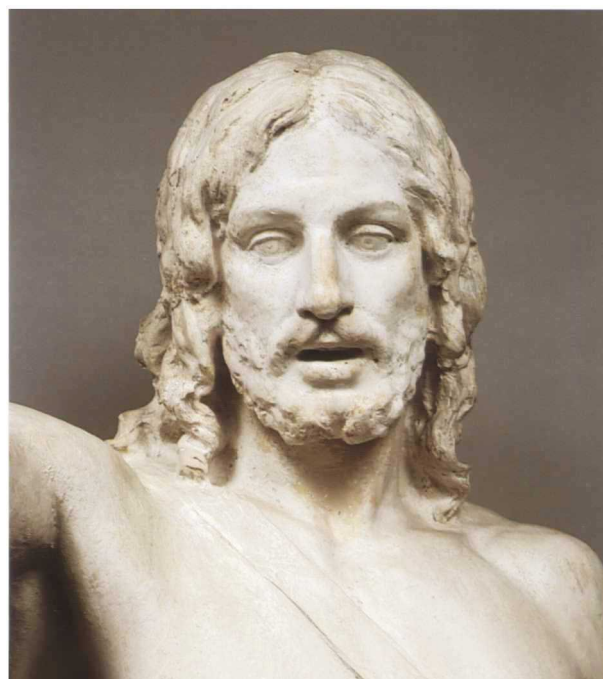
Houdon also executed two models of the entire figure of Saint John—one with the right arm stretched out in front of him in a gesture of blessing, as in the present plaster, and the other with the right arm raised above his head, as recorded in two drawings by Saint-Aubin in his copy of the Salon catalogue of 1769 (figs. 2–3). Houdon may well have executed an *Ecorché* in this second pose as a study while still in Rome (see cat. 2). Although no photographs survive of the original *Saint John* as installed at Santa Maria degli Angeli, a strong indication that the second pose was used is the fact that the sculptor exhibited that version, along with his *Saint Bruno*—his two most famous Roman sculptures, both shown in niches—at his first Salon in 1769.

In a review of the 1769 Salon a critic called Pingeron wrote, “M. Houdon exhibited a statue of *Saint John the Baptist* that reminds amateurs of the *Christ Holding the Cross* by Michelangelo, which one admires in the church of the Minerva in Rome.”<sup>10</sup> This relationship has been repeated by Houdon scholars into the twentieth century<sup>11</sup> and seems to be well founded, particularly when one compares the figure of Christ to the version of Saint John with the arm raised (fig. 3). Like Michelangelo’s Christ (fig. 4), Houdon’s Saint John is a powerful, idealized standing male nude with his weight balanced on one leg. There is a close resemblance between the heads of the two figures, both with long, wavy hair parted in the middle, short beards and a mustache, and deep-set, lightly incised eyes. They share a great beauty of modeling and spiritual expression. In early inventories at Gotha, Houdon’s head of Saint John was mistaken for a head of Christ.<sup>12</sup> It was fitting that Houdon found inspiration in the sculpture of Michelangelo, who as architect of Santa Maria degli Angeli had designed the entrance and vestibule of the church. Combining the Christ of Michelangelo with anatomical studies and classical prototypes, Houdon invented a superb figure that was the active counterpart to the passive, contemplative *Saint Bruno* installed in the facing niche.

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4. Michelangelo, *Christ Holding the Cross*, 1518–1521, white marble, Church of Santa Maria Sopra Minerva, Rome.



Detail of cat. 3

PROVENANCE

In 1921 Achille Bertini Calosso identified the present plaster, found in the collection of the Museo Nazionale, Rome, by its director, Robert Paribeni, as the life-size model for Houdon's *Saint John the Baptist* (see Calosso 1922, 298); following its restoration by Cesare Fossi, it was transferred to the Galleria di Villa Borghese, where it remains today.

REFERENCES

Dierks 1887, 17–18; Paul Vitry, “Le ‘Saint Jean-Baptiste’ de Houdon,” *BSHAF* (1910), 207; Giacometti 1918–1919, 1:34; 3:220–221; Calosso 1922, 289–307; Réau 1922b, 316–318; Réau 1923, 43–52, ill. pp. 48–49; Vitry 1923, 77–81, ill.; Giacometti 1929, 1:8–9, ill. opp. p. 22; Réau 1934, 36, 38; Réau 1945, 96–98; Italo Faldi, *Galleria Borghese. Le Sculture dal secolo XVI al XIX* (Rome, 1954), 57, no. 54; Puech 1960, 30–32; Réau 1964, 1:39–42, 94, 99, 142, 144, 146, 147, 199–200, 204, 205, 210–212; 2:16, no. 17, pl. XXII; Amason 1975, 11, 13–15, 45, fig. 59; Schuttwolf 1995, 129; Mannlich (ed. 1989–1993), 260; Moreno and Stefani 2000, 125, no. 7, ill.

RELATED WORKS

Plasters

Life-size statue (lost), shown at Salon of 1769 (not in cat.; see Réau 1923, 43–52). Two drawings by Gabriel de Saint-Aubin (see figs. 2–3; and Dacier 1909–1921, 2:89, nos. 38 and 7e garde/verso) show the figure standing in a niche with his right arm raised and holding in his left hand a staff surmounted by a cross.

Schlossmuseum Gotha, *Head of Saint John the Baptist* (inv. P 39) (see fig. 1); painted white; H. 66.5 cm, W. 38 cm, D. 34 cm; exhibited at Salon of 1769 (not in cat.); see Réau 1923, 44–45, 51–52, ill. p. 41; Schuttwolf 1995, 129, no. 44, ill.

Boilly paintings

A terracotta-colored *Head of Saint John the Baptist* appears on the center bottom shelf at the back of the room in both of Boilly's paintings of Houdon's studio (cat. 66).

1. *Corr. directeurs*, 12:119, 122, 140, 146, 151, nos. 5911, 5915, 5946, 5952, and 5959.

2. See Mario Rotili, *Vita di Luigi Vanvitelli* (Naples, 1975), 132–136.

3. See Marcel Raymond and Charles Marcel-Raymond, “Vanvitelli et Michel-Ange à Sainte-Marie-des-Anges,” *GBA*, 5th ser., 7 (Sept.-Oct., 1922), 195–217, esp. 203–204, ill. p. 199.

4. The records of Santa Maria degli Angeli are conserved in the Archivio de Stato di Roma. See James Hogg, *The Charterhouse of Rome* (Salzburg, 1984), 12.

But no mention of the commission was found there. The author wishes to thank Dr. Christoph Frank for this information.

5. See Réau 1923, 50; and C. Bernardi Salvetti, *S. Maria degli Angeli alle Terme e Antonio Lo Duca* (Rome, 1965), 109–110.

6. Calosso 1922, 289–307.

7. Mannlich (ed. 1989–1993), 1:260.

8. Appendix to the present catalogue, lines 340–357.

9. Appendix, lines 357–374.

10. Réau 1923, 44.

11. See, for example, Réau 1964, 1:212; and Amason 1975, 14.

12. “Verzeichniss der im sogenannten Antiken-Saale befindlichen Abgüsse, Büsten pp.,” ThStA, Gotha, ca. 1804–1827, “Cap: II,” fol. 4v, nos. 3–4: “Maria und Christus”; “Catalog der Sammlung der Gips-Abgüsse,” Schlossmuseum Gotha, 1845, “Büsten,” no. 37: “Maria/von Houdon.”

## + Saint Bruno

Probably 1766–1767

Plaster, painted white

H. 84.4 cm, W. 32.5 cm

Schlossmuseum Gotha (inv. P 27)

This statue of *Saint Bruno* is the same one that Houdon exhibited in the Salon of 1769. Its identification is confirmed by Saint-Aubin's drawing of the figure in his copy of the Salon catalogue (fig. 1)<sup>1</sup> as well as by the letter Houdon wrote to accompany a shipment of his works to the Duke Ernst II of Saxe-Gotha in July 1772, specifying "the *Saint Bruno* that was exhibited at the Salon three years ago."<sup>2</sup> Of the five examples of Houdon's work shown at his first Salon in 1769, all dating from his years in Rome, four were sent to the court of Saxe-Gotha in 1772.

This plaster is a small-scale version of Houdon's over-life-size marble of *Saint Bruno* in the church of Santa Maria degli Angeli in Rome (fig. 2). It may be the original presentation model for the marble or a cast of it, for the plaster is virtually identical to the marble in its proportions and pose; even the back is roughly finished, as is that of the marble, which was intended to be seen only from the front and sides. The composition of the figure is simple, closed, and almost columnar. The saint, who has his eyes lowered in contemplation, is conceived to fit quietly into the space of a niche.

The *Saint Bruno*, along with a statue of *Saint John the Baptist* (cat. 3), was created in 1766–1767 by the twenty-five-year-old Houdon, who had arrived in Rome in late 1764 as a Prix de

Rome winner at the Académie de France. Both works were commissioned by Dom André Le Masson, the French *procureur général* of the Carthusian order of friars. Representing the patron saint and the founder of the order, respectively, the statues were to occupy two niches flanking the space between the vestibule and the nave of the church, which was the seat of the Carthusian order in Rome. Charles Natoire, director of the academy, wrote to Marigny, director of the Bâtiments du Roi, on 16 July 1766 to tell him that Houdon had already begun to work on this prestigious commission, that he was highly qualified, and that it should contribute to the advancement of his career.<sup>3</sup> The colossal marble statue of *Saint Bruno* was completed and installed in its niche in 1767.

Houdon's *Saint Bruno* is a remarkable achievement for a young sculptor. It was conceived as a stylistic alternative to the dramatic neobaroque marble *Saint Bruno* done by his teacher, Michel-Ange Slodtz, in 1744 for Saint Peter's in Rome. In contrast to Slodtz' figure—gesturing with his left hand to refuse a bishop's miter and staff offered by a putto while twisting to point to a skull with his right hand—Houdon's robed saint stands motionless and introspective, without attributes, his arms folded across his chest, and his eyes lowered. Contemporary critics praised the figure



for embodying the humility, faith, and vow of silence associated with the Carthusian order. Avoiding all narrative detail, Houdon distilled these qualities in his monumental figure of the saint.

Johann Christian von Mannlich, a friend and fellow student of Houdon's at the Académie de France in Rome, wrote that in 1766 Houdon was studying anatomy by dissecting corpses under the tutelage of a French professor of surgery named Séguier at Saint-Louis des Français in Rome.<sup>4</sup> From these studies he composed his famous *Ecorché* (cat. 1), which served as a preparatory model for his *Saint John the Baptist*. These anatomical studies also inform the composition of the *Saint Bruno*. One senses the body of the saint under his heavy robes. The head of the saint, with the sharp definition of the face and skull, also relies on the *Ecorché*. At the same time, the proportions and pose of the figure recall those of the famous classical statue of Antinous in the Capitoline Museum (fig. 3), a sculpture that was greatly admired in France in the eighteenth century and considered to be a model for the ideal figure of a young man.<sup>5</sup> The style of the *Saint Bruno*, which was the result of the sculptor's close study of anatomy combined with an equally careful study of classical prototypes, was to characterize all of Houdon's later work.

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1. Gabriel de Saint-Aubin, drawing of Saint Bruno in a Niche in Salon catalogue of 1769, 55, 7e garde (detail), BNest.



2. Houdon, Saint Bruno, 1766–1767, marble, Santa Maria degli Angeli, Rome.



3. Antinous, Hadrianic copy of a Hermes from the early 4th century BC, marble, Capitoline Museum, Rome.

## PROVENANCE

Identical with the plaster Houdon exhibited at Salon of 1769 (see text above); sent by Houdon to Duke Ernst II of Saxe-Gotha in July 1772 and incorporated into the plaster cast collection at Schloss Friedenstein; listed as “Der heilige Bruno” under “Cap: III. An kleinen Modellen, antik und modern” in the collection's earliest known written inventory, “Verzeichniss der im sogenannten Antiken-Saale befindlichen Abgüsse, Büsten pp.” (undated, ThStA Gotha, no. 63, ca. 1804–1827, fol. 5v), no. 17; listed in subsequent inventories: “Catalog der Sammlung der Gips-Abgüsse” (Schlossmuseum Gotha, 1845), under “Kleinere Statuen,” no. 54, as “St. Bruno /von Houdon”; Eduard Wolfgang, “Verzeichniss der Abgüsse antiker und moderner Bildhauerarbeiten im Herzogl: Antiken-Cabinet zu Gotha” (Schlossmuseum Gotha, 1857), no. III.61; and Wolfgang 1869, 23, no. IV.37.

## EXHIBITIONS

Paris, Salon of 1769 (not in cat.; see Réau 1923, 41–52); Berlin 1955, 67, ill. pp. 18, 20; Duisburg 1987, 136, no. 85, ill. p. 137; *Art in Rome in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Edgar Peters Bowron and Joseph J. Rishel [exh. cat., Philadelphia Museum of Art] (Philadelphia, 2000), 256–257, cat. 131, ill.

## REFERENCES

*Lettre sur l'exposition... au Salon du Louvre 1769* (Paris, 1769), 49 (Deloynes IX, no. 120); *L'Année littéraire* (Paris, 1769), 320 (Deloynes IX, no. 128); *L'Avant-coureur*, no. 39 (Paris, 1769), 404 (Deloynes IX, no. 137); [Daudet de Jossac], *Sentiments sur les tableaux exposés au Salon* (Paris, 1769), 27 (Deloynes IX, no. 122); “Lettre... au sujet des ouvrages exposés au Salon du Louvre en 1769” (1769), 370 (Deloynes IX, no. 133); Dierks 1887, 25, 116; Carl Aldenhoven, “Houdon in Gotha (1887),” in *Gesammelte Aufsätze*, ed. A. Lindner (Leipzig, 1911), 142; Dacier 1909–1921, 2:88–89, pl. 7e garde/verso; Giacometti 1918–1919, 2:26; 3:218–219; Calosso 1922, 289–307, ill. p. 291; Réau 1923, 43–46, 49–50, 52; Brinckmann 1925, 132–133; Schwark 1930,



49, pl. 40.I; C.M.A.A. Lindeman, "Een tweetal onbekende ontwerpen voor den H. Bruno van Houdon," *Maandblad voor Beeldende Kunsten* 19 (Oct. 1942), 228–235, fig. 2; Réau 1945, 96–98; Mansfeld 1955, 28–32, no. 2; Boggyay 1964, 113; Réau 1964, 2:16, no. 18; Arnason 1975, 12, pl. 7; Schuttwolf 1995, 132, no. 46, ill. p. 173.

#### RELATED WORKS

##### Full-length statues

###### Marble

Over-life-size marble in church of Santa Maria degli Angeli, Rome (see fig. 2); H. 315 cm; commissioned from Houdon in 1766; installed in a niche between nave and vestibule in 1767.

###### Plaster

Musée des monuments français, Paris (inv. 551); plaster cast of the marble; H. 350 cm, W. 103 cm; recorded as having entered the collection ca. 1883 (AMMF).

##### Reductions

###### Plasters—sales

Documented in the catalogues of the Bergeret sale, Paris, 24 Apr. 1786, 127, no. 496: "Un Saint-Bruno en plâtre, par M. Houdon, sur piédestal en bois de chêne. Hauteur 5 pieds 6 pouces [167.6 cm]"; and the posthumous sale of the contents of Houdon's studio, Paris, 15–17 Dec. 1828, no. 9: "Plâtre peint. Petit modèle de la belle statue de Saint Bruno, exécutée en marbre par M Houdon et placée à Rome dans l'église des Chartreux."

###### Marble

There is a nineteenth-century copy in the Museum of the History of Religion, St. Petersburg, Russia (inv. A.1472.III); H. 107 cm, W. 39 cm. The author wishes to thank Guilhem Scherf for bringing this sculpture to her attention.

###### Terracottas

Kunstgewerbemuseum, Hamburg (inv. 1959.256 and 257); two terracotta statuettes, attributed to Houdon and considered preparatory studies for the statue; H. 44 cm, W. 16.2 cm; and H. 46.1 cm, W. 17.7 cm; acquired on the art market in Amsterdam in 1959. In one the saint holds an open book, and in the other his hands are clasped in front of him in a slightly more active pose as he looks down to his right. See Christian Theuerkauff et al., *Die Bildwerke des 18. Jahrhunderts. Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe Hamburg* (Braunschweig, 1977), 280–283, nos. 164, 165, ill. While these terracottas clearly bear a relationship to Houdon's *Saint Bruno* and appear to date from the eighteenth century, it is uncertain whether they are preliminary sketches by Houdon's hand.

##### Drawing

Gabriel de Saint-Aubin drew a sketch of Houdon's plaster statue of *Saint Bruno* in a niche in his copy of the Salon catalogue of 1769 (see fig. 1; and Dacier 1909–1921, 2:88–89, pl. 7e garde).

##### Reductions of the Head of Saint Bruno

Houdon also executed several reductions of the *Head of Saint Bruno* as independent sculptures in plaster and bronze:

###### Plaster—extant

Musée des Beaux-Arts, Dijon (inv. CA-757); painted terracotta color; H. 18 cm (with base: 23 cm), W. at shoulders 10.6 cm; *cachet de l'atelier* on center back; collection of François Devosge (1732–1811), founder and director of Ecole de dessin, Dijon; by inheritance to his son Anatole Devosge (1770–1850); bequeathed to the city of Dijon; transferred to the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Dijon, in 1850 (see Quarré 1960, 45, no. 247; Réau 1964, 2:16, no. 18, pl. XXIV, fig. 18/71).

###### Plasters—lost or location unknown

A small *Head of Saint Bruno*, painted terracotta color, shipped by Houdon to the Duke Ernst II of Saxe-Gotha in July 1772 (see Appendix, lines 448–452), does not appear in any inventories of the royal collection at Gotha, and it does not exist in the collection today.

Other reductions appeared in the François sale, Paris, 19 June 1777, no. 31: "La tête de Saint Bruno . . . sous un cage de verre avec un pied doré" (without indication of medium, but all but one of the other sculptures by Houdon in the sale were plasters); and in the Beauvais sale, Paris, 8 July 1793, no. 118: "Le buste de Saint Bruno. Joli plâtre par Houdon."

###### Bronze—lost or location unknown

Houdon's studio sale, Paris, 8 Oct. 1795, 12, no. 67, under "Figures et bustes en bronze": "Le Buste de Saint Bruno, extrait de la Statue en marbre faite pour l'Eglise des Chartreux à Rome, il est pose sur pied douche en bronze doré; hauteur totale: 8 pouce 9 lignes [ca. 22.6 cm]" (752 livres, as noted by Rigault Delaland).



Back view of cat. 4

1. Dacier 1909–1921, 2:88–89, mistakenly identifies the statue of *Saint Bruno* drawn by Saint-Aubin as a work by Etienne Pierre Adrien Gois (no. 221 in the Salon cat.).

2. Appendix in the present catalogue, lines 316–317.

3. *Corr. directeurs*, 12:119.

4. Mannlich (ed. 1989–1993), 1:260, 269.

5. Haskell and Penny 1981, 143–144, no. 5, fig. 74.

## ‡ Priest of the Lupercalia

Probably 1768

Plaster, painted white, with self-base

H. (with base) 78 cm, W. 49 cm (diam. of base: 31 cm)

Schlossmuseum Gotha (inv. P 38)

For many decades mistaken for a “running youth,” this statuette actually represents the unusual subject of a priest of the ancient Roman spring festival known as the Lupercalia. Observed on 15 February, this fertility and purifying rite honored the god Lupercus, or Faunus (Greek: Pan).<sup>1</sup> Proceedings started at the Lupercal cave on the Palatine Hill, where the she-wolf (Latin: lupa) is said to have suckled the infants Romulus and Remus, legendary founders of Rome. The festivities included the sacrificial offering of one or more goats, after which the ceremony officials—the Luperci—would anoint themselves with goats’ blood and race through the streets, nude except for a girdle cut from the animals’ hide. Wielding bloody thongs of goatskin, they would lash at onlookers, especially women, in an action intended to promote fertility and facilitate childbirth, a superstition also put forward in Ovid.<sup>2</sup> Houdon’s *Priest of the Lupercalia* is captured at this moment, running with his right arm raised, ready to swing one of the rolled-up strips of goat hide in his hand.<sup>3</sup>

The present plaster of the *Priest of the Lupercalia* is the only known surviving version and comes directly from the sculptor’s studio. Houdon sent it to Duke Ernst II of Saxe-Gotha in July 1772 as part of a larger shipment of sculptures, noting in the

accompanying letter, preserved in the library of Schloss Friedenstein in Gotha: “One will find a small figure enclosed in a crate that is inserted inside the large one, representing the Priest of the Lupercalia. . . . This plaster is the one with which I was *agrée*. It was exhibited at the Salon of 1769.”<sup>4</sup> Houdon here ascribes special importance to the *Priest of the Lupercalia* by singling it out as the one piece that secured his preliminary admission to the Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture in 1769, yet he reportedly submitted several sculptures.<sup>5</sup> Although not listed in the official Salon catalogue, it was documented in a drawing by Saint-Aubin (fig. 1) and was highly praised by the critics: “The Luperque by M. Houdon is certainly in motion, as antiquity would require of these kinds of priests of the god Pan”; “a charming figure, seized in movement perfectly; it is nature caught as she is and embellished by the execution”; “full of grace and of informed refinement”; “full of warmth”; and “with a refined design, great subtlety of surface, and a light composition.”<sup>6</sup>

Houdon’s statuette is a dynamic study of the male body in motion. Balanced on the ball of his left foot, the figure stretches his right arm forward and his right leg back in a strong diagonal. The pose recalls that of the famous Borghese *Gladiator*, which, from the time of its discovery in the early seventeenth





1. Gabriel de Saint-Aubin, drawing of Priest of the Lupercalia in *Salon catalogue of 1769* (detail), BNEst.

century, was widely celebrated for its truthful rendering of anatomy.<sup>7</sup> In the eighteenth century the work could be seen in the Villa Borghese in Rome, where numerous artists admired and copied it. Houdon's *Priest of the Lupercalia* transformed this antique nude into a running figure by tilting it slightly forward onto one foot and lifting the other foot. The impression of movement is enhanced by the windblown hair and fluttering animal pelt, and the face is animated by the pupils defined in the eyes and teeth showing in a slightly opened mouth. Almost a century and a half earlier, Gian Lorenzo Bernini used similar devices in his *Apollo and Daphne* (1622), also displayed at the Villa Borghese.<sup>8</sup> Another possible prototype for Houdon's *Priest of the Lupercalia*, and maybe closest of all, is Nicolas Coustou's *Apollo* (fig. 2), executed for the gardens of Marly around 1713–1714. Coustou drew inspiration from both Bernini and the *Gladiator*, consciously combining elements from the antique and the Roman baroque. The *Priest of the Lupercalia* is the most baroque expression in Houdon's career, distinguished from all later figures by its animation and extension into space.

Unlike the Bacchanalia, the theme of the Lupercalia was never popular in the fine arts, and possible models are rare. Documented depictions of the subject include a series of seventeenth-century etchings mentioned by Pierre Jean Mariette.<sup>9</sup> Under "Les cérémonies des fêtes Lupercales," Mariette lists fifteen prints by Jean Le Pautre and Louis de Châtillon, finished by Jean Boulanger, after drawings by François Torteat. The series, dated 1659, is based on a fresco cycle representing the story of

Romulus and Remus, which Agostino, Annibale, and Ludovico Carracci executed around 1590 for the Palazzo Magnani in Bologna. Only one scene is named, "Ludi Lupercali," and it shows a youthful priest, nude but for a cloth around his hips, wielding a whip and chasing a fleeing woman (fig. 3).<sup>10</sup> His dynamic posture on one leg, his lean but muscular body, the disheveled hair and fluttering fabric, all are elements that can be seen in Houdon's *Priest of the Lupercalia*. Prints of this kind were widely distributed and regularly copied by artists and craftsmen.

Réau suggests that Houdon may have gotten the idea for his *Priest of the Lupercalia* from Michel-François Dandré-Bardon.<sup>11</sup> Dandré-Bardon was a professor of historical costumes and Roman history at the Ecole royale des élèves protégés, the exclusive school at the Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture in Paris where Houdon studied for three years prior to his stay in Rome.<sup>12</sup> Dandré-Bardon explains the particulars of the Lupercalia feast in the first volume of his *Costume des anciens peuples*, published in 1772, and he even illustrates several figures.<sup>13</sup> Although his drawing of a nude celebrant holding strips of goatskin was clearly not the model for Houdon's *Priest of the Lupercalia*, it is conceivable that a class on the religious rituals of ancient Rome sparked the sculptor's interest in this unusual subject.

ULRIKE D. MATHIES



2. Nicolas Coustou, *Apollo*, ca. 1713–1714, marble, Musée du Louvre, Paris.



*Alternate views of cat. 5*



3. *Louis de Châtillon, Ludi Lupercali, 1659, etching, Istituto nazionale per la grafica, Rome, Storie di Romulo e Remo, plate without number (FC 4607, vol. 26 M 18).*

## PROVENANCE

Sent by Houdon to Duke Ernst II of Saxe-Gotha in July 1772 and incorporated into the collection of plaster casts at Schloss Friedenstein; possibly identical with “Ein Silen die Becken schlagend” mentioned under “Cap: III. An kleinen Modellen, antik und modern” in the collection’s earliest known inventory, “Verzeichniss der im sogenannten Antiken-Saale befindlichen Abgüsse, Büsten pp.” (undated, ThStA Gotha, no. 63, ca. 1804–1827, fol. 61r), no. 21; in 1835 recorded in Rathgeber 1835, 49; listed as “Ein Priester des Bacchus” in “Catalog der Sammlung der Gips-Abgüsse” (Schlossmuseum Gotha, 1845, no. 44); and as a running male figure in later inventories: Eduard Wolfgang, “Verzeichniss der Abgüsse antiker und moderner Bildhauerarbeiten im Herzogl. Antiken-Cabinet zu Gotha” (Schlossmuseum Gotha, 1857, no. III.91): “Männliche laufende Figur”; and Wolfgang 1869, 23, no. IV.49, as “Männliche Figur, laufend, von Houdon (?)”.

## EXHIBITIONS

Paris, Salon of 1769 (not in cat.; see text above and Réau 1923, 41–52); Berlin 1955, 68, ill. p. 26; Duisburg 1987, 138, no. 86, ill. p. 139; Gotha 1989 (not in cat.).

## REFERENCES

*L'Année littéraire* 5, letter 13 (Paris, 1769), 320 (Deloynes IX, no. 128); *L'Avant-coureur*, no. 39 (Paris, 1769), 404 (Deloynes IX, no. 137); *Lettre sur l'exposition... au Salon du Louvre 1769* (Paris, 1769), 49 (Deloynes IX, no. 120); [Daudet de Jossac], *Sentiments sur les tableaux exposés au Salon* (Paris, 1769), 27 (Deloynes IX, no. 122); [Des Boulmiers], “Exposition... dans le Salon du Louvre,” *Mercur de France* (Oct. 1969), 360 (Deloynes XLIX, no. 1313); Dierks 1887, 25 n. 2; Vitry 1907c, 151–154; Dacier 1909–1921, 2:89, pl. 7e garde/verso; Lami 1910–1911, 1:414; Giacometti 1918–1919, 1:36; 3:162–163; Réau 1923, 41–52, ill. p. 47; Maillard 1931, 15–16, pl. 6; Mansfeld 1955, 38–39, no. 4; Réau 1964, 1:38, 41–42, 200–202; 2:11, no. 2, pl. 1; Arnason 1975, 15, fig. 61, pl. 8; Schuttwolf 1995, 133, no. 47, ill. p. 172.

## RELATED WORKS

Only extant version. A copy in plaster appeared in the François sale, Paris, 19 June 1777, 5, no. 32: “un jeune Homme courant à la fête des Lupercales, très belle figure en plâtre; morceau de réception de M. Houdon à l'Académie.”

## Bronze

Mentioned in Houdon's autograph list of his own works from ca. 1784 (Vitry 1907b, 197), no. 10: “Un figure sur 2 pieds de hauteur representant un prêtre des fêtes lupercales, morcau dagrée [sic] à l'académie, et a été exécuté en bronze.” Apparently cast after 1777, it remained in the artist's possession (see his *mémoire* to Bachelier of 11 Oct. 1794, in Réau 1964, 1:99: “A mon retour [de Rome], pour mon morceau de réception, un Morphée en marbre demi-nature; depuis un Prêtre des Lupercales en bronze, à moy”) until his studio sale, 8 Oct. 1795, 12, no. 64, under “Figures et bustes en bronze”: “Un Prêtre des fêtes Lupercales, il tient d'une main des courroyes, & de l'autre un couteau. Cette Figure sur terrasse, porte 31 pouces de haut [78.75 cm]” (18,000 livres). It resurfaced in the [Lucien-François] Feuchère père sale, Paris, 29 Nov. 1824, 11, no. 14: “Un prêtre des fêtes Lupercales, seul bronze existant de ce modèle. 31 pouces” (543 or 800 francs, to Lafontaine).

## Drawing

Saint-Aubin sketched the figure in his copy of the Salon catalogue of 1769 (see fig. 1; and Dacier 1909–1921, 2:89).



Detail of cat. 5

1. See Christoph Ulf, *Das Römische Lupercalienfest. Ein Modellfall für Methodenprobleme in der Altertumswissenschaft* (Darmstadt, 1982).

2. Ovid, *Fasti*, trans. and ed. A. J. Boyle and R. D. Woodard (London, 2000), 39–40; 2.425–428, 445–448.

3. The bronze version in Houdon's studio sale (see Related Works) was described as holding “strips in one hand and a knife in the other.” These tools are not identifiable in the plaster.

4. Appendix in the present catalogue, lines 94–101.

5. Ultimately Houdon created the *Morpheus* (cat. 7) as his reception piece for full membership in the Académie royale (see Vitry 1907c, 149–156).

6. See *L'Avant-coureur*, 404; [Des Boulmiers], 360; *L'Année littéraire*, 320; [Daudet de Jossac], 27; and *Lettre sur l'exposition*, 49.

7. Today in the Musée du Louvre (inv. Ma 527); see *D'Après l'antique* [exh. cat., Musée du Louvre] (Paris, 2000), 151, no. 1, ill. p. 150; and Haskell and Penny 1981, no. 43, 221–224, fig. 115.

8. Inv. CV; see Moreno and Stefani 2000, 110, 154, no. 7, ill.

9. Listed in Réau 1964, 1:38, 210. See also Ph. de Chenévieres and Anatole de Montaiglon, eds., “Abecedario de P. J. Mariette, et autres notes inédites de cet amateur sur les arts et les artistes,” *AAF* 2 (1851–1853), 321; and 6 (1854–1856), 185.

10. *Annibale Carracci e i suoi incisori* [exh. cat., Ecole française] (Rome, 1986), 35, no. XIII/15, ill.

11. Réau 1964, 1:201.

12. Dandré-Bardon must have known Houdon as an artist after his return from Rome, since a copy of Houdon's *Ecorché* appeared in Dandré-Bardon's posthumous sale, 23 June 1783, no. 21.

13. See Michel-François Dandré-Bardon, *Costume des anciens peuples* (Paris, 1772), 110, pl. 2.



## + Peasant Girl of Frascati

Dated 1774

White Carrara marble with small gray inclusions

H. 38 cm (with base: 50.7 cm), W. 21 cm

Inscribed on back and proper right edge of truncation: *Houdon Sculpsit 1774*

Musée Cognacq-Jay, Paris (inv. J.223)

This marble bust of a young girl is a later version of a plaster bust called the *Peasant Girl of Frascati* (fig. 1),<sup>1</sup> which Houdon submitted to the Salon of 1769—the first Salon in which he participated. The plaster head, along with the other sculptures he showed at the Salon, had been executed during his time as a student at the Académie de France in Rome.

After he returned to Paris from Rome in 1768, Houdon often created multiple versions of his sculptures in marble, bronze, and plaster. This marble *Peasant Girl of Frascati* is one of the earliest instances in which he duplicated a plaster study. He made two marble busts of the head, the present one dated 1774 and a second one, now in the Hermitage Museum, dated 1775 (see Related Works). The sculptor devoted more attention to surface texture in the Cognacq-Jay marble than he did in the plaster, contrasting the smooth, matte skin of the face and neck with the undulating strands of hair and with the polished coil of hair wrapped in a striped cloth and held in place with a pin. Even the underside of the back has been embellished with chiseled radiating lines, a practice Houdon was to repeat in many of his marble busts.

The *Peasant Girl of Frascati* is not a true portrait, nor is it a copy after the antique. It is rather a “tête d’étude” in which the

young sculptor blends an idealized female head inspired by antique prototypes with the observation of everyday Italian life. Houdon shipped the plaster version to Duke Ernst II of Saxe-Gotha in the summer of 1772, and in a letter concerning the shipment he gives a telling description of the bust:

The head of a woman of frescati [*sic*], a city 6 leagues [24 kilometers] from Rome. It was exhibited at the Salon before last [1769], and can give an idea of the hairstyles of Italy, not of the first ladies of Rome, who adopt ours, and who for the most part, exaggerate them to the point of the ridiculous. I like this kind of hairstyle, which draws-up all of the hair to the back, then is held in place by gold pins, silver, and other materials. Their hairstyles for the day and for the night do not prevent their ears from growing according to nature’s course. This head, and that of my Ecorché have ears as one should have them in general.<sup>2</sup>

Houdon’s letter provides a number of valuable insights concerning this early bust and his approach to sculpture. He is preoccupied by and very critical of the excesses and artificiality of





1. Houdon, Peasant Girl of Frascati, by 1769, plaster, Schlossmuseum Gotha.



2. Houdon, Head of a Vestal, by 1769, plaster, Schlossmuseum Gotha.

French contemporary fashion and of the women in Rome who imitate it. In contrast, he presents the image of an Italian peasant girl to the duke as an example of the simple, natural beauty of an ordinary young woman from a town outside of Rome. While Houdon makes clear that the *Peasant Girl of Frascati* is not a portrait, he nonetheless is quite specific about having observed the hairstyle and the way it complements the natural form of the ears of the women in Frascati who wear it. He qualifies his emphasis on the first-hand study from nature by stating that an artist who simply imitates nature is no better than a well-trained monkey, and that he must choose what is most noble in her in order to achieve perfection and to elevate the soul.<sup>3</sup>

For Houdon, antique prototypes were integral to choosing the most noble aspects of nature. The sculptor's evocation of an antique ideal is reflected in the frontal pose, regular features, straight nose, finely shaped eyes and lips, and undraped neck of the *Peasant Girl of Frascati*. This type of neoclassical female head is similar to another plaster bust that Houdon exhibited

at the Salon of 1769 (fig. 2) and later shipped to Gotha, where it remains today.<sup>4</sup> In his letter to Ernst II he describes it as "A study of a head, that one can call a Vestal, she has a veil on her head and was composed and made in Rome. She is in my studio, sketched in marble."<sup>5</sup> As with the *Peasant Girl of Frascati*, the plaster *Head of a Vestal* has lightly incised eyes. The roughed-out marble version of the *Vestal* that he said was in his studio in 1772 and that he must have finished later is probably identical with the *Head of a Vestal*, dated 1788, now in the Louvre.<sup>6</sup>

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## PROVENANCE

Collection of Markus von Schuetzenau-Trenck, Taberhof (Steiermark), Austria, in 1910 (see Berlin 1910); “il est ensuite passé en France et se trouvait, peu avant la guerre, chez l’antiquaire Friedel” (Giacometti 1929, 2:200–201); listed in the archives of the Musée Cognacq-Jay as coming from Azura Temple (neither Friedel nor Azura Temple is found in the *Bottins commerciaux* for Paris in 1908–1918, and both remain unverified); acquired by Ernest Cognacq (1839–1928), 12 June 1918, for 250,000 francs through Mme Bègue, one of his agents, according to an unpublished inventory from 1923–1924 in the archives of the Musée Cognacq-Jay; bequeathed with the rest of his collection to the Fondation Cognacq-Jay and the city of Paris.

## EXHIBITIONS

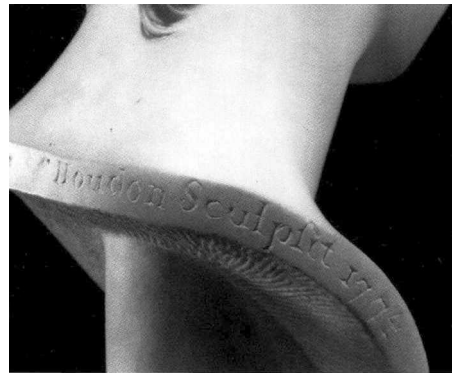
Berlin 1910, 25, 47, no. 238, fig. 12 (see also 2nd rev. ed., 30, no. 12); London 1972, 247–248, no. 382.

## REFERENCES

Giacometti 1819–1919, 3:34–36; Giacometti 1929, 2: 200–201; Edouard Jonas, *Collections léguées à la ville de Paris par Ernest Cognacq* (Paris, 1930), 63, no. 223; Worcester 1964, 4; Bogyay 1964, 110, 129 nn. 37–39, fig. 2; Réau 1964, 1:216–217; 2:57, no. 277c, pl. CLXIII, 61; Thomas von Bogyay, review of Réau 1964, in *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 31, no. 1 (1968), 76; François Periset, “L’Age néo-classique. Les Expositions de Londres, 1972,” *Dix-huitième siècle* 5 (1973), 371; Arnason 1975, 13, 17, 30, 37, 102–103, 122, fig. 63; Schuttwolf 1995, 136–137.



Back view of cat. 6



Signature on cat. 6

## RELATED WORKS

## Plaster

Schlossmuseum Gotha (inv. P 40) (see fig. 1); H. 39.4 cm (with base: 52.2 cm), W. 23 cm. The bust differs from the Cognacq-Jay marble in that the irises and pupils of the eyes are lightly incised rather than blank, there is no signature or date, and the finish on the back of the truncation is smooth rather than incised. Houdon executed the plaster in Rome, exhibited it at the Salon of 1769, and shipped it to the court at Gotha in July 1772 (see Appendix, lines 404–406). It has remained in the collection at Schloss Friedenstein since that time. See Schuttwolf 1995, 136–137, no. 49.

## Marble

The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg (inv. NH CK. 374); H. 39 cm (with base: 50.9 cm), W. 22 cm; inscribed across back edge of truncation: “HOUDON. F. 1775.” The dimensions of this bust correspond very closely to those of both the plaster and the marble at the Musée Cognacq-Jay. The truncation is squared at shoulder level in back, as is that of the plaster, whereas the Paris bust is rounded at the shoulders. The backs of both the Hermitage and Gotha busts have a smooth finish, in contrast to the radiating striations on the back of the Cognacq-Jay bust. The eyes are blank. Réau claims this bust was exhibited at the Salon of 1775, listed in the catalogue (39, no. 261) under “Plusieurs Têtes ou Portraits en marbre, sous le même Numéro” (Réau 1914, 43, 52). It was in the collection of Mikhail Aleksandrovich Golitsyn (1804–1860); inherited by his son Sergei Mikhailovich Golitsyn (1843–after 1892). The latter opened a private museum in Moscow in which the bust was included. See *Ukazatel golitzinskogo Museja* (Moscow, 1882), 46, nos. 587, 588. The author is grateful to Dr. Ljuba Savinskaya, Moscow, for providing this information. In 1886 Golitsyn sold his collection to Emperor Alexander III, and it was taken to St. Petersburg (Réau 1917, 139).

1. Although none of the sculptures submitted by Houdon is listed in the Salon cat. of 1769, this bust can be identified from one of the reviews, *Réflexions sur quelques morceaux de peinture et de sculpture exposés au Salon du Louvre...* (Paris, 1769), 27: “M. Houdon a exposé une statue de Saint Jean-Baptiste.... On ne

quitte qu’avec regret, le buste d’une paysane de Frescaci [sic]... du même artiste” (see Réau 1923, 44–52).

2. See Appendix, lines 404–414.

3. See Appendix, lines 75–77.

4. Inv. P 35; see Schuttwolf 1995, 134–135, no. 48.

5. Appendix, lines 331–334.

6. Inv. RF 3994; see Louvre cat. 1998, 2:432, ill.



## + Morpheus

Dated 1777

White marble

H. 36.5 cm, W. 70.5 cm, D. 35.8 cm

Inscribed on back of plinth: A. HOUDON F. A: 1777

Musée du Louvre, Paris, département des sculptures (inv. RF 3993)

The *Morpheus* concluded Houdon's long application process for membership in the Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture. Houdon had won a third-place medal in the quarterly competition held in June 1756<sup>1</sup> before earning first prize in sculpture in 1761. After three years at the Ecole royale des élèves protégés, then a stay at the Académie de France in Rome between 1764 and 1768, he presented a number of works he had done in Italy to the Académie royale on 23 July 1769.<sup>2</sup> The following month he showed these sculptures to the public at his first Salon, including the *Saint Bruno*, *Saint John the Baptist*, and *Priest of the Lupercalia* (cats. 3–5).<sup>3</sup> On 31 December 1770 Houdon presented to the academy “a sketch of the piece that had been ordered from him for admission, which depicts a Morpheus”; hence back in Paris he had been required to come up with a new sculpture.<sup>4</sup> At the Salon of 1771 Houdon exhibited a “life-size model” of his *Morpheus* (no. 279), but it was fully six years later that he displayed his admission piece in marble, returning to a smaller format, and was accepted as a member of the academy.

The Schlossmuseum Gotha houses a large plaster *Morpheus* (fig. 1), which is certainly the one from the Salon of 1771. There were strong ties between Houdon and the court of Gotha at that time. This magnificent plaster, impossible to

transport safely, had a broken right foot, as did the Louvre marble; the foot was glued back onto the Gotha plaster at some point, or simply remade. Houdon, in executing his admission piece, remained faithful to the model; indeed, no significant variation can be discerned.

The Salon catalogue of 1771 provides the key to understanding this work: “Morpheus, one of the children of the god of Sleep and his agent. He is the most skillful of all the [gods of] dreams in taking on the manner, the appearance, and the voice of those he wants to represent. It is he who was sent by that god to Alcyone in the guise of her husband.” Ovid describes his appearing to the unfortunate Alcyone to inform her of her husband's death: “On gliding wings (one could not hear them stir) / Morpheus made way to Alcyone's city. / He dropped the wings and took the mask of Ceyx.”<sup>5</sup> The name Morpheus, derived from the Greek for “form,” indicates his function: he takes the form of human beings and appears to them in their dreams.<sup>6</sup> Houdon depicts him sleeping but with wings on the alert, just before he assumes the image dictated by the dream to which he must submit.

Denis Diderot, who apparently did not reread the *Metamorphoses*, was irritated by a subject he believed Houdon had misunderstood:



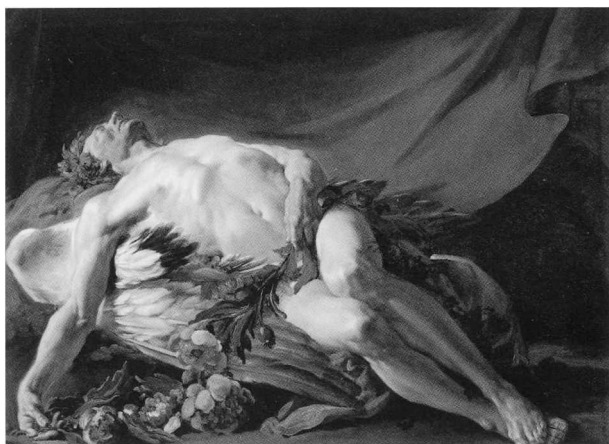
1. Houdon, Morpheus, 1771, plaster, Schlossmuseum Gotha.



2. Charles Le Brun, Sleep, 1663–1668, ceiling compartment, Palais du Louvre, Paris, Gallery of Apollo.

Once more, it is unfortunately too academic a figure. That mania always enslaves the artist and saps his reason; it binds him strictly to the customary rules of his art and keeps from him the memory of classical beauties and the Ancients' close observation of the age and condition of persons. Morpheus . . . is a young man, one who cannot have the body of a man of forty. . . . This sleeping Morpheus does not show the effects of the languidness that sleep lends to flesh; his legs are too much in control of the position they are holding, and so on. As a matter of fact, why is he sleeping? He is Morpheus, but he is not Sleep, he is only his messenger—that is, always ready to go anywhere and in any disguise the master orders. That idea alone ought to have provided the artist with a figure for an ingenious composition, which the wings and poppy would have sufficed to make clear. In any case, the figure is well drawn.<sup>7</sup>

To be sure, the god of dreams is sleeping, but it is only then that his true character can be seen, for as soon as he becomes active, he assumes a different identity. Houdon has taken care to depict a young man, avoiding any confusion with the iconography of Sleep. The latter is traditionally represented as a sleeping old man, as Charles Le Brun painted him on the vault of the Gallery of Apollo at the Louvre (fig. 2),<sup>8</sup> a work the young Houdon must have seen nearly every day as a student at the *Ecole royale des élèves protégés*. In the *Morpheus* the leaves and poppy flowers—which Ovid describes outside the doors to the cave of Sleep—are arranged in a garland, not in a veil, as in the painting.



3. Jean-Bernard Restout, *Sleep*, 1771, oil on canvas, Cleveland Museum of Art.



Back view of cat. 7

Houdon's figure did not please Diderot, who savaged a painting of *Sleep* by Jean-Bernard Restout, displayed at the same Salon (fig. 3).<sup>9</sup> Yet other critics praised Houdon's talent for capturing the truth of nature: "The figure is very beautiful and has something celestial about him. His attitude, his contours, the softness of his members, correspond very well to the artist's idea. There is a marvelous sweetness in his sleep, through which we can discern a living being, whose breathing seems to be perceptible"; "M. Houdon's Morpheus . . . cannot be mistaken for anything else. This is no ordinary drowsiness; it is a perfect suspension of all the senses, a profound weightiness, a total abandon, the most absolute annihilation, which . . . is only the natural state of that deity. Only his wings seem to have some action, some movement in them still, to express, no doubt, in the midst of his torpor, his dominion over nature as a whole."<sup>10</sup> In fact, the large wings, "cumbersome . . . as they are not folded, seem to indicate a waking state."<sup>11</sup> Houdon may have taken liberties with the form of Morpheus' wings: "The ancients gave him butterfly wings, a symbol of lightness. The artist was content to represent him with bird's wings, more favorable to a rendering in sculpture."<sup>12</sup> But the idea of butterfly wings is not found in Ovid.

All of these reviews enhanced the reception of the work: "If M. Houdon slips into the crowd headed for the Salon to pick up what is being said about his work, he will surely be pleased and flattered to hear his Morpheus praised."<sup>13</sup> The sculpture, installed in the Gallery of Apollo, directly inspired the young Russian student Prokofiev,<sup>14</sup> who frequented the academy school.

Quatremère de Quincy, usually critical of Houdon, saw in his *Morpheus* the basis for a renewal of art closer to the classical models: "A very good correspondence between truth without pettiness and nobility without affectation boded well for the new direction that art was soon to take."<sup>15</sup> Houdon may have had in mind some classical model or perhaps Alessandro Algardi's *Cupid* (Galleria Borghese, Rome), who falls asleep amid poppies. At the Salon of 1771, he had shown "two heads of young men, one wearing a myrtle wreath, the other with a ribbon wrapped around it." These heads have since disappeared and thus offer no possibility of comparison with works of antiquity or with the head of *Morpheus*. In any case, Houdon avoided conceiving the head as that of an epebe: the soft whiskers along the jaw extending almost to the chin, while characteristic of a faun, may represent a physical detail of his live model and give the figure a modern and natural touch.

The artist took particular care in the composition and execution of this figure, which appears completely three-dimensional when viewed from the front; the body is conceived in an unbroken contour, deeply undercut and casting a shadow. The face is clearly traced in profile. The back, by contrast, has hardly been touched: one feels fully the mass of marble. Although the left foot and knee are slightly lifted, the rest of the body, from the left thigh to the right arm, constitutes a compact whole, of a piece with the drapery and the rock. This impression is accentuated by the fact that the head is folded deeply into the crook of the arm. Houdon, however, tried to temper the effect by carving wings with very pure lines; the sharp form evokes butterfly wings, though naturally the feathers do not. The extreme delicacy of the drill holes is also found in the fine traces of the pointed chisel on the stone and the small strokes rendering the texture of the young man's skin. In his admission piece Houdon wanted to show his expertise in working with marble, handling his tools with ease, creating contrasts between the velvety texture of the drapery, the softness of the flesh, and the roughness of the rock.

GUILHEM SCHERF

#### PROVENANCE

Admission piece for the Académie royale, 26 July 1777: "Jean-Antoine Houdon, sculpteur... a fait apporter le morceau qui lui avait été ordonné pour sa réception, représentant Morphée. Les voix prises à l'ordinaire, l'Académie a reçu et reçoit le sieur Houdon académicien" (*Procès-verbaux*, 8:273). The sculpture, belonging to the Académie royale, was in the Gallery of Apollo at the Louvre in 1781. Confiscated Aug. 1793, during the Revolution; assigned to the Ecole spéciale de peinture et sculpture, 19 June 1798; and placed at the Musée des monuments français, probably in Mar. 1808; it remained in the archive room of the Ecole des beaux-arts after 1816. Reclaimed by the Louvre in 1851; assigned to that museum in 1866, but not listed in the inventory at that date (inventoried in 1986).

#### EXHIBITIONS

Paris, Salon cat. 1777, no. 256: "cette figure, en marbre, est le morceau de réception de l'auteur"; London 1972, no. 391; Duisburg 1989, 30–35, 275, no. 4, ill.

#### REFERENCES

Dezallier d'Argenville, *Description sommaire des ouvrages de peinture, sculpture et gravure exposés dans les salles de l'Académie royale (Paris, 1781)* (Paris, 1893; reprint Nogent-le-Roi, 1991), 154; Quatremère de Quincy 1834, 393; Montaiglon and Duplessis 1855, 167–169, 442; Délerot and Legrelle 1857, 39–40, 179; Vitry 1907c, 149–156, ill. (the right foot is already missing); Hart and Biddle 1911, 13, ill. p. 12; Giacometti 1929, 1:116, ill. 2:259; Fontaine 1910, 185, no. 428; Marguerite Charageat, "Le Fleuve et le Sommeil. Etudes en vue des morceaux de réception à l'Académie de Caffieri et de Houdon," *Bulletin des musées de France*, no. 5 (June 1950), 112–116; Réau 1964, 1:220–223; 2:13, no. 8, pl. 10, 11; Arnason 1975, 18, 37, 109–110 n. 75, pl. 9–10; Louvre cat. 1998, 432, ill.

#### RELATED WORKS

##### Plasters

Schlossmuseum Gotha (inv. P 26); plaster; H. 116 cm, W. 156.9 cm, D. 108.5 cm; exhibited at the Salon of 1771, no. 279: "Modèle de grandeur naturelle"; see Schuttwolf 1995, 138–139, no. 50, ill.

Houdon's studio sale, 8 Oct. 1795, no. 104 (H. 62.1 cm): "modèle en plâtre."

##### Drawing

Gabriel de Saint-Aubin sketched the work in the margin of his copy of the Salon catalogue of 1777 (Dacier 1909–1921, vol. 4, n.p., ill.).

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1. Antoine Cahen, "Les Prix de quartier à l'Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture," *BSHAF* (1993), 74.
2. "The Académie, after taking the usual vote and acknowledging his abilities, approved his presentation. The director will prescribe to him what he must do to be admitted" (*Procès-verbaux*, 8:19).
3. Daudet de Jossan, *Sentimens sur les tableaux exposés au Salon [de 1769]* (Deloynes IX, no. 122; MacWilliam 1991, 196).
4. *Procès-verbaux*, 8:59. It is not known whether at that date this was considered a sanction (as if the works on which acceptance was based were judged too weak). In the 1760s and 1770s Pierre-François Berruer, Félix Lecomte, and Martin-Claude Monot also had to create new models, whereas Louis-Simon Boizot, Charles-Antoine Bridan, Jean-Baptiste-Cyprien d'Huez, and Louis-Philippe Mouchy were at the same time allowed to use a model they had submitted for acceptance. Because new members increasingly neglected to execute their admission pieces, a new regulation in 1785 stipulated: "the artists, accepted on the basis of several pieces executed by them, will always be obliged to present a new piece for admission."
5. Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, trans. Horace Gregory (New York, 1958), 317 (11:633–676).
6. Pierre Grimal, *Dictionnaire de la mythologie grecque et romaine* (Paris, 1986), 303.
7. Diderot (ed. 1995b), 241–242 (*Salon de 1771*).
8. Jacques de Favanne very nearly reproduced Le Brun's old man sleeping in a 1733 engraving, whose title, nonetheless, was *Morpheus*; see Carter E. Foster, "Jean Bernard Restout's *Sleep*—*Figure Study*: Painting and Drawing from Life at the French Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture," *Cleveland Studies in the History of Art* 3 (1998), 64, fig. 22. In the present author's view, a sketchily done terracotta of *Sleep* (Louvre cat. 1998, 432, ill.), most likely done after the Cochin and Gravelot engraving published in their *Iconologie par figures* (1774–1781), must be removed from Houdon's body of work; oddly, the artist avoided representing the wings of the sleeping old man.
9. "Figure study. . . which was not studied after a model posing naturally (Ignoble sleeper with the look of a torture victim; without vigor, poorly drawn, you can't make out what it is. Oh, what a vile beast, don't you think, M. Houdon? I'm betting you'll kick that out of the Académie and the Salons)." The comments within parentheses are Diderot's; the rest were written by an anonymous collaborator; see Diderot (ed. 1995), 128 and 195 (*Salon de 1771*); and Foster 1998.
10. *Mémoires secrets. Lettre sur le Salon de 1771* and *Mémoires secrets. Lettre sur le Salon de 1777* (see Fort 1999, 95, 186; and MacWilliam 1991, 217).
11. Montaiglon and Duplessis 1855, 168.
12. *Mercur de France*, Oct. 1771 (MacWilliam 1991, 270).
13. *L'Année littéraire* 5 (1771), letter 13 (MacWilliam 1991, 209).
14. *The Flight of Actaeon*, 1785, by Prokofiev (Museum of the Academy, St. Petersburg) is directly inspired by another of Houdon's works, *Priest of the Lupercalia* (cat. 5).
15. Quatremère de Quincy 1834, 393.





## + Sophie Arnould (1740–1802)

Dated 1775

White marble on white marble base

H. 67.0 cm (with base: 81 cm), W. 51.0 cm, D. 29.5 cm

Inscribed on back: SOPHIE ARNOULD, *Houdon F. 1775*

Musée du Louvre, Paris, département des sculptures, Gift of Madame E. Stern and of her children, 1947 (inv. RF 2596)

“Rare creatures are they, and strewn across time at distant intervals, these women who, while alive, are the scandal of a century and, once dead, are its smile.”<sup>1</sup> Thus the Goncourt brothers open their book on Sophie Arnould, evoking in one line the memory of one such woman, who enchanted Paris and the ancien régime.

Sophie Arnould was born in Paris in 1740 to a bourgeois family (her father was a hotelier) with five children. She took music and singing lessons at an early age and, under the patronage of the princesse de Conti, performed at the church of the aristocratic convent of Panthémond. Presented to the queen, Marie Leszczyńska, at Versailles, she debuted at the Opéra (Académie royale de musique) on 15 December 1757. Her fame lasted a dozen years, fed by a tumultuous love life. She had a stormy affair with Louis Félicité de Brancas, comte de Lauraguais (with whom she had two children), was kept by the prince d’Hénin (captain of the guards for the comte d’Artois), dallied with the prince de Ligne, loved the architect François-Joseph Bélanger (whom she recommended, in fact, to the other three),<sup>2</sup> and had a scandalous liaison with the actress Mlle Raucourt. Refined and libertine,<sup>3</sup> maliciously called a “courtesan,”<sup>4</sup> possessing a devastating wit,<sup>5</sup> she welcomed into her home a

select circle of artists and intellectuals.<sup>6</sup> After she retired from the stage in 1779, following a fairly long decline (marked, notably, by the sale of her collections in 1778), she left Paris amid financial difficulties. Struggling to make ends meet under the Revolution and the Consulate, she was aided from time to time by her former lovers Lauraguais and especially Bélanger.<sup>7</sup>

Early in her career, Arnould had excelled at the traditional French repertoire, especially the works of Rameau. Her musical talent — despite a voice lacking in depth — as well as her elegance and expressiveness were widely celebrated: “she is the most beautiful asthmatic I’ve ever heard sing,” said Abbé Ferdinando Galiani. Her last triumphs came in 1774, when she performed the starring roles in two Gluck operas: *Orphée et Eurydice* and *Iphigénie en Aulide*. The dauphine, Marie Antoinette, attended the premiere of *Iphigénie* on 19 April 1774, leading an enthusiastic claque.<sup>8</sup> Gluck reportedly declared: “Without the charms of Mlle Arnould’s [*sic*] inflections and declamation, my *Iphigénie* would never have come to France.”<sup>9</sup> It was “the last great evening of her life in the theater.”<sup>10</sup>

Houdon did his portraits of Sophie Arnould and Christoph Willibald Gluck (see cat. 10) at the same time: the two busts — the singer’s in marble — were shown together at the Salon of

1775. The sculptor worked very quickly: his contract with Arnould is dated 5 April, and the marble was ready for exhibition on 25 August.<sup>11</sup> This Salon, one of Houdon's most important, included his model of a chapel for the duchess of Saxe-Gotha as well as portraits of ministers Miromesnil (cat. 30) and Turgot, aristocrats Mme du Cayla and Mme de la Houze, and members of the financial bourgeoisie such as Mme His. The marbles of Arnould and Mme His (private collection, United States),<sup>12</sup> like the imposing female portrait of 1778 of Mme Girardot de Vermenoux (cat. 31), are elongated busts ending at the waistline, a format that Houdon adopted from Jean-Baptiste II Lemoyne's showy portraits.

The *Sophie Arnould* was noticed at the Salon, where its resemblance to Arnould's features was praised less than its personification of her in the role: "What beauty, what sweetness, what unctuousness in Mlle Arnould, depicted as Iphigenia! She has the bandages, the crescents, and all the attributes that designate the moment of sacrifice at which he painted her."<sup>13</sup> "Abbot: 'Beautiful expression, excellent choice, superb head.' Fanfale: 'A bit flattering, Abbot, you have to admit; it's not a very good likeness'; Abbot: 'What does it matter? Does that take anything away from its beauty? Resemblance takes away nothing and adds nothing to the artist's talent. . . . For the portraits of kings, a lack of resemblance would be a very great flaw. . . . But, as for an actress, it hardly matters whether she is a bit more or a bit less beautiful.'"<sup>14</sup>

Houdon created a strong image of the heroine at the moment her life is to be sacrificed. His head of Iphigenia conveys a lofty feeling, something like resignation, which recalls the "tête d'expression" by Jacques-Louis David in 1773 (fig. 1).<sup>15</sup> Arnould

1. Jacques-Louis David, *Grief*, 1773, pastel, *Ecole nationale supérieure des beaux-arts, Paris*.



excelled in the tragic roles: "I have not seen combined in a single actress more grace, truth, feeling, nobility of expression, serious study, intelligence, and warmth all at once; I have not seen more beautiful grief; her entire physiognomy paints it, renders all its horror, but her face does not lose the slightest trace of her beauty."<sup>16</sup> With her luxurious hair piled high, her sorrowful eyes fixed on the sky, a tear running down her cheek, and her bare, palpitating breast, Houdon's *Iphigenia* wears a costume that—with its antique flavor and its sash<sup>17</sup>—in no way resembles what the 1774 audience might have seen. Onstage, Arnould wore a "long-sleeved wispy gown enveloped in a large veil, tragic handkerchief in hand."<sup>18</sup> Creating this expressive portrait,<sup>19</sup> Houdon may have been thinking of Lemoyne's *Mlle Clairon* (fig. 2).

Houdon's work on this bust is masterful. Intertwined with the locks of hair, admirably treated as masses with fine incisions evoking the strands, are roses and rows of beads. The oval face framed by the hair emphasizes the eyes, rendered melodramatically: the eyeballs are prominent, and the irises deeply carved to accentuate the gaze. The loosely parted lips, showing the teeth, and the individual hairs lightly etched above the breast attest to Houdon's fondness for realistic detail. The hollowed-out back with the large central reinforcement, necessitated by the bust's mass, displays the artist's customary fine and regular striations. The marble Houdon used for this private commission, no doubt provided by one of his usual contractors, is not of perfect quality (especially compared with the superb white marble provided by the king's warehouses for *Mme Adélaïde*; cat. 51); many gray veins streak the work, a few of them unfortunately placed (on the forehead, below the lips). Stains and small holes were originally camouflaged by stucco restorations, which have since disappeared.

Arnould, who was sensitive to the art of sculpture,<sup>20</sup> liked this bust and displayed it prominently in her home. When Voltaire came to see her during his last stay in Paris in 1778, "at the age of eighty-two, [he] made his way to her home and wrote these lines about her bust: 'Her grace, her talents, distinguished her name; / She charmed everything, even jealousy; / Alcibiades would have seen in her Aspasia, Maurice Lecouvreur, and Gourville Ninon!'"<sup>21</sup> She still owned the bust during the Revolution, when agents of the revolutionary committee came to her home in Luzarches: "one of the members noticed on a console a marble bust depicting her in the role of Iphigenia; he believed it was the bust of Marat and, taking the priestess' scarf for that of their employer, they withdrew, very edified by the actress' patriotism."<sup>22</sup>



2. Jean-Baptiste II Lemoyne, Mlle Clairon, 1761, marble, Musée de la Comédie-Française, Paris.

Arnould may have met Houdon through Bélanger, who was a designer at Les Menus Plaisirs in 1767, working with the sculptor's brother Jacques-Philippe. In her contract with Houdon, she stipulated that at least thirty copies of her bust in plaster, finished by the sculptor, be distributed to her admirers by the time of the Salon of 1775. Houdon could sell her additional copies, but no more than twenty. Only one of these plasters is identified today: unsigned, undated, and, until very recently, completely ignored in the storerooms of the Goethe-Nationalmuseum in Weimar, it is in an admirable, indeed miraculous, state of preservation (cat. 9).

#### GUILHEM SCHERF

#### PROVENANCE

Commissioned by Sophie Arnould in contract of 5 Apr. 1775 (published first in *L'Amateur d'autographes* [Feb. 1907], 35–36; then in Giacometti 1929, 1:133; and Réau 1964, 1:83). Collection of sitter until revolutionary period, then probably sold during her lifetime. M. Véron collection sale, 22–23 Mar. 1858, no. 64 (13,800 francs); acquired, along with Houdon's bust of *Mme Victoire*, by Richard Seymour Conway, fourth marquess of Hertford (1800–1870), and displayed at the château de Bagatelle, outside Paris; bequeathed to his illegitimate son, Sir Richard Wallace (1818–1890), Paris (see posthumous inventory, 13–14 Aug. 1890, Archives of Paris, D48 E 3/76); by inher-

itance to his wife, Lady Wallace (1819–1897); bequeathed to Sir John Murray Scott (1834–1912; her husband's secretary and her advisor; see his posthumous inventory, 16 Feb. 1912, 2 rue Laffite, Paris, in WCA; the author wishes to thank Robert Wenley for this reference); and to Josephine Victoria Sackville-West, Lady Sackville (1862–1936); sold through Galerie Jacques Seligmann, Paris, in 1914 for "more than a million" (Giacometti 1929, 2:4). Edgar Stern collection (before 1925); given to the Louvre in his memory and in gratitude to the Commission de récupération artistique, by Mme Edgar Stern and her children, 1 Oct. 1947.

#### EXHIBITIONS

Paris, Salon of 1775, no. 257; Paris 1865, no. 3219 (loaned by Hertford); *L'Art du XVIIIe siècle* [exh. cat., Galerie Georges Petit] (Paris, 1883–1884), no. 251; *Exposition de l'art français sous Louis XIV et sous Louis XV* [exh. cat., Maison Quantin] (Paris, 1888), no. 76; Paris 1894, no. 211; Paris 1928, no. 1, ill.; *Vingt ans d'acquisitions au Musée du Louvre, 1947–1967* [exh. cat., Orangerie des Tuileries] (Paris, 1967–1968), 101, no. 312.

#### REFERENCES

[Albéric Deville d'Angers], *Arnoldiana ou Sophie Arnould et ses contemporaines; recueil choisi d'anecdotes piquantes, de réparties et de bons mots de Mlle Arnould...* (Paris, 1813), 93–94; Délerot et Legrelle 1857, 50, 182; Vitry 1907b, 202, no. 58; Gustave Babin, "La 'Collection Wallace' de Paris," *L'Illustration*, no. 3722 (27 June 1914), 575, ill.; André Linzeler, "Les Expositions. L'Art au théâtre," *Beaux-Arts* (15 Dec. 1925), 344–345; Vitry 1928b, 60–61; Giacometti 1929, 1:133, 134, ill., 2:3–5; Michèle Beaulieu, "Le Buste de la cantatrice Sophie Arnould, par Houdon," *Bulletin des musées de France*, no. 7 (Aug. 1947), 22–24, ill.; Cecil 1950, 172, fig. 25; Réau 1964, 1:376–378, 2:25, no. 81, pl. XXXVII; Cecil 1965, 454–455, fig. 10; Arnason 1975, 35–36, 109 n. 73, fig. 79, pl. 25; Thomine 1997, 126–127, ill.; Louvre cat. 1998, 430; Sauerländer 2002, 27, fig. 10.

#### RELATED WORKS

##### Plasters

Some are listed in eighteenth-century sales catalogues as finished (*réparés*) by the artist (the same work may have been auctioned several times): [Mme de Cossé] sale, 11 Nov. 1778, no. 124; [Le Brun] sale, 11 Dec. 1780, no. 254; [marquis de Chamgrand, de Proth, Saint-Maurice, Bouilliac] sale, 20–24 Mar. 1787, no. 251 (as Caffieri); Louis-Antoine-Auguste de Rohan-Chabot sale, 8–9 Dec. 1807, no. 83.

A plaster was exhibited at the Société des beaux-arts, Montpellier, Dec. 1779, no. 181 (see Stein 1913, 402; and Claparède [ed. 1993], 42), lent by Abraham Fontanel, organizer of the society and curator of its collections. Aubin-Louis Millin, *Voyage dans les départemens du midi de la France* (Paris, 1811), 4:315 n. 1, records its presence in Montpellier in 1811.

A plaster is listed by Gaston Brière as being in the Brissac collection in the early twentieth century (handwritten note in the Louvre's sculpture department files).

Goethe-Nationalmuseum, Weimar (see cat. 9); superb example in an extraordinary state of preservation.

Musée de Picardie, Amiens; damaged, restored by its owner, the sculptor Gustave Deloye (1838–1899); face and bust in marble, drapery and restorations in plaster; H. 85 cm, W. 50 cm; bequeathed to the museum by Deloye 12 Dec. 1898 (Giacometti 1929 2:4). This was perhaps the "buste en marbre blanc, grandeur naturelle, de Sophie Arnould, d'après Houdon," cited in a Paris sale, 22 May 1897, no. 55.



Signature on cat. 8

### Boilly paintings

A plaster is depicted in Boilly's paintings of the sculptor's studio (cat. 66), on the right-hand shelf. The work is not listed in the posthumous sale of the contents of Houdon's studio in 1828.

### Prints

A print clearly inspired by Houdon's bust, *Mlle Arnould / Role d'Iphigénie en Aulide / Dans l'opéra de ce nom*, unsigned and undated (BNEst, N2, microfilm D 077780).

Engraving by Antoine-Achille Bourgeois de la Richardière after a lost portrait presumably by Maurice-Quentin de La Tour (BNEst, N2, microfilm D 077781) served as a frontispiece for the *Arnoldiana* by Deville d'Angers.

1. Edmond de Goncourt and Jules de Goncourt, *Sophie Arnould d'après sa correspondance et ses mémoires inédits* (Paris, 1859), 5.

2. See Jean Stern, *A l'ombre de Sophie Arnould. François-Joseph Bélanger, architecte des Menus Plaisirs, premier architecte du comte d'Artois* (Paris, 1930), 1:18–24, 41, 43; and Martine Constans, "Le Gout d'un prince à la fin de l'Ancien Régime. L'Œuvre de Bélanger et de son équipe dans la décoration des bâtiments du comte d'Artois," in *Clodion et la sculpture française de la fin du XVIIIe siècle*, papers of the colloquium organized by the Louvre (Paris, 1993), 424.

3. *Mémoires de la baronne d'Oberkirch...*, ed. Suzanne Burkard (Paris, 1989), 445.

4. Bombelles (ed. 1977), 1:62; and *Mémoires secrets*, 29:190–191, 6 Aug. 1785.

5. *Mémoires de [Jean-Nicolas] Dufort de Cheverny*, ed. Jean-Pierre Guicciardi (Paris, 1990), 318.

6. Including d'Alembert, Diderot, Helvétius, the baron d'Holbach, Moncrief, and Rousseau (Stern 1930, 2:183); see also *Mémoires du comte Alexandre de Tilly...*, ed. Christian Melchior-Bonnet (Paris, 1986), 443.

7. Arnould's moving correspondence with her "good angel" was unearthed by the Goncourts.

8. *Mémoires secrets*, 7:161–162.

9. Letter from Bélanger to Jean-Antoine Chaptal, 30 June 1802; quoted in Adolphe Lance, *Dictionnaire des architectes français* (Paris, 1872), 1:58.

10. Goncourt and Goncourt 1859, 60.

11. Houdon mistakenly placed the bust of Sophie Arnould under the year 1778 in his autograph list of ca. 1784 (Vitry 1907b, 202), no. 58: "Le buste en marbre de Melle Arnould dans le rôle d'Iphigénie en Thauride [sic]."

12. Réau 1964, 2:33, no. 131, pl. 62. A beautiful plaster, recently restored, is in the Musée des arts décoratifs, Paris.

13. *Mémoires secrets. Lettre sur le Salon de 1775* (Fort 1999, 148).

14. *Entretiens sur l'exposition des tableaux de l'année 1775* (Deloynes X, no. 164; MacWilliam 1991, 240).

15. The "tête d'expression" competition offered one of the most coveted prizes at the academy.

16. *Journal et mémoires de Charles Collé...*, intro. and notes by Honoré Bonhomme (Paris, 1868), 2:147.

17. The sash, adorned with alternating stars and crescent moons (alluding to the cult of Diana), recalls the scarf with crescent moons on the *Iphigénie* by Houdon's teacher, Michel-Ange Slodtz; see François

Souchal, *Les Slodtz sculpteurs et décorateurs du Roi (1685–1764)* (Paris, 1967), pl. 16. It also anticipates the sash on Houdon's *Bust of Diana* (see cat. 36).

18. Beaulieu 1947, 24. See Louis-René Boquet's charming watercolors in *Costumes de ballets* (BNEst, Tb. 20b).

19. Two paintings in the Wallace Collection are no longer thought to depict Sophie Arnould; see John Ingamells, *The Wallace Collection. Catalogue of Pictures, III. French before 1815* (London, 1989), 3:403, 413, ill. A miniature in the Panhard collection may portray Arnould seated at a harpsichord (copy in the Louvre, inv. RF 219); see Jean-Richard 1994, no. 321, ill. According to Vigée-Lebrun 1984, 1:104: "Mademoiselle Arnould was not pretty; her mouth marred her face, and only her eyes gave her a physiognomy on which was painted the remarkable wit that made her famous."

20. Arnould was applauded as she purchased a terracotta bust of the famous actress Mlle Clairon at the sale of the Randon de Boisset collection, ca. 27 Feb. 1777, no. 274: "de proportion naturelle, par un artiste savant" (for 72 francs); see *Corr. littéraire*, Mar. 1777, 11:441. Réau 1964, 1:377, insinuates that she purchased the bust of her rival in order to destroy it.

21. See the letter from Bélanger to Chaptal (Lance 1872, 58–59).

22. *Arnoldiana*, 1813, 93–94.

## + Sophie Arnould (1740–1802)

1775

White plaster on separate white plaster base

H. 69 cm (with base: 84 cm), W. 55 cm

Goethe-Nationalmuseum, Weimar, Stiftung Weimarer Klassik (inv. KP1/00253)

A rare example of the beauty of an eighteenth-century plaster in its original state, this bust of the singer Sophie Arnould is one of two extant versions of this model (see also cat. 8) and the only surviving copy in plaster. Forgotten in storage rooms for one and a half centuries, it is astonishing for its pristine condition, crisp detail, and untouched surface, which, never having been obscured by paint layers, reveals considerable handwork done after casting and the careful removal of all mold marks.

The provenance of the bust can be traced back directly to Houdon, whose studio the seventeen-year-old hereditary prince of Weimar, Carl August, visited in 1775 on the occasion of his “Kavaliersreise,” or educational journey.<sup>1</sup> Carl August’s mother was the cultured Duchess Anna Amalia of Saxe-Weimar, née princess of Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel, who reigned in her son’s stead for sixteen years and had a fundamental interest in the arts. As a subscriber to the *Journal de Paris*, she was well-informed about the latest developments in the Parisian art world; and the sensational success of the Gluck opera *Iphigénie en Aulide*, with Sophie Arnould in the title role, must have prompted her desire to obtain an image of this singer-actress.

Eager to provide his mother with souvenirs from his trip to France, Carl August wrote on 18 February 1775 from Strasbourg that “*Iphigenia* definitely is not found here, but I count on obtaining it for you in Paris.”<sup>2</sup> Nine days later the prince and his entourage arrived in the French capital, where a range of activities awaited them, from serious social events to amusing distractions. By the time they visited Houdon’s studio on 15 March, Carl August had seen Sophie Arnould in performance, and he had been introduced to the composer Gluck. Although the prince’s purchase of the bust of Gluck (cat. 10) from Houdon is well documented, it was hitherto unknown that he also—and apparently at the same time—acquired its pendant, the bust of Sophie Arnould. In a letter to his mother dated 16 March, Carl August announced the successful completion of his mission: “I am sending you the *Iphigenia* that you requested.”<sup>3</sup>

Upon its arrival in Weimar, the bust was probably first installed in Anna Amalia’s dowager residence, the Wittumpalais, but was later moved to her summer palace in Tiefurt. There it found its appropriate setting, in a place that, after the duchess stepped down as regent at Carl August’s eighteenth birthday, became the site of lively artistic gatherings and



amateur plays. When Anna Amalia died in 1807, Schloss Tiefurt and its collections lost their significance and fell into neglect, while the bust of Sophie Arnould was stowed away and the identity of its sitter forgotten.

ULRIKE D. MATHIES

ULRIKE MÜLLER-HARANG,

*Goethe-National Museum, Weimar*

PROVENANCE

Acquired from Houdon in Mar. 1775; recorded in Schloss Tiefurt in 1886 as "Eine Büste von Gips: Corona Schröter" in a room next to the kitchen ("Inventarium über das Großherzogliche Schloß zu Tiefurt," GSA, GNM [150] 382, fol. 207, no. 27); unidentified at Tiefurt in 1956: "Weibliche Büste, mit einer entblößten Brust, halbgeöffnetem Mund und Rosen im Haar, reicher Faltenwurf über stern-mond-geschmückter Schärpe; Gipsabguß von unbekannt; Höhe m. S. 82 cm" ("Bestandsaufnahmeliste Tiefurt," GNM, Handbibliothek 102:79, no. 1226); transferred to sculpture storage in the Goethe-Nationalmuseum; rediscovered and identified in 1999 by Anne L. Poulet and Ulrike D. Mathies.

REFERENCES

Unpublished.

RELATED WORKS

See cat. 8.

Back view of cat. 8



Back view of cat. 9



1. See the essay "Houdon and the German Courts" in the present catalogue.

2. Alfred Bergmann, ed., *Briefe des Herzogs Carl August von Sachsen-Weimar an seine Mutter die Herzogin Anna Amalia* (Jena, 1938), 14, no. 14.

3. Bergmann 1938, 16, no. 16.





## + Christoph Willibald Gluck (1714–1787)

Dated 1775

Plaster, on separate base and counterbase, all painted greenish black to simulate antique bronze

H. 75.8 cm (with base: 94.1 cm), W. 62.4 cm

Cast in plaster on face of counterbase: *Houdon Sculpteur du Roy 1775, / Bibliotheque Royal*

Herzogin Anna Amalia Bibliothek, Weimar, Stiftung Weimarer Klassik (inv. Pl 6/1980)

Houdon's bust of the composer Christoph Willibald Gluck was almost as controversial as the sitter himself. While Gluck was celebrated as the great reformer of the opera by his followers and ardently opposed by others, Houdon's bust earned simultaneous praise and criticism for its truthfulness.

Gluck, who was born in Germany and raised in Bohemia, settled in Vienna and began his official career at the imperial court in the mid-1750s.<sup>1</sup> In his so-called reform operas, which can be understood as the musical equivalent to Enlightenment ideas, Gluck exercised the principles of simplicity, naturalness, and integration. He reached the peak of his career in 1774–1779 with several productions in Paris, for which he had secured the patronage of the dauphine, Marie Antoinette, his former pupil in Vienna and daughter of Austrian archduchess Maria Theresa. Already a sexagenarian, Gluck took five trips to Paris in these years for rehearsals and performances of the operas he wrote and arranged exclusively for French audiences. The eagerly awaited premiere of *Iphigénie en Aulide* on 19 April 1774, starring Sophie Arnould in the title role, met tremendous success, immediately surpassed by that of *Orphée et Eurydice* on 2 August.

Gluck attracted unusual attention, partly because of the opposition of two groups: supporters of the old French music

of Rameau and Lully, and supporters of the new Italian music. The latter set up the Neapolitan composer Niccolò Piccinni as a rival to Gluck, launching a veritable war between Gluckists and Piccinnists, which caused both men great stress and unhappiness. In 1779, disappointed with the failure of his last work and in fragile health, Gluck withdrew to Vienna, where he died eight years later.

The Salon of 1775 featured two portraits of the renowned composer: a half-length oil painting by Joseph Siffred Duplessis showing Gluck seated at the harpsichord, and the plaster bust by Houdon.<sup>2</sup> Prior to this exhibition Gluck had stayed in Paris twice—once for almost a year, between mid-November 1773 and mid-October 1774, and again from late November 1774 through mid-March 1775.<sup>3</sup> The sittings for Duplessis' portrait occurred during the earlier sojourn, probably soon after the triumph of *Iphigénie en Aulide*.<sup>4</sup> Houdon may also have begun working on his bust around that time. Gluck and his family then resided in the townhouse of Duke Christian IV of Pfalz-Zweibrücken,<sup>5</sup> next door to Houdon's former classmate from the Académie de France, the German court painter Johann Christian von Mannlich. As a friend and admirer, Mannlich accompanied Gluck to rehearsals and social events, and he may have intro-



Alternate views of cat. 10

duced the composer and Houdon.<sup>6</sup> He gives a vivid anecdotal account of Gluck's appearance and behavior in the summer of 1774: "His head was round, his face broad, ruddy, and pock-marked; his eyes were small and rather deep-set, but sparkling, fiery, and expressive. His nature was blunt, animated, and quick-tempered. He was incapable of conforming to the rules and conventions of polite behavior in the fashionable world."<sup>7</sup>

In Houdon's bust of Gluck the composer's unconventional appearance, pock-marked face, and demanding personality are sensitively captured. Following the conventional format for artists, Gluck is shown with open shirt, unbuttoned vest, and short disheveled hair (which he would cover with a wig when in public); the upward tilt of his head gives him an inspired look. Houdon balances the rendering of his sitter's flawed skin by emphasizing the ribbed texture of the coat, creating an overall surface pattern that unites head and torso. This meticulous attention to detail was disliked by contemporary reviewers of the Salon of 1775 and by later critics, who perceived it as exaggerated and offensive.<sup>8</sup> At the same time, the bust was praised for its liveliness and vigor and hailed as a companion piece to Houdon's bust of the actress-singer Sophie Arnould (see cats. 8–9).<sup>9</sup> Houdon's only documented marble version of this portrait of Gluck was commissioned in July 1776, when the composer's Parisian supporters decided to honor him with a bust in the grand foyer of the Opéra, "alongside the portrait of Rameau."<sup>10</sup> It was installed in March 1778, having been exhibited in the Salon of 1777, but was destroyed by fire in 1873 (see Related Works).

Among the myriad copies in other materials or sizes, the bronze-colored plaster bust of Gluck in Weimar is distinguished by its impeccable provenance and the unusual inscription on its counterbase. The seventeen-year-old hereditary prince of Saxe-Weimar, Carl August, saw the work when visiting Houdon's studio in Paris on 15 March 1775 and entrusted the art expert in his entourage, Baron Karl Ludwig von Knebel, with its acquisition. On 8 September 1775 Houdon wrote a letter to Knebel's friend J.-B. Gaspard d'Ansse de Vilvoison, saying that the bust had been sent to Weimar via Strasbourg and that Knebel had agreed on a price of 4 louis d'or, with shipping and handling to be paid upon the crate's arrival at its destination.<sup>11</sup> Houdon enclosed with his letter a report on "the works of sculpture shown in the Salon and especially mine," that Vilvoison had requested for Carl August.

Houdon's inscription on the counterbase of this portrait of Gluck is remarkable for its length and content, identifying him as "Sculpteur du Roy" and the location of his workshop as the "Bibliotheque Royal." The date 1775 establishes a new *terminus ante quem* for Houdon's installation at this prestigious address,<sup>12</sup> a royal privilege granted only to recognized artists. The comprehensiveness of the inscription must be seen as evidence of the sculptor's pride in this honor and not, as Mansfeld assumed, an indication that this bust is identical with the one exhibited in the Salon of 1775, particularly as it was delivered to its purchaser before the exhibition closed.<sup>13</sup>

By the time the bust of Gluck arrived in Weimar, Carl August had ascended to the throne. Under his reign the small court at Weimar grew into a major center of cultural and intellectual activity, attracting numerous writers, scholars, and scientists. In 1784–1785 Carl August acquired a plaster version of Houdon's portrait of Henry of Prussia (cat. 54), again directly from the sculptor's studio and immediately after its completion.<sup>14</sup> Both busts were installed in the ducal library, along with many paintings, sculptures, medals, and other objects (fig. 1).<sup>15</sup> Its three-story "Rococo Hall" became a virtual pantheon of famous men—court members, scholars, poets, and artists—represented in various media. The duke himself sustained a long-lasting relationship with Gluck,<sup>16</sup> whose bust was admired in the library by English writer George Eliot in 1854: "The rugged power of the face is given with wonderful reality, as far as possible from the feeble idealization one generally sees in busts."<sup>17</sup>



1. Interior of the Herzogin Anna Amalia Bibliothek, Weimar, ca. 1900, with Houdon's bust of Gluck at the bottom of the staircase.

2. Gabriel de Saint-Aubin, drawing of Houdon's bust of Gluck in margin of Salon catalogue of 1777, no. 245 (detail), BNEst.



PROVENANCE

Purchased from Houdon in Mar. 1775; shipped to Weimar via Strasbourg in Sept. 1775; installed in the ducal library after 1781 (Oswald 1995, 1:11, 15); listed in the inventory of the ducal art collection in Weimar "Repertorium Großherzogliches Kunstkabinett 1818–1851" (HAAB, fol. 23) as "Ritter Gluck, von Houdon," and in the 1848–1853 inventory of the ducal library, "Verzeichnis der im Kunst-Cabinet auf Großssherzogl. Bibliothek befindlichen Gegenstände" (HAAB, fol. 488, XXIIIb, no. 79) as "Ritter Gluck, von Houdon 1775, bronziert. 3'h.," Rococo Hall of the Herzogin Anna Amalia Bibliothek.

EXHIBITIONS

Berlin 1955, 71, ill. pp. 40–41.

REFERENCES

Charles Joret, "J.-B. Gaspard d'Anse de Vilvoisen et la cour de Weimar," *Revue d'histoire littéraire de la France* (1895), 529–530; Joret 1896, 61–64; Jean Leroux, "L'Iconographie du chevalier Gluck," *La Revue musicale. Bulletin français de la Société internationale de musique* 10, no. 6 (1914), 44–45; Jacques-Gabriel Prod'homme, "Les Portraits français de Gluck," *Rivista musicale italiana* 25 (1918), 44–45 ("reproduction en bronze"); Giacometti 1918–1919, 2:185–187; Jacques-Gabriel Prod'homme, "A Propos du Centenaire de la mort de Houdon. Gluck et Houdon, histoire d'un buste," *Mercure de France* (July–August 1928), 68–69; Werner Deetjen, "Houdon's Gluck-Büste in der Weimarer Bibliothek," *Deutscher Schillerbund Mitteilungen* 62 (May 1932), 2, ill. title page; Bogayay 1935, 365–366; Mansfeld 1955, 125–130, no. 20; Réau 1964, 1:83, 1:376; 2:31–32, no. 125; Arnason 1975, 108 n. 67, fig. 78, pl. 143; Bernd Vogelsang, "Zur Rezeption der Bildnisse des Komponisten Christoph Willibald Ritter von Gluck (1714–1787)," *Johann Anton de Peters. Ein Kölner Maler des 18. Jahrhunderts in Paris* [exh. cat., Wallraf-Richartz-Museum] (Cologne, 1981), 110, no. 1g; Gabriele Oswald, "Die Plastiksammlung der Herzogin Anna Amalia Bibliothek in Weimar" (Ph.D. diss., Martin-Luther-Universität, Halle-Wittenberg, 1995), 2:145, no. 39; Schuttwolf 1995, 145.

RELATED WORKS

Versions with full shoulders and partial torso

Marble

Following Houdon's plaster bust of Gluck shown in the Salon of 1775 (no. 258), the marble was exhibited in 1777 (no. 245) and destroyed in the fire at the Paris Opéra, 28–29 Oct. 1873. A faithful reproduction, ordered in 1798 by Alexandre Lenoir for the Musée des monuments français and executed in marble by Guillaume Francin, is in the Musée national du château de Versailles (inv. MV 6041; MR 2179). The Louvre's plaster cast workshop distributed copies of this reproduction beginning in 1864 (Rionnet 1996, 264, no. 1110). The Francin copy and the drawing by Saint-Aubin in his copy of the Salon catalogue of 1777 (fig. 2) show that Houdon's marble, although with full shoulders, was slightly more truncated than the plaster in Weimar.

Extant plasters (most important works only)

Staatliches Museum, Schwerin (inv. Pl 280); H. 72.8 cm (with base: 88.2 cm), painted terracotta color; *cachet de l'atelier* on lower center of back support. See Steinmann 1911, 213–214; Schwerin 2000, 174, no. 4, ill. p. 175.

Schlossmuseum Gotha (inv. P 46); H. 72.8 cm (with base: 88.6 cm), painted matte white. See Schuttwolf 1995, 145, no. 55, ill. p. 178.

Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Skulpturensammlung (formerly Kaiser-Friedrich-Museum) (inv. 1960); H. (with base)

88 cm; painted dark orange; until 1892 in the Königliche Bibliothek, Musikabteilung; according to Dierks 1887, 61, sent to the court in Berlin by Houdon himself. See Theodor Demmler, *Die Bildwerke des Deutschen Museums*, vol. 3, *Die Bildwerke in Holz, Stein und Ton. Großplastik* (Berlin, 1930), 465–466, no. 1960, ill.; *Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Skulpturensammlung. Bildwerke aus sieben Jahrhunderten II* (Berlin, 1972), 106, no. 107, fig 116.

#### Variants with truncated shoulders (selection)

##### Terracottas

Deutsches Historisches Museum, Berlin (inv. Pl 96/12); H. 49.6 cm; see Koschnick 1997, 276, ill.

Royal Academy of Music, London; H. (with base) 67 cm; donated in 1894 by Sir George Donaldson; see London 1932, 141–142, no. 286.

Cleveland Museum of Art (inv. 88.59); H. 51 cm, W. 40 cm; bought from a dealer in 1988; see *Handbook of the Cleveland Museum of Art* (Cleveland, 1991), 114, ill.



Signature on cat. 10

##### Plaster

Sale, Rohan-Chabot, 8 Dec. 1807.

Posthumous sale of contents of Houdon's studio, 15–17 Dec. 1828, 16, no. 22, sold with plaster bust of Jean-Guillaume Moitte for 11 francs (Réau 1964, 1:119); probably the bust seen in Boilly's paintings of Houdon's studio (cat. 66), a terracotta-colored copy of the type with truncated shoulders in the middle of the lower shelf on the back wall.

##### Reduced bronze

Musée des arts décoratifs, Paris (inv. 15199); H. 30 cm; cast by Thomire, and inscribed "FC THOMIRE 1778"; attached gilt bronze base (Niclausse 1947, 39, 119, ill. p. 112); another version is said to have been in the Edmond Courty collection, Châtillon-sous-Bagneux (Réau 1964, 2:32).

1. See Patricia Howard, *Gluck: An Eighteenth-Century Portrait in Letters and Documents* (Oxford, 1995); and Patricia Howard, *Gluck: A Guide to Research* (New York), 1987.

2. Critical accounts of all known portraits are given in Emil Vogel, "Gluck-Portraits," *Jahrbuch der Musikbibliothek Peters für 1897* (Leipzig, 1898), 13–18; Leroux 1914, 39–47; and Prod'homme 1918, 29–62. The Duplessis painting is now in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Gemäldegalerie, Vienna (inv. 1795).

3. Georg Kinsky, "Glucks Reisen nach Paris," *Zeitschrift für Musikwissenschaft* 8 (1925–1926), 551–566.

4. The portrait was well advanced if not finished in early Oct. 1774, when Mlle de Lespinasse, who had personally seen it in Duplessis' studio, mentioned it in a letter (see Prod'homme 1918, 30–31). Owing to the death of the king, performances of *Iphigénie en Aulide* were suspended 10 May 1774 for the period of mourning. Gluck spent time socializing before he started rehearsals for *Orphée et Eurydice*, which was performed forty-seven times between 2 Aug. and 20 Nov. 1774.

5. Kinsky 1925–1926, 553.

6. There is no indication that Gluck and Houdon met through their association with different Masonic lodges, as assumed in Prod'homme 1918, 43 n. 2; Houdon did not become a member of the Loge des Neuf Soeurs until 1778.

7. Männlich (ed. 1989–1993), 2:106–137. Translation in Howard 1995, 110.

8. [Jean-François-Gilles Colson], *Observations sur les ouvrages exposés au Sallon du Louvre...* (Paris, 1775), 55–56 (Deloynes X, no. 160); *L'Art de voyager au loin sans sortir d'une chambre. Lettre...sur les tableaux exposés au Sallon de l'Académie royale de peinture et sculpture* (1775) (BNest, YD2 19 in 8°); Bachaumont 1780, 214–215. See also Quatremère de Quincy 1834, 1:398.

9. Salon cat. 1775, no. 257.

10. A subscription was set up to cover Houdon's remuneration of 4,000 livres. For the terms of the subscription, the identity of the underwriters and subscribers, and a reproduction of the original documents see Prod'homme 1918, 47–55.

11. Discovered in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, and published in Joret 1896, 61–64.

12. Réau 1964, 1:170, and Vitry 1907d, 219, give the year as 1777.

13. See Mansfeld 1955, 129. In 1775 the Salon was extended through 30 Sept. (see Seznec and Adhémar 1957–1967, 4:233).

14. The bills and receipts for this purchase were discovered in the archives in Weimar (see Mansfeld 1955, 132).

15. See Herzogin Anna Amalia Bibliothek. *Kulturgeschichte einer Sammlung*, ed. Michael Knoche (Munich and Vienna, 1999).

16. See Gluck's letters to Carl August in Hedwig Mueller von Asow and E. H. Mueller von Asow, eds., *The Collected Correspondence and Papers of Christoph Willibald Gluck* (London, 1962), 173, 191.

17. Entry of 11 Aug. 1854, *The Journals of George Eliot*, ed. Margaret Harris and Judith Johnston (Cambridge, 1998), 22; see also 27.

## ✦ Jean-Baptiste Poquelin, called Molière (1622–1673)

Dated 1781

Terracotta, with plaster restorations, on circular gray marble base

H. 50 cm (with base: 62 cm), W. 49 cm, D. 33 cm

Inscribed on truncation of right shoulder: *houdon 1781*

*Cachet de l'atelier* on back

Musée des Beaux-Arts, Orléans (inv. 1691)

On 15 February 1773 the actor Lekain proposed that the Comédie Française use profits from a performance marking the centennial of Molière's death to erect a statue of him. It was probably not by chance that this suggestion came about three years after a fund was established for a marble statue of Voltaire by Jean-Baptiste Pigalle.<sup>1</sup> The Académie française approved the project, but general indifference obliged the actors to give it up.<sup>2</sup> On 30 September 1776 they ordered "that a bust of Molière... in marble be executed by M. Houdon" in exchange for a lifetime pass to the theater.<sup>3</sup> The model was completed 10 March 1778,<sup>4</sup> and the marble recorded on Houdon's autograph list of 1784 under the year 1778.<sup>5</sup> Probably installed in the public foyer of the Comédie-Française in early 1779,<sup>6</sup> it still occupies that pride of place, but in a new theater at the Palais Royal (fig. 1).

Houdon's bust of Molière quickly became famous. The terracotta model was exhibited at the Salon of 1779 (no. 218) as belonging to Miromesnil. In May 1778 d'Alembert gave a plaster of it to the Académie française; Houdon sent one to the Société des beaux-arts in Montpellier the next year;<sup>7</sup> plasters were acquired by many of Houdon's patrons, including the dukes of Mecklenburg-Schwerin and Saxe-Gotha, Prince Henry of Prussia, and the king of Poland (see Related Works).

The present sculpture was in the collection of François-Pascal Haudry, who owned four busts by Houdon. The *Molière* was displayed as a pendant to *La Fontaine* (cat. 12). Both are terracottas, but they were once repaired in plaster (especially in the back), probably after an accident, and given a thick coating of terracotta-colored paint.<sup>8</sup> The Orléans version of *Molière* is smaller than the marble at the Comédie-Française and the plasters in Montpellier, Schwerin, and Gotha: the head is identical, but the truncation, elegantly rounded, is narrower, like that of *La Fontaine*.

For this retrospective portrait, Houdon was inspired by an iconography dominated by paintings by the Mignard brothers. He apparently executed his model after "a rather mediocre copy that belonged to the Comédie-Française." He then had access, at the home of a collector, to an "original" by Mignard:

That precious discovery gave him new ideas and allowed him to render his subject even more true to life, to make an ideal far superior to all the portraits we know of Molière, both in the beauty of its expression and probably as well in the truth of its forms. That great man's genius for observation is expressed with an energy,





1. Houdon, Molière, 1778, marble, Comédie-Française, Paris.

a nobility, that no painter has ever approached. The forehead bears the mark of profound meditation. His gaze (M. Houdon may be the first sculptor able to do eyes) penetrates deep into the heart. . . . It was after M. Voltaire saw that masterpiece and kissed it on his knees that he kindly permitted the young artist to do his bust from life, even though he was already quite ill at the time.<sup>9</sup>

It is not known exactly which painting was the “original” seen by Houdon. Many portraits of Molière had circulated since the late seventeenth century. A print by Jean-Baptiste Nolin reproduces a painting by Pierre Mignard, which shows the writer seated, holding a book and pen, wearing an ample wig, his shirt fastened at his throat, looking directly at the viewer.<sup>10</sup> By contrast, Molière looks to his right in an engraving by Audran after a painting by Nicolas Mignard, Pierre’s brother (fig. 2); a famous version of this image represents the actor in the role of Caesar in Corneille’s *La Mort de Pompée*.<sup>11</sup> It is probably this work that inspired Houdon: the slightly turned head, attentive eyes, fine mustache, fleshy lips, and open shirt collar.

Houdon’s execution of a bust of Molière for the Comédie Française stirred the enmity of his colleague Jean-Jacques Caffieri, who considered the theater his private preserve and had regularly proposed works for it since his marble of *Alexis Piron* in 1773. Caffieri was shattered when Houdon sent plasters of his *Voltaire* (cat. 24) to actors in the company, replacing his own *Philippe Quinault*.<sup>12</sup> He sent an anonymous letter to the comte d’Angiviller, probably at the end of February 1779, expressing his bitterness: “Molière was full of fire and imagination. . . . your sculptor represents him as a stupid man, with no passion in his physiognomy. That head, which is larger than

life, has no movement to animate it. His wig looks like tufts of wool, his dressing gown and cravat are so meager that it’s impossible to know of what fabric they’re made. The whole thing is polished and very proper, which is what delights the ignorant, of whom there are a great number.”<sup>13</sup> The letter received a sympathetic hearing from the leadership at the Bâtiments du Roi, which was ambivalent about Houdon and commissioned Caffieri in 1781 to create the marble statue of Molière for the “Great Men of France” series.<sup>14</sup>

Among Houdon’s submissions to the Salon of 1779, the terracotta *Molière* drew favorable attention: “M. Houdon’s talent for the portrait is well known; but he has once again surpassed himself this year. The busts of Molière, Voltaire . . . and Rousseau are so many masterpieces.”<sup>15</sup> When Caffieri showed his own bust of Molière at the Salon of 1781, he attracted a scathing critique: “[He] was wrong . . . to try to fight against M. Houdon, who rendered him with the fine features of a creator of comedic characters; Caffieri imagined him as the enemy and detractor of vices and, in wishing to give him a severe character, made him brutal and disagreeable.”<sup>16</sup> Houdon’s interpretation was still preferred in 1787, when Caffieri displayed his marble statue at the Salon: “Of the illustrious figures for the king, only the Molière is worthy of attention. The head, however, is somewhat insignificant and is pouting a little. That statue has not displaced M. Houdon’s beautiful bust in our minds.”<sup>17</sup>

Subsequent opinions have been divided. Montaignon and Duplessis were enthusiastic: “The bust of Molière [is] one of the most beautiful, and certainly the most ideal, of any he ever



2. Audran, Molière, engraving after Nicolas Mignard, inscribed “P. Mignard pinx. / B. Audran Scul,” BNEst.





Signature and back view of cat. 11

made.”<sup>18</sup> Rostrup was more critical: “The better he got along with his model, the more felicitous the result. That is why he also did not master the historical or retrospective portrait. In that respect, he clearly had to yield to his rival and sworn enemy Caffieri. The bust of Molière . . . thus appears devoid of all substance and rigid, compared with the portraits he executed from life, or even from a death mask he had done of people he had known well during his lifetime.”<sup>19</sup> That judgment may be rather harsh. Houdon gave life to the two retrospective portraits now known: *Molière* and *La Fontaine*.<sup>20</sup> He edified himself with the images at his disposal and translated them admirably into three dimensions. One contemporary exclaimed: “We recognize the philosopher’s piercing glance, his genius for observation. That is how the Father of Comedy must have been. Upon seeing him, everyone says: that’s Molière.”<sup>21</sup>

It is difficult today to imagine how Houdon’s composition appeared in its original state. The marble at the Comédie-Française has suffered from rough handling in the past, including a treatment about 1843 by Dantan the Elder.<sup>22</sup> The plasters in Montpellier, Schwerin, Gotha, and Berlin have been repainted several times, as has the terracotta in Orléans. Nevertheless, the work’s charm remains intact. The rounded truncation of the Orléans version is particularly harmonious with Molière’s almond-shaped eyes, the trace of a smile shaded by his fine mustache, and the softness of his hair. The slight turn of the head and the portrayal of an artist in an open shirt recall the vivid and dynamic busts by Antoine Coysevox; but the handsome twist in the knotted cravat, which adds a brilliant touch of elegance, is Houdon’s signature.

GUILHEM SCHERF

#### PROVENANCE

Collection of François-Pascal Haudry (1728–1800); posthumous sale of his collection, Orléans, 1800, no. 186 (as terracotta); Vandenberghe collection; acquired ca. 1848 by M. Dupuis, appeal court advisor in Orléans; gift of Mlles Dupuis, 8 Aug. 1887, “en souvenir de leur père” (entry registry at Musée des Beaux-Arts, Orléans, no. 1124A).

#### EXHIBITIONS

Orléans 1876, no. 1682: lent by “Mme Dupuis, à Orléans.”

#### REFERENCES

Paris 1928, 56, under no. 50; Réau 1964, 1:351; Arnason 1975, 66; Dijon and Orléans 1992, 80, no. 7.

#### RELATED WORKS

##### Terracottas

Salon of 1779, no. 218: “tiré du cabinet du M. de Miromesnil, Garde-des-Sceaux”; possibly Thoré-Bürger’s posthumous sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 5 Dec. 1892, no. 60 (1,480 francs).

On rectangular base; inscribed “houdon f. 1778”; included in *Exposition d’art français du XVIIIe siècle* [exh. cat., Galerie Jamarin] (Paris, 1916), no. 69; and *L’Art au théâtre* [exh. cat., Galerie Charpentier] (Paris, 1925), no. 110 (loaned by J. S. Morgan in 1916 and 1925); and *French Painting and Sculpture of the Eighteenth Century* [exh. cat., The Metropolitan Museum of Art] (New York, 1935–1936), no. 105, ill. (loaned by Caroline L. Morgan).

On circular base; inscribed: “Houdon f.”; purchased from Giacometti by Raymond Vaxelaire of Brussels in 1921; described enthusiastically in Giacometti 1929, 2:120–121.

##### Marbles

Comédie-Française, Paris (inv. S 141) (fig. 1); H. 82 cm; inscribed on front of rectangular marble base: “JEAN-BAPTISTE POQUELIN-MOLIERE, NE A / PARIS EN 1622, ET MORT LE 17. FEVRIER 1673”; inscribed on left side: “HOUDON FECIT ANNO 1778.” Commissioned by Comédie Française, 30 Sept. 1776 (see text above).

Sarrazin sale, 8–9 Jan. 1816, no. 102: “Buste de Molière, proportion demi-nature, et réduite d’après le grand modèle placé dans le foyer de la Comédie-Française. Il n’existe dans le commerce aucun buste fait par M. Houdon dans cette proportion, ce marbre est le seul qui ait été fait.”

On rectangular marble base; H. with base: 83 cm; inscribed: “HOUDON F. 1782”; duc de Talleyrand collection at château de Valençay; his sale, Galerie Georges Petit, Paris, 29 May–1 June 1899, no. 42, ill. (49,000 francs); sale, Galliera, Paris, 16 June 1967, no. 167, ill.

##### Plasters

Bust given to Académie française in 1778 by d’Alembert, along with one of Voltaire (cat. 24) (*Corr. littéraire*, May 1778); base inscribed “Rien ne manque à sa gloire, il manquait à la nôtre,” from Bernard-Joseph Saurin (*Mémoires secrets*, 12:179, 1 Dec. 1778). At Musée des monuments français, Paris, in 1803 (AMMF 1887, 3:81; museum cat., 1797 to 1816, no. 281); Alexandre Lenoir received another copy from the Nesle warehouse in 1799 and may have had plaster casts made from previous casts (AMMF 1883, 1:319; 1886, 2:404; and 1887, 3:208). A copy was sent to Versailles in 1834; H. 65 cm (with base: 80 cm) (Versailles cat. 1993, 272, no. 1251, ill.).

Bust given by Houdon to Société des beaux-arts, Montpellier (now Musée Fabre) (inv. 806.31); H. 82 cm; inscribed on front of rectangular base: “JEAN-

BAPTISTE POQUELIN-MOLIERE, NE A / PARIS EN 1620, ET MORT LE 17. FEVRIER 1673"; inscribed on left side: FAIT PAR HOUDON EN 1778"; recorded in minutes of society meeting, 7 Mar. 1779; exhibited that year as no. 178 (Stein 1913, 379, 402). The bust today is white (described with green finish in Joubin 1926, no. 939; and Claparède [ed. 1993], 43, ill.; see also Bajou 1989, 26, fig. 3). Gonse 1904, 268 (ill. p. 267), considered it an original plaster.

Staatliche Museum, Schwerin (inv. PP 287); painted terracotta color; on circular base; H. 63 cm (with base: 83.5 cm); *cachet de l'atelier* on back; acquired by duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin in 1782; see Schwerin 2000, no. 4, ill.

Schlossmuseum Gotha (inv. P 28); with bronze finish; on rectangular base; H. 83.2 cm; acquired by Duke Ernst II of Saxe-Gotha; see Schuttwolf 1995, no. 57, ill.

Deutsche Staatsbibliothek, Berlin; with bronze finish; H. 81 cm; acquired by Prince Henry of Prussia; see Rheinsberg 1985, no. 99; and Rheinsberg 2002, 443, and no. VI.43.

Muzeum Narodowe, Warsaw; H. 61 cm; acquired by King Stanisław Augustus II Poniatowski; see Dariusz Kaczmarzyk, *Rzeźba europejska od XV do XX wieku. Katalog zbiorów, Muzeum Narodowe* (Warsaw, 1978), no. 106.

At Houdon's studio in 1815, King Frederick William III of Prussia "a paru surtout satisfait d'un buste de Molière" (*Le Moniteur*, 18 Sept. 1815, 1032).

Bust (possibly plaster) mentioned in announcement of Houdon's studio sale, 8 Oct. 1795, but not included in list of works for sale. Perhaps the same bust depicted by Boilly in his paintings of Houdon's studio (see cat. 66), at left near the bust of Cagliostro.

[Duchesse de Bourbon] sale, Palais de l'Élysée, Paris, 13 Aug. 1798, no. 83; plaster "finished by Houdon," sold along with plasters of Voltaire and Rousseau.

Formerly château de Corgolin, Côte d'Or (supposedly from Monge family); on circular base; acquired by dealer Joseph Duveen (Paris 1928, no. 50; Giacometti 1929, 1:176, ill., 2:120); Lucien Tessier collection sale, Galerie

Charpentier, Paris, 10–11 June 1958, no. 172, pl. 55. Giacometti considered it an original plaster.

Princeton University, Firestone Library; painted terracotta color; inscribed "houdon f 1778." See Worcester 1964, 43–47, ill.; Arnason 1975, fig. 106, pls. 45 and 47.

Louvre's plaster cast workshop made copies beginning in 1883 (examples at Carlsberg Museum, Copenhagen, and Musée Lambinet, Versailles); also distributed through the Musée de sculpture comparée at Le Trocadéro (see Rionnet 1996, 267, no. 1128), where a copy was exhibited (Enlart and Roussel 1910, 222, G 152). Plasters are also at the museum in Rouen and at the abbey of Châalis, among other locations.

#### Bronzes

Houdon said in his *mémoire* to Bachelier (1794), that he had made bronzes of Molière and other illustrious men "since the Revolution."

Anonymous sale, Paris, 29 Aug. 1797, no. 111: "Bronze... Le buste de Molière exécuté avec tout le soin possible. Haut. 26 pouces [70.8 cm]."

Musée Ingres, Montauban (inv. MI 842.9.3); H. 57 cm, W. 54 cm, D. 36 cm; inscribed along truncation of right shoulder: "HOUDON F 1786"; purchased in Montauban during court-ordered liquidation of the inheritance of the receiver-general Scitivaux, Dec. 1844. See Paris 1878, no. 276.

The Barbedienne foundry produced a full-size version (H. 83 cm with base) as well as reductions: six sizes (heights of 11, 14, 20, 28, 40, and 52 cm) were offered in the catalogues of 1880, 1884, and 1894.

#### Print

Oval print showing Molière in profile, inscribed: "dessiné et gravé par Aug[ustin] S<sup>t</sup> Aubin d'après le buste fait par Houdon," BNEst, N2, microfilm D 215418.

1. Gaborit 1985, 70–74.

2. M.-J. Taschereau, *Histoire de la vie et des ouvrages de Molière* (Paris, 1844), 269–270.

3. "Registre des délibérations de la Comédie Française 24 juillet 1769–1er février 1784," fol. 5v, 30 Sept. 1776 (Bibliothèque de la Comédie-Française). See also Dacier 1905.

4. Date of *Journal de Paris*, no. 69, inviting the public to see the work in Houdon's studio. See also *Mémoires secrets*, 11:197–198, 19 Apr. 1778.

5. Vitry 1907b, 201, no. 55. See also Réau 1964, 2:38, no. 164, pl. 79; and Arnason 1975, pl. 46 (detail).

6. Mentioned in that place in Salon catalogue of 1779. The Comédie Française had been located in the château des Tuileries since 1770 and was about to move into a new theater (now the Odéon), inaugurated in 1782.

7. See Houdon's letter to society, 26 Feb. 1779, in Claparède (ed. 1993), 41, presenting his work, stipulating that the society have no molds made, and giving the price for the already well-known bust: 4 louis "whether plaster alone or with a bronze finish."

8. Giacometti and the museum curator, Deschellerin, thought the busts were plaster (letters of 12 May and 21 Aug. 1919, Orléans museum files). This was repeated (with doubts) in Marguerite Devigne, "Quelques œuvres de sculpture française du XVIIIe siècle à Bruxelles," excerpted from *Le Flambeau* (Bruxelles, 1925), 7 n. 2; and (straightforwardly) in Paris 1928, 56.

9. *Corr. littéraire*, May 1778, 12:103–105.

10. Inscribed "Petrus Mignard Trecensis Pinxit / Jo. Baptis. Nolin Sculpsit 1685" (BNEst, N2, microfilm D 215323). A beautiful version of the painting, ca. 1660, is at the Musée Condé, Chantilly.

11. Musée de la Comédie-Française, Paris, ca. 1734, "probably after a lost portrait by Nicolas Mignard," replicated by Charles Coypel (see Lefrançois 1994, 281–284, no. 165).

12. Guiffrey 1877, 283.

13. Guiffrey 1877, 287, with facsimile of the letter.

14. Louvre cat. 1998, 127, ill. See also the essay "Houdon, 'Above All Modern Artists'" in the present catalogue.

15. See Jean-Baptiste Radet, *Ah! Ah! Encore une critique du Sallon! Voyons ce qu'elle chante* (Deloynes XI, no. 208); also *L'Année littéraire* 7 (1779); and Renou in *Journal de Paris* (MacWilliam 1991, 286, 287, and 284).

16. *Mémoires secrets. Lettre sur le Salon de 1781* (Fort 1999, 246). Caffieri's bust has disappeared; the terracotta at the Musée de la Fondation Calouste Gulbenkian dates from 1785.

17. *Merlin au Salon de 1787* (Deloynes XV, no. 385; MacWilliam 1991, 438).

18. Montaiglon and Duplessis 1855, 178.

19. Rostrup 1973, 5.

20. His portraits of Charles IX and Jean-Baptiste Colbert have disappeared (Réau 1964, 2:29, nos. 102 and 108).

21. Laus de Boissy in *Journal de Paris*, 415, no. 104, 14 Apr. 1778.

22. Handwritten report, unsigned and undated, and note of 31 Mar. 1844 indicating treatment paid for 18 June 1844 (Bibliothèque de la Comédie-Française, Dantan files).



## + Jean de La Fontaine (1621–1695)

1781

Terracotta, with plaster restorations, on circular gray marble base

H. 54 cm (with base: 66 cm), W. 49 cm, D. 32 cm

*Cachet de l'atelier* on back

Musée des Beaux-Arts, Orléans (inv. 1690)

A terracotta bust of La Fontaine mentioned in Houdon's autograph list of 1784 under the year 1782,<sup>1</sup> possibly the one now at Vaux-le-Vicomte, could hardly be the same one cited in the catalogue of the Salon of 1783, where the marble was displayed (see Related Works): "the model was done in 1781 for M. le Président Aubry." It is tempting to believe that Aubry<sup>2</sup> was none other than François-Pascal Haudry—to whose collection the Orléans bust can be traced—for such misprints in the Salon catalogue were not uncommon. The Orléans terracotta was once repaired in plaster (especially in the back), probably after an accident, and was given a generous coating of terracotta-colored paint. The curator at Orléans in 1919 expressed doubts about the material,<sup>3</sup> and Réau, preparing his catalogue (published after his death), vacillated.<sup>4</sup> Yet the cut of this bust is much narrower than the marble, the superb Vaux-le-Vicomte terracotta, or the Schwerin plaster. This portrait is smaller, though the head is the same. Thus the Orléans sculpture could have been executed in 1781, like its pendant, *Molière*, which is in the same material and has the same provenance (see cat. 11).

With his posthumous likeness of La Fontaine, Houdon followed an iconography established by Hyacinthe Rigaud, whose portrait of the writer circulated widely in studio replicas and

engravings.<sup>5</sup> The painting, probably done when La Fontaine was accepted into the Académie française in 1684, exists notably in a rectangular format (at the museum of the abbey of Montserrat, bequeathed by La Fontaine's descendants) and in an oval format (Musée Carnavalet, Paris). The latter is conveyed especially well in an engraving by Edelinck (fig. 1). Houdon was directly inspired by Rigaud, replicating the large wig cascading onto the shoulders, the lace frill at the neck, and the wide coat lapel running diagonally across the torso. The face is the same, with the aquiline nose and the mouth held in an almost bitter grin. Rigaud's portrait had earlier been used as a model by Jean-Jacques Caffieri, who explicitly acknowledged the source.<sup>6</sup> His terracotta bust of La Fontaine (fig. 2) appeared at the Salon of 1779 before being given to the Comédie-Française that year.<sup>7</sup> La Fontaine here turns in the same direction as in the engraving after Rigaud (whereas Houdon remained faithful to the composition of the painting itself). Caffieri's modeling is a bit stiff and generalized in his desire for synthesis, but the work is moving in its expression of the sitter's anxiety.<sup>8</sup> In comparison, Houdon's sculpture is much more austere and more sumptuous. Houdon wanted to capture the grandeur of Rigaud's image, which depicts the writer in a formal pose.

The statue of La Fontaine by Pierre Julien, which was part of the “Great Men of France” series commissioned by the comte d’Angiviller, moved away from the overpowering model of the Rigaud to show the fabulist in a relaxed pose, legs crossed, with an absent-minded gaze. The plaster model, displayed at the Salon of 1783, was widely discussed,<sup>9</sup> whereas Houdon’s terracotta bust was ignored; the bust was shown upstairs in the exhibition proper, whereas the statue, displayed in the court with the other “Great Men,” was immediately noticed by visitors as they arrived at the Palais du Louvre. Because the two portraits of La Fontaine were separated by some distance, a comparison between them could not be readily made, and no critic ventured to make it.

The collector François-Pascal Haudry may have been descended from André Haudry, a farmer general who acquired the seigneurie of Soucy in 1746.<sup>10</sup> In 1770 André’s position passed to his son, a discerning patron and music lover as well as a spendthrift and libertine who went bankrupt in 1781, then became a director of the Manufacture de Sèvres around 1792.<sup>11</sup> François-Pascal, presumably of this dynasty, was president of the Orléans bureau des finances and an administrator of the city’s school of design (founded in 1786). He was a friend of the Orléans art enthusiast Aignan-Thomas Desfriches,<sup>12</sup> knew the art market well, and made frequent trips to Paris.<sup>13</sup> The bust of Haudry done by Jacques Simiand (active in Paris 1779–1785) shows him with the pleasantly untidy appearance of an artist.<sup>14</sup> Haudry acquired a fairly large collection of paintings and a few sculptures, which were dispersed in Orléans after his death.<sup>15</sup> His four terracotta busts by Houdon are now at the Musée des Beaux-Arts: *Voltaire* and *Rousseau* (both “à la française”), *La Fontaine* and *Molière*. Such a private collection of sculpted representations of illustrious men was rare in France at the time.<sup>16</sup> Yet it was similar to the portrait galleries assembled by some of the sculptor’s clients among the German and Russian nobility.

In Houdon’s *mémoire* to Bachelier in 1794 he listed his bust of La Fontaine immediately after that of Molière. The two portraits were clearly conceived as pendants. They were shown together in the homes of Haudry, the duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, Talleyrand, and the Monge family in Corgolin (see Related Works). The *La Fontaine* also has a smaller format, with a rounded truncation matching that of the *Molière*. In fact, the former is less majestic than the imposing Vaux-le-Vicomte terracotta or the Schwerin plaster.

GUILHEM SCHERF

#### PROVENANCE

Collection of François-Pascal Haudry (1728–1800); posthumous sale of his collection, Orléans, 1800, no. 186 (as terracotta); Vandeberghe collection; acquired ca. 1848 by M. Dupuis, appeal court advisor in Orléans; gift of Milles Dupuis, 8 Aug. 1887, “en souvenir de leur père” (entry registry at Musée des Beaux-Arts, Orléans, no. 1125A).

#### EXHIBITIONS

Orléans 1876, no. 1683; lent by “Mme Dupuis, à Orléans.”

#### REFERENCES

Délerot et Legrelle 1857, 117–118, 181; Vitry 1907b, 207, no. 102; Paris 1928, 49, under no. 43; Giacometti 1929, 2:106; Réau 1964, 1:351, 2:35, no. 143A, pl. LXXII; H. Harvard Arnason, “Jean-Antoine Houdon’s Jean de La Fontaine,” *Art News* 66, no. 10 (Feb. 1968), 70; Arnason 1975, 66 and 114 n. 168, pl. 77 (detail); Dijon and Orléans 1992, 80–81, no. 8, ill.

#### RELATED WORKS

##### Terracottas

Houdon’s studio sale, 8 Oct. 1795, no. 96: “Terre cuite. . . Le buste de La Fontaine; il est posé sur piédouche en marbre blanc. Haut. totale 29 pouces [78.3 cm].”

A very fine example; inscribed on truncation of right shoulder: “houdon f. / 1782”; Laperlier sale, 17 Feb. 1879, no. 126; acquired by M. Sommier for his château de Vaux-le-Vicomte and kept there still (Réau 1964, 2:35, no. 143B, pl. LXXVII).

Terracotta with the dealer René Gimpel (mentioned in Versailles 1928, no. 24).

##### Plaster

Staatliches Museum, Schwerin (inv. Pl 282); painted terracotta color; H. 70.5 (with base: 86.5 cm), W. 64.5 cm, D. 34.2 cm; *cachet de l’atelier* on back; acquired by duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin during visit to Houdon’s studio in 1782; see Schwerin 2000, no. 10, ill.

Though not in catalogue of the posthumous sale of the contents of Houdon’s studio, 15–17 Dec. 1828, a plaster is mentioned in Gandouin 1893–1907, 29 (sold for 7 francs).



1. Edelinck, Jean de La Fontaine, after 1684, engraving after Hyacinthe Rigaud, BNEst.

2. Jean-Jacques Caffieri, Jean de La Fontaine, 1779, terracotta, Comédie-Française, Paris.

Formerly château de Corgolin, Côte d'Or (supposedly from Monge family); plaster on circular base; H. 80 cm; inscribed: "Houdon" on back; acquired by dealer Joseph Duveen (see Paris 1928, no. 43; Giacometti 1929, 1:184, ill., 2:107); Lucien Teissier collection sale, Galerie Charpentier, Paris, 10–11 June 1958, no. 171, ill.; sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 25 Mar. 1981, ill. Giacometti considered it an original plaster.

Formerly Sacha Guitry collection; see Réau 1964, 2:35, under no. 143.

**Marble**

Philadelphia Museum of Art (inv. 1966–174–1); marble bust on rectangular marble base, H. 87 cm (with base); inscribed twice, once on truncation of proper left shoulder: "HOUDON, F.," and again (indecisively) on base:

"H / HOUDON, F.;" château de Valençay; duc de Talleyrand sale, 29 May–1 June 1899, no. 43, ill.; acquired for 30,000 francs by Gaston Menier (Versailles 1928, no. 24; Paris 1928, no. 42); his posthumous sale, 24 Nov. 1936, no. 71, pl. 12; repurchased by his heirs; sale, Galliera, Paris, 18 June 1963, no. 156, ill.; acquired by museum in 1966 (Arnason 1968, 30–33, 69–70, ill.; Arnason 1975, fig. 139). In all likelihood, this is the marble exhibited at the Salon of 1783 as no. 247.

**Boilly paintings**

A plaster bust of La Fontaine is seen in the two canvases Boilly painted of Houdon's studio (cat. 66), at the end of the right-hand shelf next to a bust of Jérôme Lalande.

Back view of cat. 12



1. See Vitry 1907b, 207, no. 102.

2. Favre-Lejeune 1986, 1:151, cites a dynasty of magistrates named Aubry, but prior to the 1780s. Joël Félix, *Les Magistrats du Parlement de Paris 1771–1790. Dictionnaire biographique et généalogique* (Paris, 1990), lists no magistrates under that name.

3. Letter of 21 Aug. 1919 from M. Deschellerin to Giacometti (Orléans museum files): "Les deux derniers bustes [Molière and La Fontaine] ne sont pas en terre cuite, mais doivent être en stucc, et n'ont pas du être retouchés par le maître comme les deux terres cuites de Voltaire et de Rousseau." Giacometti 1929, 2:106, however, describes the medium as terracotta.

4. Letter from the publisher De Nobele to the Orléans museum curator, 4 Apr. 1964, notes that Réau indicates on one page that the bust is made of plaster and on another that it is of terracotta. The same inconsistency is found in Arnason 1975; see 114 n. 168 and caption to pl. 77.

5. Dominique Brême, "Mon portrait jusqu'ici ne m'a rien reproché," in *Jean de La Fontaine* [exh. cat., Bibliothèque Nationale] (Paris, 1995–1996), 108–121, passim.

6. In 1784 Caffieri sent seventeen busts to the Académie française, and his letter of submission mentions "Jean de la Fontaine... done after Hyacinthe Rigaud" (see Guiffrey 1877, 360).

7. Guiffrey 1877, 340–341. The bust is now installed at the theater's main staircase.

8. Louis-Pierre Deseine was inspired by Caffieri's work when he did his own terracotta bust of La Fontaine in 1799 for the Musée des monuments français (on long-term loan from the château de Versailles to the Musée Jean de La Fontaine in Château-Thierry); see Versailles cat. 1993, 211, no. 945, ill.

9. "The good nature, simplicity, and sensitivity are ingeniously expressed... The attitude and facial features project equally the candor and the charming openness that characterize the French fabulist" (*L'Année littéraire* 6, letter 16). "This is La Fontaine, it breathes. His air of freedom and simplicity is in all his features" (*Messieurs, Ami de tout le monde*; Deloynes XIII, no. 295; MacWilliam 1991, 362). Julien's marble was exhibited at the Salon of 1785; see Louvre cat. 1998, 447, ill.

10. The family's legendary origin went back to Estienne Haudry, an officer under Saint Louis and founder of the convent of Haudriettes.

11. Contemporary accounts describe Haudry's sumptuous life-style; see Mme Roland (ed. 1986), 274–276.

12. Cuénin 1997, 224, 295 n. 54. Desfriches was a friend of Jean-Baptiste Pigalle—he had four of the sculptor's terracottas in his collection—and he owned a beautiful plaster of Houdon's *Miromesnil* (now at the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Orléans).

13. Paul Ratouis de Limay, *Un amateur orléanais au XVIIIe siècle. Aignan-Thomas Desfriches (1715–1800)*... (Paris, 1907), 24–28, cites two 1780 letters from Haudry to Desfriches. Haudry was a regular at the auction houses, had conversations with Paillet, and knew about the "underhanded schemes" of "cunning" dealers such as Lenglier.

14. See Dijon and Orléans 1992, 83, no. 29, ill. Another plaster version, signed and dated 1784, appeared at the Alphonse Kann sale, 6 Dec. 1920; acquired by David-Weill.

15. Abbé Desnoyers, *Les Collectionneurs orléanais*, excerpted in *Bulletins de la Société archéologique et historique de l'Orléanais* (Orléans, 1880), 7, assumes that the 1800 sale catalogue repeats the "true catalogue written by Haudry himself," which was probably lost after his death. The sale catalogue is not included in Lugt, but there is one copy at the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, and another at the municipal library in Orléans. The collector Vandeberghe, who purchased Houdon's bust from the Haudry sale, was part of a large dynasty of refiners of white sugar and was undoubtedly the son of Desfriches' friend Georges III Vandeberghe-Villebouré; see Cuénin 1997, 43, 101, 225, 287 n. 8, 293 n. 21.

16. Scherf 2001, 158–160.



## + Jean-Marie Maudit, called Larive (1747–1827)

Dated 1784

White marble with gray inclusions

H. 67.5 cm (with base: 81 cm), W. 62 cm, D. 31 cm

Inscribed on truncation of right arm: HOUDON. F./ 1784.

Comédie-Française, Paris (inv. S.178)

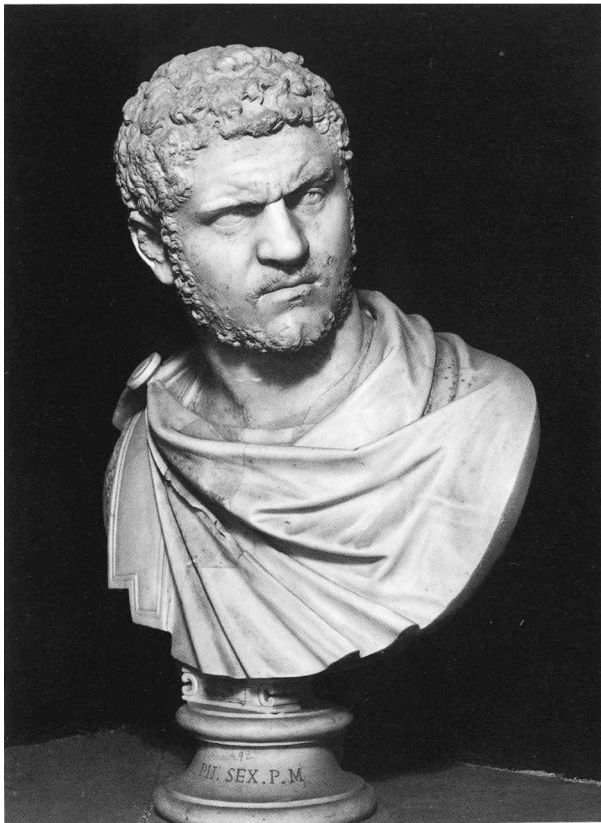
Houdon portrayed several artists associated with the Comédie Française in Paris, including Gluck, Molière, Voltaire (see cats. 10, 11, 23–25), and the renowned actor Jean-Marie Maudit, called Delarive or Larive. As with his bust of the singer Sophie Arnould (cats. 8–9), Houdon depicted Larive performing in a specific role, that of Brutus in Voltaire's play *La Mort de César*. In a pose charged with dramatic tension, Larive turns his head, his eyes focused to the extreme right, his brow furrowed in thought, an expression of alertness and determination on his face. He is contemplating the imminent murder of Caesar. The actor wears a Roman toga draped in deep folds across his chest and held at the right shoulder with an ornate fibula; a cord with a beautifully carved tassel pulls up the sleeve of the toga to reveal the arm that will be raised against the emperor. Larive's hair, short with soft curls, is dressed in the Roman manner.

According to contemporary accounts, Houdon created a speaking likeness of his sitter. Gerhard Anton von Halem wrote in his travel journal of his visit to Houdon's studio in 1790: "Also very pleasing to me was the animated bust of the actor la Rive. I just saw him act in [*Le*] *Cid* and *Pygmalion* and recognized him instantly."<sup>1</sup> According to Bertrand Barère: "Houdon executed a bust of the tragedian Larive in the role of Brutus.

It is not only a very striking likeness, but is one of the most beautiful and expressive heads one can imagine, the most beautiful perhaps that Houdon has executed."<sup>2</sup>

Larive began acting in provincial centers such as Tours and Lyons. He was discovered by the famous actress Hippolyte Clairon of the Comédie Française.<sup>3</sup> Although twenty-four years younger than she, he became her protégé and lover, and she helped promote his career, inviting him in December 1770 to perform in Paris, where he received mixed reviews. In the *Correspondance littéraire* of January 1771 he was judged harshly: "As for M. Larive, the public, after having seen him in several roles, conferred upon him the honors of mediocrity; I doubt that he will ever merit more than that."<sup>4</sup> After retreating to work in Brussels, Larive returned to Paris and in April 1775 became a member of the Comédie Française, where he distinguished himself in major roles until his retirement in 1788, returning briefly as a freelance actor in 1790.<sup>5</sup> Reversing its earlier judgment, the *Correspondance littéraire* praised him generously in 1775: "With strong and noble features, an elegant figure, a natural and graceful carriage, he has a voice as soft as it is resonant... pure and distinct pronunciation and all of the quality that grace can give to youth.... The greatest strength of our





1. Roman, Caracalla, third century AD, marble, Museo Nazionale, Naples.



2. Houdon, Alexander the Great, 1784, marble, Muzeum Narodowe, Warsaw.

young actor is to speak in a tragedy and to speak without exaggeration and without taking liberties.”<sup>6</sup>

Larive was admired for his declamatory skills, although his performances were often criticized for exaggerated gestures and lack of emotional depth. Among his most successful roles was that of Brutus in *La Mort de César*. Written in 1743, the play was performed at the Comédie-Française twenty-five times between 1781 and 1790.<sup>7</sup> There were four performances in 1784, the date of this bust. Voltaire’s play, with its theme of the virtuous patriot overthrowing a tyrant, had special resonance during the period leading up to and during the French Revolution.

The circumstances under which the bust of Larive was commissioned are not known. Houdon may have met the actor through his acquaintances in the Comédie Française or perhaps through Voltaire and the masonic Loge des Neuf Soeurs to which Voltaire and Houdon belonged. Larive, also a freemason, participated in the ceremony of Voltaire’s initiation into the Loge des Neuf Soeurs on 7 April 1778. Representing Melpomène, the muse of tragedy, the actor placed a crown of laurel leaves on the writer’s head.<sup>8</sup> It is probable that Larive,

who was independently wealthy, commissioned his own bust, since it remained in his family and was given to the Comédie Française by his son in 1827.

As has been pointed out by other writers,<sup>9</sup> Houdon draws on an antique prototype for his portrait of Larive. In its fierce, frowning expression, turned head, and toga held by a decorative fibula, the bust reflects the sculptor’s knowledge of the third-century marble head of the Roman emperor *Caracalla* (fig. 1), which was in the Palazzo Farnese in Rome when Houdon was a student there<sup>10</sup> and was widely admired and copied during the eighteenth century. Caracalla was an apt model, as he had murdered his brother in order to gain power. It has also been suggested that Houdon must have seen and been influenced by Michelangelo’s bust of *Brutus* in the Medici collection in Florence.<sup>11</sup> There is, however, no evidence that Houdon went to Florence. It seems more likely that both he and Michelangelo were aware of the *Caracalla* as a prototype for the depiction of Brutus. The costume of a Roman toga held by a fibula is one that Houdon also used in his idealized historical bust of *Alexander the Great* (fig. 2), executed for the king of Poland and exhibited

at the Salon of 1783 along with the plaster model for the portrait of Larive. He was to use it again in his portrayal of *Prince Henry of Prussia* of 1789 (cat. 54). The bust of Larive is distinguished by its dramatic power and immediacy. The sculptor successfully conveys the fact that he is portraying an actor playing the part of Brutus rather than an historical portrait of Brutus himself.

ANNE L. POULET

PROVENANCE

Collection of the sitter; following his death, given to the Comédie Française by his son Achille Maudit Larive (1774–1854), Dec. 1827 (see letter in archives of the Comédie Française, 29 Dec. 1827, from M. Lemazurier, secretary of the administrative committee of the Comédie Française, to M. Larive, accepting the gift).

EXHIBITIONS

Paris, Salon cat. 1785, 48, no. 227; Paris 1928, 32, no. 14; Versailles 1928, 25, no. 27; Vitry 1937, pl. XXXIV; *La Comédie-Française, 1680–1962* [exh. cat., Château de Versailles] (Versailles, 1962), 68, no. 181; London 1972, 253, no. 392.

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*Observations critiques sur les tableaux du Sallon de l'année 1785...* (Paris, 1785), 23 (Deloynes XIV, no. 326); *Le Peintre anglais au salon de peintures exposées au Louvre en l'année 1785* (Paris, 1785), 29 (Deloynes XIV, no. 327); Soulavie 1785, 34 (Deloynes XIV, no. 331); "Exposition des tableaux au Louvre. Année littéraire" (1785), 768 (Deloynes XIV, no. 349); "Exposition des tableaux au Sallon du Louvre, 1785. Journal général de France," 940 (Deloynes XIV, no. 363); *Observateurs sur le Sallon de 1785, extraites du Journal général de France* (Paris, 1785), 32 (Deloynes XIV, no. 363); "Sciences et arts. Exposition... dans le Sallon du Louvre," *Mercur de France* (1 Oct. 1785), 18; *Mémoires de B[ertrand] Barère* (Paris, 1844), 4:246–247; *Corr. littéraire*, 14:297; Henry Jouin, "Le Musée de portraits d'artistes, II," *NAAF*, 3rd ser., 2 (Paris, 1886), 14; Monval 1897, 86, no. 181; Jean-Jacques Olivier, *Voltaire et les comédiens, interprètes de son théâtre* (Paris, 1900), 383, no. 1; Dacier 1905, 175; Giacometti 1918–1919, 1:84; 2:112–115; Giacometti 1929, 1:36; 2:36–37, ill. opp. 34; Vitry 1928a, 12; Réau 1928a, 343–344; Vitry 1937b, 480; Michèle Beaulieu, "Le Théâtre et la sculpture française au XVIIIe siècle," *Le Jardin des arts*, no.

15 (Jan. 1956), 171, ill. p. 168; Réau 1964, 1:83, 379–381; 2:35, no. 146b, pl. LXXIII; Arnason 1975, 65–66, fig. 138, pls. 75, 143k; Noëlle Guibert and Jacqueline Razgonnikoff, *Le Journal de la Comédie-Française, 1787–1799. La Comédie aux trois couleurs* (Paris, 1989), 127, ill.; von Halem (ed. 1990), 188–189.

RELATED WORKS

Plasters

Paris, Salon cat. 1783, 51, no. 251. See *L'Impartialité au Sallon dédiée à messieurs les critiques présents et à venir*. (Paris, 1783), 35 (Deloynes XIII, no. 303); *Lettre aux auteurs du Journal de Paris (sur le Salon de 1783)* (Paris, 1783), 1008 (Deloynes XIII, no. 312); *Corr. littéraire*, 13:447.

Posthumous sale of contents of Houdon's studio, Paris, 15–17 Dec. 1828, no. 48: "Plâtre. Buste de feu Larive, tragédien célèbre"; possibly identical with the plaster bust shown in the Salon of 1783.

Terracotta

Sale, Paris, 29 Dec. 1906, no. 55: "Buste terre cuite représentant en grandeur nature J. Mauduit de Larive, comédien ordinaire du roi sous Louis XV et Louis XVI, dans le rôle de Brutus de la *Mort de César* par Voltaire. Signé: Houdon, daté 1784." See Réau 1964, 1:122.

Private collection, London; inscribed: "HOUDON 1784 LARIVE"; H. 76.5 cm. See Black and Nadeau 1979, no. 30, ill.



Back view of cat. 13

1. Von Halem (ed. 1990), 189.

2. *Mémoires de B[ertrand] Barère*, 1844, 4:247.

3. For a biography of Larive see H. Lyonnet, *Dictionnaire des comédiens français* (Paris, 1902–1908), 1:33–47.

4. *Corr. littéraire*, 9:236–237.

5. Georges Monval, *Comédie-Française (1658–1900)*.

*Liste alphabétique des sociétaires depuis Molière jusqu'à nos jours* (Paris, 1900), 74, no. 218.

6. *Corr. littéraire*, 11:73–74, letter of May 1775.

7. See A. Joannidès, *La Comédie-Française de 1680 à 1900. Dictionnaire des pièces et des auteurs* (Paris, 1901), XIX, and "Table chronologique des pièces—1784."

8. *Annuaire de 5,8,38 de la Loge des Neuf-Soeurs suivi du*

*procès verbal de la réouverture de ses travaux en tenue solennelle du [10 Dec. 1836]...* (Paris, 1838), 29; Louis Amiable, *Une loge maçonnique d'avant 1789. La Loge des Neuf Soeurs*, ed. Charles Porset (Paris, 1989), 67.

9. Réau 1964, 1:380; and Arnason 1975, 66.

10. See Haskell and Penny 1981, 172–173, no. 18.

11. Réau 1964, 1:380; and Arnason 1975, 66.



## + Giuseppe Balsamo, called Comte Alessandro Cagliostro (1743–1795)

Dated 1786

White marble with gray inclusions and veining

H. 63 cm (with base: 78.1 cm), W. 58.6 cm

Inscribed on truncation of proper right arm: *houдон / f. / 1786*

National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection (inv. 1952.5.103)

This bust represents Giuseppe Balsamo, who called himself the comte Alessandro Cagliostro. A charismatic figure who attracted the attention of intellectuals and aristocrats throughout Europe for his reputed skills as an alchemist, purveyor of magical medicines, and originator of secret Masonic rites, Cagliostro was both admired and vilified during his tempestuous life.<sup>1</sup> Born in Palermo, he moved to Rome and married the beautiful Lorenza Feliciani in 1768. They traveled from city to city throughout Italy, Spain, and France, arriving in England in 1776. Often received with enthusiasm, if not adulation, they would hold séances during which base metals were said to be turned into gold, or stones transformed into large diamonds. Cagliostro also became famous as a healer. In 1780 he went to Strasbourg, where he met the cardinal de Rohan, who became one of his most enthusiastic admirers following Cagliostro's extraordinary cure of his cousin the prince de Soubise. Similarly, Jacob Sarasin, a wealthy Basel silk merchant, credited Cagliostro with the miraculous cure of his wife and became one of the Italian's most faithful and generous supporters.

In London Cagliostro founded a new Masonic lodge, the mystic Egyptian Rite, which drew members from the nobility and intelligentsia all over Europe. As its leader, he gave himself

the title Grand Cophta. Freemasonry became an important source of income and support for Cagliostro, with lodges established in Poland, Switzerland, Germany, and France. He traveled, lived, and dressed opulently. When doubts were cast on his cures or séances, or when a threat of arrest or discovery presented itself, he and his wife would flee. On 27 January 1785 they left Lyons for Paris, where Cagliostro was to have an enormous, if brief, success.

Although undocumented, it is probable that Houdon and Cagliostro met in Paris through their Masonic associations, sometime between Cagliostro's arrival in the city on 30 January and Houdon's departure for the United States in mid-July with Benjamin Franklin to carry out the commission for a portrait of George Washington. Houdon was ill in February, however, and probably did not meet Cagliostro and work on his portrait until March or April, leaving only a few months during which he could have done the original bust. Houdon had become a member of the Loge des Neuf Soeurs in 1778, through which he had obtained other important portrait commissions, such as those of Voltaire and John Paul Jones (cats. 23–25 and 44). Houdon submitted a bust of Cagliostro to the Salon of 1785; but when Cagliostro, along with his wife and the cardinal de

1. *Christophe Guerin*, Cagliostro, 1781, engraving, Universitätsbibliothek, Basel, department of prints and drawings.



Rohan, was arrested on 22 August for his alleged participation in the affair of the queen's diamond necklace, the work was withdrawn from exhibition.<sup>2</sup> The material of the bust sent to the Salon is not recorded, but it was Houdon's custom to show a plaster bust, then execute marble versions that were commissioned based on the plaster.

Houdon depicted Cagliostro as a heavy-set middle-aged man, in an almost half-length format, with his arms defined separately from his body and cut several inches above the elbow. Following the eighteenth-century French convention for portraits of artists, scientists, and men of letters, his collar is open. Most striking is the pose of the head, which turns up to the sitter's left, the eyes focused in the distance with a look of otherworldly inspiration. The lips are parted, and the teeth are visible. Cagliostro does not wear a wig. His head is bald on the top, but his hair is very long on the sides, where it is rolled over his ears and gathered in a bow at the nape of his neck, with loose curls falling over the collar of his coat.

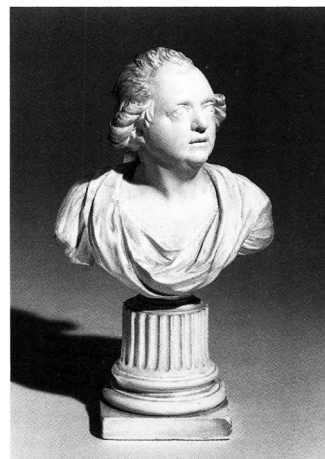
The pose used by Houdon is similar to that which appeared in a print of Cagliostro made in Strasbourg in 1781 when the Italian healer first met the cardinal de Rohan (fig. 1), a work with which Houdon was doubtless familiar. As a means of spreading his fame and satisfying admirers, Cagliostro had distributed images of himself from about 1780 on, in the form of prints, decorative objects such as fans and snuff boxes, and small sculptures.<sup>3</sup> A small plaster bust of Cagliostro wearing a Roman toga, in the Historisches Museum, Basel (fig. 2),<sup>4</sup> may be one of these propaganda pieces. Houdon's bust is of a type he employed to depict the inspired artist, seen a decade earlier in his bust of Gluck (cat. 10). The sculptor has succeeded in

representing the corpulence and physical idiosyncrasies of the sitter—an extraordinarily good likeness, according to contemporary accounts—with an expression of lively intelligence, wiliness, and spiritual preoccupation.

The period during which Houdon could have executed the two marble busts dated 1786 was also very short. He did not return from the United States until 25 December 1785. The two busts must therefore have been done following his return—and probably before 31 May, when the sitter was acquitted of any wrongdoing in the affair of the queen's necklace and released from prison. Welcomed by throngs of well-wishers, Cagliostro was forced by order of the king to leave the country almost immediately, and he never returned to France, dying in a prison in Italy in 1795.

Eighteenth-century documents indicate that Houdon did at least two marble busts of Cagliostro, but it is not clear which of these, if either, is identical with the present bust. In 1785 Ramond de Carbonnières, a close friend and advisor to the cardinal de Rohan and assistant to Cagliostro from 1781 to 1786, wrote that Cagliostro had a bust of himself by Houdon in his house in Paris and that it was destined for a Masonic temple in Lyons, the Loge de la Sagesse Triomphante.<sup>5</sup> It is often said in the literature that this bust is now in the Musée Granet, Aix-en-Provence. A marble bust of Cagliostro, presumably by Houdon, is mentioned as belonging to Jacques Sarasin, the silk merchant in Basel who was one of Cagliostro's most ardent defenders. The bust is described by a young German cleric on 28 November 1786 as being displayed in an oval boudoir of the first floor of Sarasin's magnificent house overlooking the Rhine.<sup>6</sup>

ANNE L. POULET



2. Attributed to "Ja... de Viller," Bust of Cagliostro, ca. 1781, biscuit porcelain, Historisches Museum, Basel.



Back view of cat. 14

PROVENANCE

Possibly identical with bust sold in Paris, [Galerie Georges Petit], 22–24 Nov. 1826, no. 208, as “Un Buste en marbre de Cagliostro par M. Houdon.” More recent history: Collection of Richard Seymour Conway, fourth marquis of Hertford (1800–1870), said to have been acquired in Paris ca. 1860; by inheritance to his illegitimate son, Sir Richard Wallace (1818–1890), at 2 rue Laffite, Paris; by inheritance to his wife, Lady Wallace (1819–1897); by inheritance to Sir John Murray Scott (1847–1912); by inheritance to Josephine Victoria Sackville-West, Lady Sackville (1864–1936), who sold it to Jacques Seligmann, Paris, in 1914 (stock no. 13273; JPGM archives, no. 89.P.7); looted by the Germans from Seligmann in early 1940s; recovered by Seligmann by 8 Feb. 1947; Samuel H. Kress Collection, New York (inv. K1907), 1952.

EXHIBITIONS

*L'Art au XVIIIe siècle* [exh. cat., Galerie Georges Petit] (Paris, 1883–1884), 78, no. 250; possibly *Catalogue de l'exposition de l'art français sous Louis XIV et sous Louis XV* [exh. cat., Ecole des beaux-arts, Hôtel de Chimay] (Paris, 1888), 37, no. 77; Paris 1894, no. 212; Paris 1908, no. 131; London 1932, 464, no. 1005; Washington 1976, 144–145, 370, no. 228.

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Montaignon and Duplessis 1855, 263; Charles Yriarte, “Le Buste de Cagliostro,” *La Chronique des arts et de la curiosité*, no. 32 (20 Oct. 1888), 252–253; Jean Thorel, “L'Exposition de Marie-Antoinette et son temps,” *GBA*, 3rd ser., 11 (1894), 62; Dilke 1900, 137; Charles Yriarte, “Mémoires de Bagatelle,” *Revue de Paris*, no. 18 (15 Sept. 1903), 48; Gonse 1904, 24–26; Brière and Vitry 1908, 173–175, no. 131; Vitry 1908a, 26, 28, ill. on cover; Vitry 1908c, 26; Frantz Funck-Bretano, *L’Affaire du Collier d’après de nouveaux documents* (Paris, 1910), 95–96, 101–102, ill. p. 84; Lami 1910–1911, 1:428; Brière 1913, 357–361; Giacometti 1918–1919, 2:97–98; Jean-Louis Vaudoyer, “Les Houdons d’Aix,” *L’Art et les artistes*, n.s. 10 (1925), 113–115;

Giacometti 1929, 1:199, ill. opp. p. 128; 2:25–27; *Commemorative Catalogue of the Exhibition of French Art, 1200–1900*, Royal Academy of Arts, London, January–March, 1932 (Oxford, 1933), 214–215, cat. 1017; Haavard Rostrup, *J.-A. Houdon (1741–1828)* (Copenhagen, 1942), 30–31; Cecil 1950, 172 n. 25, figs. 19, 24; R.F.C., “Noti e commenti. Il quindicesimo anniversario della National Gallery de Washington,” *Emporium* 124, no. 740 (Aug. 1956), 71; *Paintings and Sculpture from the Kress Collection* (National Gallery of Art, Washington, 1956), 18, 236–237, cat. 95, ill.; Alfred R. Weber, “Cagliostro in den Augen seiner Zeitgenossen” in *Basler Jahrbuch*, 1959 (Basel, 1960), 166–167, 170; *Paintings and Sculpture from the Samuel H. Kress Collection* (National Gallery of Art, Washington, 1959), 457, ill.; Germain Seligman, *Merchants of Art, 1880–1960: Eighty Years of Professional Collecting* (New York, 1961), 273; Charles Seymour Jr., *Art Treasures for America: An Anthology of Paintings and Sculptures in the Samuel H. Kress Collection* (London, 1961), 192–193, figs. 182, 183; Malcolm Vaughn, “Mr. Kress and the American People,” *The Connoisseur* 148, no. 598 (Dec. 1961), 287, ill.; Réau 1964, 1:104–105, 150; 344–347; 2:27–28, no. 95; Cecil 1965, 455–456, fig. 11; Jean Montague Massengale, “A Franklin by Houdon Rediscovered,” *Marsyas* 12 (1964–1965), 6–9, fig. 12; Arnason 1975, 25, 82, 88 n. 202, 116, fig. 166, pl. 110; Ulrich Middeldorf, *Sculptures from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: European Schools, Fourteenth–Nineteenth Century* (London, 1976), 111–112, figs. 188, 189; NGA cat. 1994, 109, ill.

RELATED WORKS

Houdon submitted a portrait of Cagliostro to the Salon of 1785 (medium not recorded). The bust was withdrawn 24 August after Cagliostro was arrested on 22 August for his alleged role in the affair of the diamond necklace. During Cagliostro’s interrogation in the Bastille on 24 August, he stated that the cardinal de Rohan had in his house two busts and one engraving of Cagliostro (AN, F74459, *Affaire du Collier*: “Interrogé si ses relations avec M. le cardinal ne lui témoignait pas les plus grandes déférences et les plus grands égards A répondu que oui, que même le cardinal a placé deux de ses bustes et sa gravure dans son appartement”). In a letter from London, 20 June 1786, Cagliostro complained of being persecuted by the baron de Breteuil and observed: “Mais avois-je présenté cette requête, lorsque, voyant mon buste chez le Cardinal [de Rohan], il [Breteuil] dit, avec colère entre les dents, ‘on voit partout cette figure, il faut que cela finisse, cela finera!’” (StAB, 212 F11, 33, Jacob Sarasins Briefwechtel, vol. 33, no. 15). If one or both of these busts was by Houdon, as is probable, the material was most likely plaster, as both the present marble bust and the one in the Musée Granet in Aix-en-Provence are dated 1786.

Plasters

Posthumous sale of contents of Houdon’s studio, Paris, 15–17 Dec. 1828, 17, no. 31: “Plâtre peint, Buste de Joseph Balsamo, dit Cagliostro, mort au château de Saint-Léon en 1795” (16 francs) (see Réau 1964, 1:118, 119); probably the terracotta-colored bust that appears in the two paintings by Boilly of Houdon’s studio (cat. 66).

Collection of Raymond Storelli, great-grandson of Jean-Charles Thilorier, the Parlement lawyer who defended Cagliostro in the necklace trial (see Yriarte 1888, 252–253; and *Le Comte de Cagliostro. Le Prince noir* [exh. cat., Les Baux de Provence, 1989], 4–5) and who received his bust as a gift, according to a letter of 18 June 1888 from André Storelli to Richard Wallace (WCA, file 25K). Two photographs of the Storelli bust in the WCA (file 25K) show Cagliostro’s coat with five large buttons, a feature not found on any other known version of the bust.

Los Angeles County Museum of Art (inv. 62.18); white plaster; H. 80 cm; sale Galerie Georges Petit, Paris, 4–5 Mar. 1921, 60, no. 167 (47,000 francs).

#### Marble

Musée Granet, Aix-en-Provence (inv. 860.I.259S); white marble with gray veins and inclusions; H. 65.1 cm (with base: 81 cm), W. 58 cm; inscribed: “houdon / f 1786”; from collection of Bourguignon de Fabregoules as a bust of Italian musician Paësiello. See L. de Montigny, “Au Louvre et au Musée d’Aix-en-Provence: Une double rectification,” *Revue historique de Provence*, no. 6 (June 1901), 362–363; Gonse 1904, 24–25, ill.; Brière 1913, 357–360, ill. opp. p. 358; Vaudoyer 1925, 113–115; Louis Gillet, “Visites aux musées de Provence,” *La Revue des deux mondes* 5 (15 Sept. 1932), 324–325.

#### Bronzes

Zarine sale, Paris, 5 Dec. 1917, no. 45: “Petit buste de Cagliostro. Bronze patiné d’après Houdon. Socle formé par un fût de colonne en marbre bleu turquin.”

Plaquette based on the bust by Houdon, published in Leo Planiscig, *Die Estensische Kunstsammlung*, vol. 1, *Skulpturen und Plastiken des Mittelalters und der Renaissance* (Vienna, 1919), 198, no. 438, pl. 31.

#### Print

Engraving by Parisot after painting by Bondeville; inscribed: “Peint par Bondeville, d’après le buste de M. Houdon et gravé par Parisot,” BNEst.

Signature on cat. 14



1. For Cagliostro's biography see Constantin Photiades, *Les Vies du comte de Cagliostro* (Paris, 1932).

2. See S. P. Hardy, “Mes loisirs ou journal des événements tels qu'ils parviennent à ma connaissance. Commencé le vingt et un septembre 1784” (BN, F 6685, G:168). For an account of the affair of the diamond necklace see Funck-Brentano 1910.

3. These portraits are mentioned in two letters written to Jacques Sarasin in Basel by Rey de Morande from Bordeaux on behalf of Cagliostro (StAB, 212.F11, 33, no. 4). On 10 Jan. 1784: “plusieurs libraires m'ont assuré avoir demandé à Strasbourg des Estampes de

notre Maître, mais il n'en a pas encore paru: Je suis en conséquence persuadé que vous feriez grand plaisir à notre Maître de lui en envoyer deux douzaines pour distribution aux gens qui l'aiment, car ce n'est qu'après beaucoup de sollicitations que je suis parvenu à obtenir une de celles qu'il avait apporté.” On 17 Jan. 1784: “je viens vous renouveler de sa part la prière que je vous ai déjà faite ci devant, de lui envoyer une douzaine, ou une douzaine et demi de ces mêmes gravures, & d'y joindre si cela vous est possible Deux de ses petits bustes, en lui adressant le tout en droiture par la plus prompte voie.”

4. See Burkard von Roda et al., *Le Musée historique de Bâle* (Basel, 1994), 117, no. 172.

5. See Henri Béraldi, *Le Passé du Pyrénéisme. Ramond de Carbonnières, le cardinal de Rohan, Cagliostro* (Paris, 1911–1920), 4:306. See also *Vie de Joseph Balsamo connu sous le nom de comte de Cagliostro* [sic]... (Paris and Strasbourg, 1791), 43, 165; and Antoine Péricaud, *Séjour de Cagliostro à Lyon, de 1784 à 1785* (Lyons, 1832), 8.

6. Christian Gottlieb Schmidt, *Von der Schweiz. Journal meiner Reises vom 5. Julius 1786 bis den 7. August 1787*, ed. Theodor and Hanni Salfinger (Bern, 1985), 195, 365 n. 768. See also *Oeuvres de J. M. Ph. Roland, femme de l'ex-ministre de l'intérieur* (Paris, [1799–1800]), 3:367; and Weber 1960, 166–167, 170.

## + Alexandre Brongniart (1770–1847)

15–16

1777

Terracotta on gray marble base

H. 36.4 cm (with base: 44.9 cm), W. 26.4 cm, D. 24 cm

Inscribed on center back support: *Alexandre / Brongniart / par Houdon*

Musée du Louvre, Paris, département des sculptures (inv. RF 1280)

## + Louise Brongniart (1772–1845)

Dated 1777

Terracotta on gray marble base

H. 34.5 cm (with base: 46 cm), W. 24.2 cm, D. 18.0 cm

Inscribed at top of center back support: *houdon / 1777...*

Musée du Louvre, Paris, département des sculptures (inv. RF 1197).

In the Salon catalogue of 1777 the mention of “two other portraits of M. Brognard’s children” (no. 246) under “Marble Busts” follows several busts in marble but precedes one in terracotta, which makes the listing ambiguous. Since the Paris exhibition of 1928, art historians have considered a marble bust of Louise Brongniart that then belonged to the dealer G. Franck to be the one shown at the Salon of 1777 (but missing its male counterpart). Giacometti wrote a “major report” appraising the work, and Réau was enthusiastic.<sup>1</sup> This marble, without any reliable provenance,<sup>2</sup> was purchased in 1985 by the J. Paul Getty Museum. Its quality is a matter of discussion today; the Brongniart children were very popular in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and were abundantly reproduced,<sup>3</sup> sometimes with fanciful variations in the clothing (see Related Works). The very high quality of the Louvre busts, their irreproachable provenance through direct descendants of the family, and the fact that the 1777 Salon catalogue does not rule out the hypothesis that the pieces exhibited were terracottas, all support the probability that these are Houdon’s original works. To this author’s knowledge, and according to currently identified documents, there is no proof that autograph marble busts ever existed.

Alexandre and Louise were the children of architect Alexandre-Théodore Brongniart, a friend and collaborator of Clodion<sup>4</sup> and acquaintance of Hubert Robert. Elisabeth Vigée-Lebrun, a close family friend, painted portraits of Alexandre and Louise in 1778 and did one of their sister Emilie in 1788 (born in 1780).<sup>5</sup> It is not known why Houdon was chosen to sculpt the children’s portraits. Might he have been introduced to Brongniart by Clodion, a fellow student of Houdon’s in Rome? The architect did not have any other works by Houdon in his collection, if we are to believe the catalogue of his posthumous sale, whereas he did collect Clodion terracottas in particular.<sup>6</sup>

By 1776–1777 Houdon was already famous, as proven by the impressive and diverse list of his submissions to the Salon. He had displayed an interest in portraying children as early as his student days in Italy, showing a marble head of a child at his first Salon in 1769 that elicited praise.<sup>7</sup> In 1774 he signed and dated a superb portrait of a child in terracotta that may depict the son of the vicomte de Noailles (fig. 1).<sup>8</sup> The rounded truncation and absence of clothing anticipated the presentation of Louise Brongniart three years later. In 1779 the sculptor also exhibited, at the Société des beaux-arts in Montpellier, a “head of a small child” and “another head of a child” (nos. 184–185).<sup>9</sup>







1. Houdon, Portrait, Presumed to Be the Son of the Vicomte de Noailles, 1774, terracotta, Private Collection.



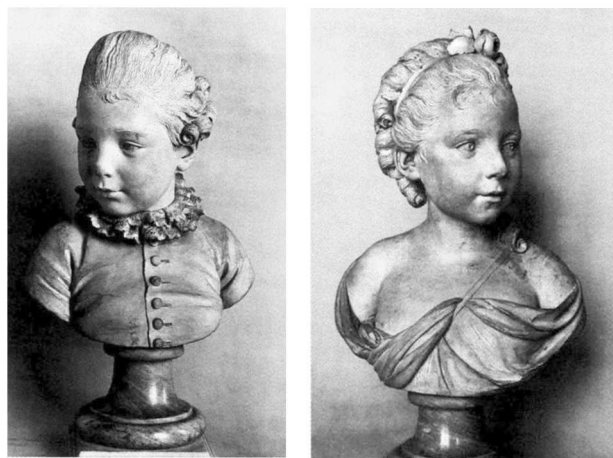
With all these figures, Houdon was following the interest in childhood then in vogue. Louis-Claude Vassé had done a few marvelous portraits that are believed to represent his children.<sup>10</sup> Other youthful busts were executed prior to Houdon's by Jean-Baptiste II Lemoyne<sup>11</sup> and especially Augustin Pajou. Of the latter, *Little Boy* and *Little Girl* (figs. 2–3), both dated 1772, were dubiously identified as representing the children of architect Pierre-Louis Moreau (known as Moreau-Desproux), an old friend of Pajou.<sup>12</sup> There might be an interesting parallel in this respect with the Brongniart progeny.

Alexandre, a future geologist and a director of the Manufacture de Sèvres, was depicted at age seven. His sister Louise, the future Mme Naval de Saint-Aubin and later marquise Picot de Dampierre, was five at the time. The busts were done with a charming delicacy and sensitivity: "The Florentines of the Quattrocento have done nothing more exquisite."<sup>13</sup> The two works were conceived as a study in contrasts. Alexandre is dressed, Louise is not (an idea reversed in Pajou's two busts). He has his lips closed, while she has hers slightly open. His loose wisps of hair are depicted whimsically—a freedom contradicted by his sensible outfit,<sup>14</sup> though one of its buttons is undone—whereas her hair is carefully coiffed, with a bun held in place by a headband topped with a knot. As was his custom, Houdon incised several lines on the forehead and temples to define a few strands of hair. The backs of the sculptures are hollowed out, leaving a central post for reinforcement, and fine regular scoring of the clay finishes the presentation.<sup>15</sup>

There is a clear distinction in the treatment of Alexandre's and Louise's eyes, no doubt to represent the difference in their

colors.<sup>16</sup> For Alexandre, the iris is not carved but rendered with two concentric rows of radiating incisions to give the impression of light-colored eyes. The pupil is defined by a small depression, with a small element in relief along the edge to catch the light. Louise's irises, in contrast, are carved into a deep bowl, with the pupil etched at the bottom. When Jean-Louis Couasnon did his bust of Emilie Brongniart in 1784 (fig. 4),<sup>17</sup> he reproduced the bowl-shaped iris with its radiating incisions and the deeply carved pupil, but in other ways his style departed from Houdon's: the hair is as stiff as straw and the dress has complicated lines. Houdon was unequalled in his busts of the Brongniart children, and he surpassed himself only in the portraits of his own children (see cat. 18).

GUILHEM SCHERF



2–3. Augustin Pajou, *Little Boy and Little Girl*, 1772, terracotta, Private Collection.



4. Jean-Louis Couasnon, Emilie Brongniart, 1788, terracotta, Musée du Louvre, Paris.

#### PROVENANCE

Both busts mentioned on Houdon's autograph list (ca. 1784) under the year 1777: "les bustes d'enfants de Mr Brognard"; collection of Alexandre-Théodore Brongniart (1739–1813), father of the sitters; though not listed in his posthumous inventory (AN, Min. Cent., XVIII, 1061, 22 June 1813), it would be unusual for family portraits to be included in such a document; by inheritance to his descendants; acquired by the museum in 1898 (*Louise*) and 1900 (*Alexandre*) from Edouard Brongniart, honorary inspector at the schools of design, Paris.

#### EXHIBITIONS

Both busts possibly listed in Salon cat. 1777, no. 246 (see text above); *Alexandre-Théodore Brongniart 1739–1813. Architecture et décor* [exh. cat., Musée Carnavalet] (Paris, 1986), nos. 2–3, ill.

#### REFERENCES

Délerot et Legrelle 1857, 183; André Michel, "Les Acquisitions du département de la sculpture du moyen âge, de la renaissance et des temps modernes au musée du Louvre," *GBA* (May 1903), 387–388, ill.; Vitry 1907b, 200, no. 43; Giacometti 1929, 1:174 (ill. of *Louise*), 2:21–22 (ill. of *Alexandre*); Louis de Launay, *Une grande famille de savants. Les Brongniart* (Paris, 1940), 23, 49, ill. facing pp. 52 and 66; Réau 1964, 1:412–413, 2:27, no. 93, pls. XLIII (92A) and XLIV (93A); Arnason 1975, 41, 110 n. 86, pls. 36, 37 (details); Louvre cat. 1998, 424–425, ill.

#### RELATED WORKS

Numerous versions in terracotta, marble, or bronze, with various dates and dimensions.

#### + Alexandre and Louise +

##### Marbles

National Gallery of Art, Washington (inv. 1942.9.123–124); *Alexandre*, H. 39.2 cm, W. 28.7 cm, D. 19 cm; inscribed on back edge of truncation: "HOUDON, F. AN. 1777"; *Louise*, H. 37.7 cm, W. 25.3 cm, D. 19.5 cm; Baron

Jérôme Pichon (nephew of the sitters); Joseph Bardac collection; Jacques Seligmann; Joseph Widener collection, Philadelphia; gift to the museum in 1942. See Réau 1964, 2:27, nos. 92–93, pls. XLIII (92B) and XLV (93E); Arnason 1975, 110 n. 86, figs. 93, 94; NGA cat. 1994, 109, ill. These marbles are judged "a bit weak" in Gimpel 1963, 23.

##### Terracottas

National Gallery of Art, Washington (inv. 1942.9.125–126); Imitator of Houdon, *Alexandre*, H. 37.7 cm; *Louise*, H. 35.5 cm; Joseph Bardac collection; acquired in 1917 by the dealer René Gimpel, who sold them to Joseph Widener for \$32,000 (see NGA cat. 1994, 111, ill.). Gimpel 1963, 23, says: "At one time, these terracottas passed for plasters; there exist two that are more beautiful at the Louvre."

##### Bronzes

Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco; H. 43 cm; signed "houdon" (Worcester 1964, 33–35, ill.); Arnason 1975, 110 n. 86, recognizes the pair as a late edition, like the pair in The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg. Editions by the Susse foundry, Thiébaud Frères. See Berman 1974–1977, 2:409, no. 1546, ill. of *Louise*.

##### Biscuit porcelains

See *Les Oeuvres de la Manufacture nationale de Sèvres*, n.d. [1933], nos. 121, 122, pl. 54, as models done under the first Empire.



Back view of cat. 15

✦ Alexandre ✦

Plaster

Formerly Pierre Lebaudy collection; H. 50 cm; *cachet de l'atelier*; acquired in comte de la Ferrière sale, 2–4 Dec. 1912, no. 43, ill.; see Giacometti 1929, 2:21.

✦ Louise ✦

Plaster

Formerly Galerie Jacques Bacri, Paris, H. 45 cm; see Réau 1964, 2:27, no. 93, pl. XLIV (93B): “plâtre original.”

Marble

J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles (inv. 85.SA.220); H. 46 cm; inscribed on back: “houdon f.”; supposedly from a famous, though unspecified, private collection in Poland (Vitry 1928b, 62; Réau 1928b, 323); G. Franck collection, Paris (Paris 1928, no. 8 bis; Vitry 1928a, ill. after p. 20; Réau 1928b, 351–352, ill.; Giacometti 1929, 2:22); Henri de Rothschild collection (Réau 1964, 2:27, no. 93, pl. XLV [93D]); Sotheby's, Monte Carlo, 5–6 Feb. 1978, no. 112; art market; acquired by Getty museum in 1985 (Fusco 1997, 29, ill.).

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (inv. 14.40.670); with one scarf on head and another around neck; inscribed: “F[ait] P[ar] Houdon 1779” (an inscription, to this author's knowledge, without parallel elsewhere); Joseph Bardac collection, Paris; Benjamin Altman collection, New York; at the Metropolitan since 1913. See Giacometti 1929, 2:30, ill.; Réau 1964, 2:27, no. 93, pl. XLV (93F); Arnason 1975, 41, pl. 38 (detail).



Back view of cat. 16

1. Giacometti 1929, 2:22; Réau 1928b, 352: “one of the happiest discoveries of the exhibition.”

2. Réau's “descendant d'une grande famille polonaise” is obviously very vague.

3. According to a note from Marcel Aubert in the Louvre's files, probably dating from the acquisition of the terracottas, Mme Brongniart was authorized to commission copies of *Louise* (and surely of *Alexandre*), but not to have casts done.

4. See Paris 1986; and Paris 1992.

5. See Vigée-Lebrun 1984, 2:96; also 337, where she mentions the first two paintings under the year 1778: “2. Les enfants de Brongniard.” The third is in the Bowes Museum, Barnard Castle; see Joseph Baillio, *Elisabeth Louise Vigée Le Brun 1755–1842* [exh. cat., Kimbell Art Museum] (Fort Worth, 1982), 35, fig. 2.

6. Paris sale, 22 Mar. 1792.

7. Jean-Claude Pingeron, *Réflexions sur quelques morceaux de peinture et de sculpture, exposés au Sallon du Louvre...* (Paris, 1769), 27 (MacWilliam 1991, 205): “a little head in white marble... representing a young child, which, by its sensitivity and its expression, vies with Antiquity for the most beautiful in this genre.”

8. No doubt the “Buste en terre d'un enfant de M. le vicomte de Noyalles” mentioned on Houdon's autograph list of 1784 (no year given; see Vitry 1907b, 198, no. 27); see also *Burlington Magazine* (Dec. 1955), pl. XXV.

9. Stein 1913, 402.

10. See Black 1994, nos. 2a, 3a, 4a, and 5b, ill.

11. See *Little Girl with Scarf*, plaster, 1769; in Louvre cat. 1998, 466, ill. Among painters, Drouais may have been the one most interested in children's portraits.

12. See Henri Stein, *Augustin Pajou* (Paris, 1912), 30–31, ill.; and Paris and New York 1997–1998, 224–225, 384, ill.

13. Michel 1903, 388.

14. The neat costume “of a serious child, attentive, deliberately a little austere, who must have been the Alexandre of that time” (Launay 1940, 49).

15. The rounded cut at the back of Alexandre's head indicates that the head was hollowed before firing; the joint became very apparent, presumably during firing. The dorsal reinforcements of the two busts were added in plaster after firing, the one on the portrait of Louise more recently.

16. See Haavard Rostrup, *Grandeurs et misères de Jean-Antoine Houdon* (Paris, 1973), 17. It is obvious that Houdon wanted to give the impression of light and dark eyes. In a posthumous painting of Alexandre (Manufacture de Sèvres), Emile Wattier, who knew the sitter, portrayed him with light, grayish green eyes (the author thanks Tamara Préaud for this detail).

17. See Michèle Beaulieu, “Le Buste d'Emilie Brongniart par J. L. Couasnon,” *Revue du Louvre*, no. 2 (1974); and Louvre cat. 1998, 159, ill.

## + Mme Houdon, née Marie-Ange-Cécile Langlois (1765–1823)

Probably 1786

Plaster on plaster base

H. 48.5 cm (with base: 61.5 cm), W. 39.5 cm, D. 26.7 cm

Musée du Louvre, Paris, département des sculptures (inv. RF 1391)

Houdon may have met Marie-Ange-Cécile Langlois, his future wife, through Mme His, née Marie-Anne De Vatre, who was the bride's witness at the couple's prenuptial agreement on 12 June 1786.<sup>1</sup> Mlle De Vatre was a childhood friend of Mlle Langlois, and Houdon had done a bust of her in 1774.<sup>2</sup> She married a banker, François Pierre His, who had an office and a home in Paris.

Marie-Ange was born in Paris, in the parish of Saint-Sulpice.<sup>3</sup> She was the daughter of Jean Langlois, an "employee in the service of the king," and married Houdon on 1 July 1786 in Saint-Philippe-du-Roule, soon after his return from America in January 1786.<sup>4</sup> She was an Anglophile, and her adoptive mother, the comtesse de Villegagnon, married Thomas Walpole, Horace Walpole's cousin, in 1787 (it was her second marriage).<sup>5</sup> Marie-Ange had some experience as a translator<sup>6</sup> and regularly handled her husband's correspondence and accounts, carefully looking after his interests.

At the Salon of 1787 Houdon exhibited a "Head of young girl. In plaster" (no. 258), which Paul Vitry in 1906 identified as the smiling young wife of the sculptor, represented in the superb plaster at the Musée du Louvre, which had belonged to the family. The work was praised, but with reservations, by a

critic at the Salon: "His head of a young girl rivals the most graceful works of antiquity. The proportions of the features; the soft, supple contours; the elasticity of the flesh; the lively, sweet, naïve physiognomy are the admiration of connoisseurs and astonish even the ignorant. Dazzling whiteness, grace, voluptuousness, ease of muscular movement: that is what one notices in the neck and head. The rest, however, is not irreproachable. It is annoying that the artist, fatigued by the masterpiece of the head, placed the breasts a little too low. . . . Perhaps that's the fault of the sitter."<sup>7</sup> There are few portraits of Mme Houdon, but this bust may be compared to a miniature painted about 1792 (fig. 1),<sup>8</sup> in which one recognizes the same abundant hair, regular features, and large eyes, but assuredly not the blank expression.

The Louvre bust is an original plaster, cast in a waste mold made from the terracotta bust (which was destroyed in the process of removing the mold); the single seam line of the mold is clearly visible on the shoulders and the top of the head. The terracotta in the Frick collection in Pittsburgh (fig. 2) is a cast made from the Louvre plaster (when it was still owned by the Houdon family), hence the difference in the dimensions, which resulted from shrinkage of the clay during firing.<sup>9</sup> Florence





1. Louis Lié Périn-Salbreux, Mme Houdon, ca. 1792, miniature on ivory, Musée du Louvre, Paris.

Ingersoll-Smouse has postulated that “the terracotta is possibly the original work and that Houdon executed the plaster bust now in the Louvre from it.”<sup>10</sup> But that piece cannot be the clay model, destroyed during the production of the original plaster; and examination reveals that it is clearly a terracotta cast in a mold.

A label on a version of the bust sold in Paris in 1928 (see Related Works) indicates that two casts were made from the Louvre plaster around 1872 with the permission of its owner, Mme Sand, Claudine Houdon’s granddaughter. This operation seems to have left indelible traces on the work: yellowish stains that could be remnants of separation agents used to remove the cast. Following the aftercastings, the work was covered probably with a coat of paint. Gaston Brière described the state of the surface about 1905: “dirty patina, a layer of oil clogging the contours, muddy and grayish, modern.”<sup>11</sup> According to Vitry, the plaster had received “a few layers of paint intended to revive its brilliance, which had coated it in a peculiar manner. Prior to its arrival at the museum, it was cleaned and the paint layers removed, virtually down to the raw plaster, a treatment that some considered rather radical.”<sup>12</sup> But the bust had been irremediably spoiled; in a beautiful photograph published in 1911 one can clearly make out the stains on the upper torso.<sup>13</sup> In 1959 an attempt was made to improve the bust’s appearance: the plaster was treated with bisulfate of soda, and some marks removed with a tool; but brown stains persisted. Since then, care has been taken not to touch the work, which has suffered so much from the handling of its admirers.

Marie-Ange-Cécile is depicted here with a breezy, disordered hairstyle in a fanciful arrangement (especially in the back). Her hair is pulled up into a bun by a headband, while rows of beads

break free from stray wisps of hair. As was his habit, Houdon carved fine lines on the forehead and temples to indicate a few strands of hair (he evokes the general composition of the hairstyle in *Sabine Houdon at Age Four*; see fig. 3). The smile is broad, with a clearly visible row of teeth. The iris is carved into the shape of a bowl to create a vibrant gaze. Her dimples and the curves at the top part of her breasts add to the figure’s irresistible charm. The back was hollowed out, then filled with plaster at an unknown date. There is no inscription, as this work truly belongs to the artist’s private, intimate sphere.

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2. Houdon, Mme Houdon, 1787, terracotta, Frick Art Museum, Pittsburgh.



3. Houdon, Sabine Houdon at Age Four, 1791, plaster, Musée du Louvre, Paris.





Back view of cat. 17

#### PROVENANCE

Probably executed before 1 July 1786, the date of Houdon's marriage to the sitter. Remained in the sculptor's home, then with his descendants: daughter Claudine Houdon (Mme Désiré Raoul-Rochette); her daughter Joséphine (wife of Luigi Calamatta); her daughter Mme Maurice Sand; her daughters. Acquired from M. Lemaire, 1905.

#### EXHIBITIONS

Possibly Paris, Salon of 1787, no. 258: "Tête de jeune fille. En plâtre."

#### REFERENCES

Vitry 1906, 341–346, ill.; Vitry 1914; Vitry 1928a, ill. 15; Giacometti 1929, 1:42, ill., 2:74–75; Frick 1947; Réau 1950, 178; Réau 1964, 1:417–418, 2:33, no. 135,

pl. 64; Arnason 1975, 84, fig. 172, pl. III; Louvre cat. 1998, 425, ill.; Sauerländer 2002, 50–53, fig. 24.

#### RELATED WORKS

##### *Terracotta?*

Sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 25–26 Oct. 1928, no. 142: "Buste de femme en terre cuite [sic], sur piédouche en marbre, porte l'étiquette avec l'inscription suivante: Buste d'après Houdon représentant Madame Houdon, une des deux épreuves tirées vers 1872 (sur le plâtre qui est au Louvre) par Madame Sand, belle-fille de George Sand et petite-fille de Houdon"; possibly plaster painted terracotta color.

##### *Plasters*

Two plasters are cited in Réau 1964, 2:33: one formerly in the Edmond Courty collection, Châtillon-sous-Bagneux (no. 135A, pl. LXV); the other painted a terracotta color, with *cachet de l'atelier* (?), from the Galerie Souffrice, Paris, presumably the one sold at the Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 27–28 Feb. 1986, no. 245, ill.; then Sotheby's, New York (H. 58 cm), 31 May 1990, no. 177, ill.

##### **Variant with rounded truncation**

Frick Art Museum, Pittsburgh (1973.3) (fig. 2); terracotta; H. 38 cm (without base); from Sabine Houdon; to her son Edouard Pineu-Duval; then his son Richard, who never married; passed on to his cousin Antoine Perron; acquired by Duveen Brothers; sold to J. Pierpont Morgan, New York (Vitry 1914, 218–223, fig. 1); acquired by Helen Clay Frick in 1937 (Frick 1947, fig. 1).

##### **Round relief**

Musée du Petit Palais, Paris, as gift of Joseph Duveen (Réau 1964, 1:446, 2:57, no. 275, pl. CXL1); round medallion with a double female portrait in profile; terracotta; diam. 43 cm; inscribed along left edge: "houdon f. / an 7"; Doucet sale, 1912, no. 115, ill. The work, of modest quality, has been thought to represent Mme Houdon and thirteen-year-old Sabine, but this identification—particularly compared with the profile painted by Boilly in his 1804 version of *Houdon in His Studio* (see cat. 66, fig. 1)—and the style of the relief are hardly convincing.

1. BMV, F 945(1), no. 3; Frick 1947, 208.

2. The date of the marble (Private Collection); see Réau 1964, 2:33, no. 131, pl. LXII. A beautiful plaster, recently restored, is at the Musée des arts décoratifs, Paris.

3. BMV, F 945(2), nos. 4 and 5; Frick 1947, 207.

4. BMV, F 945(1), no. 18.

5. Her mother, Françoise Cécile Lorteau, died a month after giving birth to Marie-Ange, whose will of 9 Mar. 1815 refers to Mme Walpole as "sole source of my fortune and our mother by her tenderness, her care, and her steadfast kindnesses" (Frick 1947, 212).

6. She translated, most notably, Mme Dymmer's *Belmour* for a French edition in 1804.

7. *Tarare au Sallon de peinture* (Deloynes XV, no. 377; MacWilliam 1991, 444).

8. Acquired by the Louvre from Henry Perron, the sculptor's great-grandson, in 1905; see Versailles 1928, no. 88; Paris 1928, no. 103; Giacometti 1929, 1:186, ill.; and Jean-Richard 1994, 280, no. 516, ill.

9. Vitry 1906, 345–346, describes this terracotta as "intended to preserve the memory of this familial image at the home of Houdon's elder daughter." The head is smaller, and the breast is cut higher.

10. Florence Ingersoll-Smouse, "Quelques documents et lettres relatifs au voyage (1785) et aux œuvres de Jean-Antoine Houdon aux Etats-Unis," *BSHAF* (1914), 293.

11. Handwritten note by Gaston Brière (files in the département des sculptures, Musée du Louvre).

12. Vitry 1906, 346.

13. Hart and Biddle 1911, 256.

## ✦ Antoinette-Claude, called Claudine Houdon (1790–1878)

Circa 1793

White marble on white marble base with black and gray veins

H. 24.7 cm (with base: 43 cm), W. 29.2 cm, D. 19.4 cm

Inscribed on back, under right shoulder: *houdon f.*

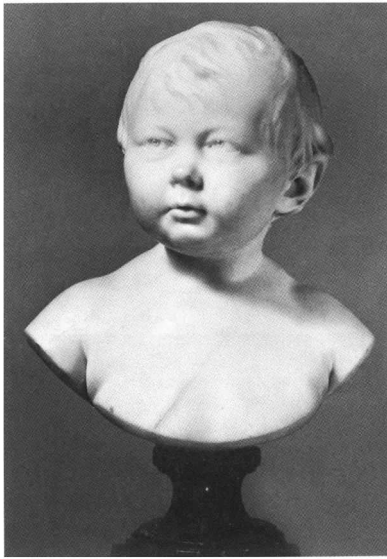
Worcester Art Museum, Worcester, Massachusetts, Museum Purchase, Stoddard Acquisition Fund (inv. 1964.17)

The Houdons had three daughters: Sabine, Anne-Ange, and Antoinette-Claude, called Claudine. Sabine was born 25 February 1787<sup>1</sup> and died 7 April 1836. She married Henry Jean Pineu-Duval, an interior ministry employee, in 1805<sup>2</sup> and had two children: their daughter married Auguste Perron (and a descendant sold a terracotta of Claudine in the early twentieth century); their son Edouard Duval had a son who never married. Anne-Ange, who was baptized 15 December 1788<sup>3</sup> and died 28 October 1843, married a doctor, Jean-Baptiste-Esprit Louyer de Villermay, in 1806.<sup>4</sup> Their only son, Eugène de Villermay, died childless, and his widow (née Berthe de Moréal), “having taken religious vows, appears to have dispersed what she possessed of Houdon’s inheritance among her own family.”<sup>5</sup> Claudine was born 29 October 1790<sup>6</sup> and died 17 April 1878. She married an archaeologist, Désiré Raoul-Rochette, in 1810<sup>7</sup> and was widowed in 1854. They had two daughters: Joséphine, who married an engraver, Luigi Calamatta (their daughter Marcelline married Maurice Sand, son of George Sand; their granddaughter Aurore Lauth-Sand donated a plaster bust of Claudine to the Musée Carnavalet); and Angéline, who married Paul Perrin (they had three children, including Raoul Perrin, whose death in 1910 preceded the Perrin-Houdon sale at the Hôtel

Drouot, Paris, on 18 May 1914, with, in particular, a terracotta of Claudine; he also had a plaster, purchased by Jacques Doucet).

No portrait explicitly identified as representing a member of the Houdon family is mentioned in the catalogues of the Salons except in 1791. “Head of young girl. In plaster” at the Salon of 1787 (no. 258) was probably a bust of Mme Houdon (cat. 17). “Head of child at ten months” at the Salon of 1789 (no. 246) was surely the small marble of Sabine, inscribed and dated “Sabinet Houdon 1788,” now at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (fig. 1).<sup>8</sup> The first catalogue of the Salon of 1791, which was withdrawn,<sup>9</sup> mentions a marble of “Sabine Houdon, belonging to M. Girardot [de Marigny]” (no. 227); this was the bust of Sabine at age four with a drapery covering her right shoulder, signed and dated “houdon f. 1791” (fig. 2).<sup>10</sup> It is probably this model that appears on the back shelf at the left in Houdon’s studio as painted by Boilly (cat. 66). Houdon also did an undraped version of Sabine at age four wearing a headband in a fanciful hairstyle; he used the same truncation as in her mother’s portrait (cat. 17, fig. 3).<sup>11</sup> The withdrawn catalogue for the Salon of 1791 (no. 234) lists a plaster of “Mlle Ange Houdon at fifteen months,”<sup>12</sup> one of three heads of children mentioned in the second edition of the catalogue (no. 484). At the Salon of





1. Houdon, Sabine Houdon at Ten Months of Age, 1788, marble, *The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.*



2. Houdon, Sabine Houdon at Age Four, 1791, marble, *Private Collection.*



3. Houdon, Anne-Ange Houdon at Fifteen Months of Age, 1791, marble, *Private Collection.*

1793 Houdon exhibited “a bust of a child in plaster” (no. 123), which was probably of Claudine. Finally, at the Salon of 1806, the sculptor showed a *Mlle H.* (no. 604), which has sometimes been identified as a portrait of Sabine as a young lady.<sup>13</sup>

Thus Houdon was particularly fond of sculpting the features of his three daughters.<sup>14</sup> He represented Sabine, the eldest, at different ages and in different formats (draped and undraped) but depicted Anne-Ange and Claudine according to a single type. The large number of versions of these portraits of his children, which one might expect to be restricted to the private sphere, is astonishing. Paul Vitry assumes that Houdon, urgently in need of money—which impelled him to sell part of his studio collection in 1795 when he moved—promoted the sale of images of his children while respecting their anonymity.<sup>15</sup> It should be noted that a significant number of the plasters have come from the sculptor’s descendants: the Perrons (Sabine’s progeny) and the Sands and Perrins (Claudine’s progeny), who, in particular, benefited from the early interruption of the Villermay branch stemming from Anne-Ange.

Several of these busts circulated in Paris in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when Houdon’s works were famous and available on the market. Although one must exercise caution regarding some of Houdon’s busts of children,<sup>16</sup> the marble of Claudine belonging to the Worcester Art Museum is an unquestioned masterpiece. The sitter is adorable—with fat cheeks, a frank gaze, and mussed hair—and is prettily enveloped

in drapery with deeply carved folds. She does not have her elder sister’s almond-shaped eyes, with their unforgettably sharp gaze, but has her own look and personality. Aside from this bust and the draped version of Sabine at age four, Houdon showed the girls undraped, with a rounded truncation like that of the portrait of their mother. A marble bust of Anne-Ange (known to this author only from a photograph) (fig. 3) seems to date from the same period as this portrait of Claudine: both reveal a tenderness in the modeling of the marble, which has been worked till it seems supple and suggests the translucency of flesh; both exemplify the sculptor’s sensitivity to the subtlest expressions; and, above all, both attest to Houdon’s love of life and of his children, which makes this gallery of portraits extraordinarily affecting.

#### GUILHEM SCHERF

#### PROVENANCE

Collection of Nils Erik Bergvall, Karlskrona, Sweden (in his family since 1850); Duveen Brothers, New York; acquired by the museum in 1964.

#### EXHIBITIONS

Worcester 1964, 109–114, ill.

#### REFERENCES

H. Harvard Arnason, “Claudine Houdon by Jean-Antoine Houdon,” *Worcester Art Museum: News Bulletin and Calendar* 30, no. 2 (Nov. 1964), 1–3, ill.; Arnason 1975, 85, fig. 176, pl. 115.



Back view of cat. 18

#### RELATED WORKS

Numerous copies. The list below is not exhaustive, and some busts, especially since the dispersion of works belonging to the artist's descendants, are impossible to identify with certainty (new restorations, different bases, and so on).

#### Terracottas

From Raoul Perrin, grandson of the sitter; H. (with base) 36.5 cm; his sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 18 May 1914, no. 1, ill. See Giacometti 1929, 2:82.

Probably in a private collection, Newport, RI; from Sabine Houdon Pineu-Duval; H. (with base) 35.5 cm; marble base; to her daughter Mme Perron; then her son Jean Perron; acquired by Duveen Brothers, which produced a booklet in London (n.d.): "A terra-cotta bust by Jean-Antoine Houdon 1741–1828. Portrait of his third daughter Antoinette Claude Houdon. From the collection of Monsieur A. Perrou [sic] of Le Mans, France"; Mrs. W. Douglas, New York. See Giacometti 1929, 2:81–82.

Formerly René Gimpel collection; see Giacometti 1929, 1:62, ill., 2:82.

Formerly M. de Saint-Pierre collection (Versailles 1928, no. 20, ill.; Paris 1928, no. 39); inscribed on back: "Houdon"; sale, Espace Tajan, Paris, 15 Dec. 1997, no. 133, ill.; sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 2 Mar. 1998, no. 330, ill.

#### Plasters

Musée Carnavalet, Paris (inv. S 3329); painted terracotta color; H. 40 cm, W. 27 cm, D. 17 cm; *cachet de l'atelier*; direct provenance from the sitter; bequest of Aurore Lauth-Sand, great-granddaughter of Claudine, 1923. See Paris 1928, under no. 40; Réau 1964, 1:419, 2:50, under no. 233; cover ill. for Montagu 1966.

From Raoul Perrin, grandson of Claudine; H. 39 cm; sale, Jacques Doucet collection, 6 June 1912, no. 114, ill.; acquired by Marius Paulme; Edouard Noetzelin collection. See Paris 1928, 47, no. 40, ill.

Frick Art Museum, Pittsburgh; *cachet de l'atelier*; possibly from Pierre Decourcelle collection sale, 1911, no. 192; purchased by Helen Frick through the art market.

Plasters dispersed in Paris 16 Dec. 1922, no. 230; 30 Mar. 1925, no. 34, ill. (R. Boulland collection); and 27 Dec. 1927, no. 6. Plaster from the Edmond Courty collection illustrated in Réau 1964, pl. CXXIX, no. 233B. Another from the Florence J. Gould collection appears in Black 1994, fig. 28.

#### Bronze

Bronzes of uncertain date are mentioned (for example, as leaving France on 16 Nov. 1988) in the Louvre's sculpture department files.

#### Boilly paintings

Is the bust of Claudine among the plasters depicted in Boilly's two paintings of *Houdon in His Studio* (cat. 66), on the right-hand shelf between the portraits of Pierre-Jean-Baptiste Gerbier and Sophie Arnould? The drapery is similar, but the subject appears older and the expression in the eyes seems different.



Signature on cat. 18

1. Réau 1950, 180. According to BMV, F 945(2), no. 17; and Frick 1947, 208, Sabine was baptized 6 Mar. 1787.

2. BMV, F 945(4), nos. 42–45.

3. BMV, F 945(2), no. 15; and Frick 1947, 209.

4. BMV, F 945(1), no. 20.

5. Vitry 1906, 346. Vitry 1912, 106 n. 1, suggests that some objects belonging to Anne-Ange went to a collateral branch (the comte Fournier-Sarlovèze).

6. Claudine was baptized 4 Nov. 1790 at Saint-Philippe du Roule; see BMV, F 945(2), no. 16.

7. BMV, F 945(4), no. 42; and Frick 1947, 211.

8. Olga Raggio, "New Galleries for French and Italian Sculpture at The Metropolitan Museum of Art," *GBA*

(Dec. 1991), 245, fig. 33. For the original plaster see Louvre cat. 1998, 427, ill.

9. Scherf 1997.

10. Collection Edouard Duval (son of Sabine) in 1869 (AMN, S5, 28 July 1869); collection Tabourier (sale 20 June 1898, no. 246, ill.) and Reff (Emile Molinier and Frantz Marcou, *Exposition rétrospective de l'art français des origines à 1800* [Paris, 1900], ill.; Paris 1928, 43, under no. 34; Artemis, London, 6 June–7 July 1978, no. 9, ill.). Girardot already owned one of Houdon's busts of a child, namely, Anne Audéoud (Salon cat. 1781, no. 255; sale, Sotheby's, Monaco, 22 June 1987, no. 1212, ill.).

11. For the original plaster see Louvre cat. 1998, 425, ill., which came from Claudine.

12. Probably the original plaster, which is now at the Louvre (sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 9 Dec. 2002, no. 68, ill.).

13. See Paris 1928, nos. 36 and 37; and Armason 1975, 102–103, 120 n. 251, figs. 179 and 180; but cf. Réau 1964, 2:51, no. 241.

14. In this respect, he may have been following Louis-Claude Vassé (see Black 1994).

15. Vitry 1906, 348. Sale, 8 Oct. 1795, under "figures et bustes en marbre," no. 74: "Une tête d'enfant, coiffé en cheveux et posé sur piédouche en marbre bleu turquin. Haut. totale 13 pouces [33 cm]"; and under "Terre cuite," no. 102: "Deux têtes d'enfants, elles sont coiffées en cheveux posées sur piédouche en marbre bleu turquin. Haut. 13 pouces."

16. Giacometti 1929, 2:299 n. 2, noted that a terracotta bust of a child by Houdon was entrusted by the Perrin family to a sculptor who wanted to make a copy; he certainly also made some casts.

## + Denis Diderot (1713–1784)

19–22

1771

Terracotta on wood base

H. 46 cm (with base: 52 cm), W. 26.9 cm, D. 22.2 cm

Fragments of *cachet de l'atelier* on back

Musée du Louvre, Paris, département des sculptures, Gift of the heirs to F. H. Walferdin, 1880 (inv. RF 348)

Dated 1775

White marble on white marble base

H. 42 cm (with base: 56 cm), W. 27 cm, D. 22 cm

Inscribed on back: *A M. Robineau de Bougon. Houdon sculpsit 1775*

Musée national des châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon (inv. MV 855)

1780

Bronze on round gray marble socle with square white marble base

H. 57 cm (with base: 81 cm), W. 28.3 cm, D. 27 cm

Inscribed: DENIS DIDEROT, À SES CONCITOYENS · SCULPTÉ PAR HOUDON L'AN 1780.

Musée d'art et d'histoire de Langres (inv. 984–2–1)

1780s

Plaster, on separate plaster base, both painted terracotta color

H. 47.4 cm (with base: 58.3 cm), W. 29 cm

*Cachet de l'atelier* on back,

Inscribed on front of base: DIDEROT

Nationalmuseum, Stockholm (inv. NM Sk 1316)

The bust of Diderot that Houdon exhibited at the Salon of 1771 is generally identified as the Louvre terracotta (cat. 19). Although the work was apparently commissioned by Prince Dmitrii Alekseevich Golitsyn following his service as Russian minister to the French court in 1762–1767 (see Provenance), it has been suggested that Catherine II was the intended recipient.<sup>1</sup> Yet it is doubtful she had any interest in Houdon in 1771, when he was as yet little known;<sup>2</sup> and since Golitsyn had left France for The Hague in May 1768, Diderot himself served as Catherine's intermediary for purchasing works of art. In addition, the Russian empress had already commissioned a marble bust of Diderot from Marie-Anne Collot in 1769, completed in 1772 (fig. 1). It would seem then that Golitsyn, away from Paris, wanted a souvenir of his friendship with the French philosopher. Houdon, whose submissions to the Salon of 1769 had attracted positive reviews,<sup>3</sup> may have been recommended to Golitsyn either by Frédéric-Melchior Grimm or by Diderot himself.<sup>4</sup>

It is not known when Diderot first met Houdon. He did not know him at the time he reviewed the Salon of 1769, but he mentioned him in a letter to Etienne-Maurice Falconet on 20 March 1771, citing him as one of the art masters, alongside Jean-Baptiste II Lemoyne and Laurent Guiard (Diderot's protégé).<sup>5</sup> Houdon's interest in Collot was profound. She had done a bust of Diderot in 1766, for which he had posed,<sup>6</sup> and the sitter liked the result.<sup>7</sup> When Catherine II commissioned Collot to sculpt the writer's portrait in marble, he sent a mask of his face to Russia, done by Lemoyne (Collot's affectionate teacher), and a plaster cast of the 1766 terracotta belonging to Grimm.<sup>8</sup> Diderot's reaction to Houdon's portrait when he saw it at the Salon of 1771 was laconic; he wrote simply "a very good likeness."<sup>9</sup> He was probably not surprised to see the bust commissioned by Golitsyn, one of his close friends. It is impossible to verify if Houdon was influenced by Collot's work, because no bust of 1766 has survived,<sup>10</sup> thus only her marble of 1772 (fig. 1)

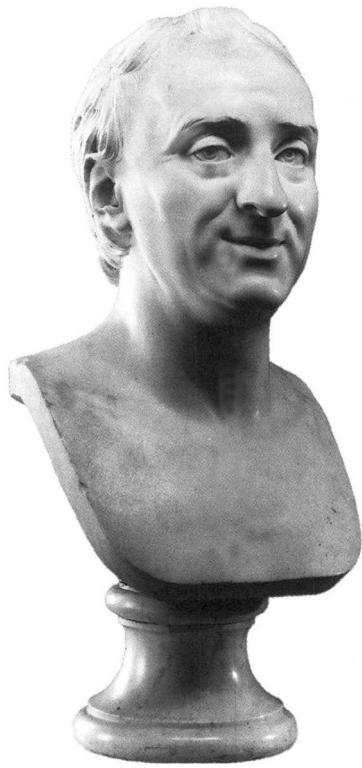




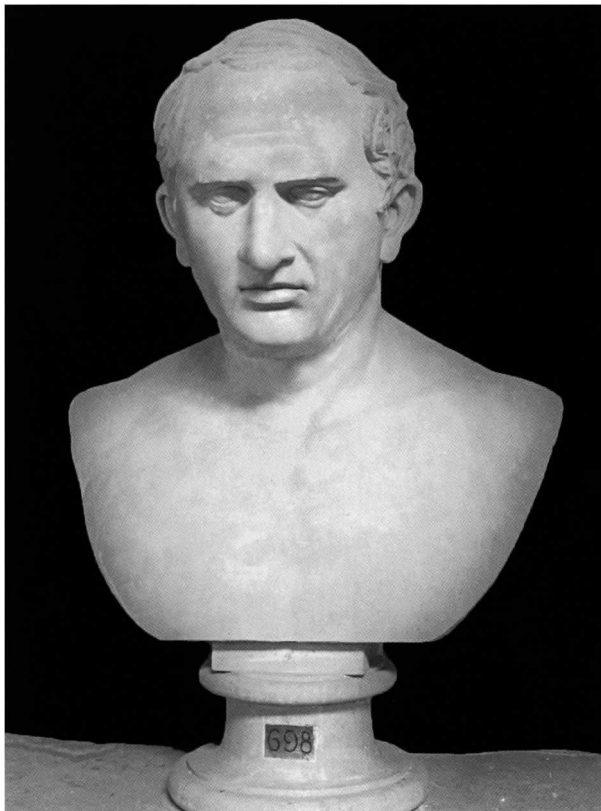








1. Marie-Anne Collot, Diderot, 1772, marble, The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg.



2. Cicero, second-century copy after a portrait made at the end of the Republic, marble, Chiaramonti Museum, The Vatican.

provides a basis for comparison. A plaster of the latter may have appeared in the shipment of 1771 from St. Petersburg.<sup>11</sup> The difference between Collot's portrait and Houdon's is striking: Collot sculpted the smiling face of a familiar man with drooping eyelids, whereas Houdon gave the philosopher the look of a virile thinker with an incisive gaze. Although the formula is similar—head with short hair on a nude upper torso—the spirit is completely different.

The critics at the Salon of 1771 were full of praise for Houdon's bust. In the words of one, "Although the large features of that head, fit for a medal, lend themselves to the chisel, and the artist has all the freedom to linger on that physiognomy, precisely articulated in its different parts, one must praise the fire, the expression M. Houdon was able to put into his work, and the enthusiasm of the passionate author of *Les Bijoux indiscrets* seems to have won over the artist, whose other works do not display such a warm and ardent character"; another wrote, "I single out the bald head of the editor of the *Encyclopédie*. The flame of genius brought that bust to life; there is a fire, an expression, that gives it a striking resemblance; I don't want to say it out loud, but our colleagues the painters have done nothing to equal us"; finally, according to Daudet de Jossan, "the bust of Diderot, whom the flame of genius seems to animate, struck all beholders with admiration and astonishment."<sup>12</sup>

Houdon exhibited another bust of Diderot at the Salon of 1773. Missing from the catalogue, it was noted in an admiring review: "The author of the bust of M. Diderot, in reproducing him for us a second time, may wish to compensate us for the absence of that scholar [Diderot was in Russia] and not allow us to cool toward him."<sup>13</sup> This may be the marble, dated 1773, that the wealthy Francophile Count Aleksandr Sergeevich Stroganov of St. Petersburg acquired during one of his stays in France (see Related Works). Houdon indicated on his autograph list of about 1784 his translation of Diderot's features into marble.<sup>14</sup> He produced at least two other marbles dated 1775 (with his studio, of course): the one at the Louvre was kept in the sitter's family; and the one at Versailles (cat. 20) belonged to a M. Robineau de Bougon, about whom almost nothing is known.<sup>15</sup> By this time Houdon's portrait of Diderot had gained great renown, and plasters of it had entered, notably, the collections of King Gustav III of Sweden (cat. 22), Prince Henry of Prussia, and Duke Ernst II of Saxe-Gotha.

In 1780 Houdon cast a copy of his bust of Diderot in bronze (carefully noted on his autograph list of 1784), which the philosopher sent to his hometown of Langres at the request of the



3. Louis-Michel Van Loo, Diderot, 1767, oil on canvas, Musée du Louvre, Paris.

municipal council (cat. 21). Finally, at the Salon of 1789, the sculptor displayed a “marble head of small proportions” representing Diderot (no. 249), next to those of Jean-Jacques Rousseau and the comte de Buffon.

Diderot is the only great intellectual of the Enlightenment in Houdon’s portrait gallery to have been depicted according to a single typology (bare head, nude upper torso). That formula, established in 1771, did not change. In this respect, Diderot can be distinguished from Voltaire, Rousseau, d’Alembert, Buffon, and Benjamin Franklin. Giacometti and Réau suggested that Houdon used a new model for the Langres bust, showing an older Diderot. But Arnason maintained that Houdon used the same model for all of the busts, observing more accurately that Diderot’s appearance in 1780 would have been closer to that captured by Jean-Baptiste Pigalle in 1777.<sup>16</sup> This was obviously not Houdon’s intent. Rather, it was to show at Langres, and to everyone, an image of the philosopher that had received the sitter’s approval and would correspond fully to his tastes.

Diderot liked Houdon’s bust of 1771. The typology of the orator from classical times, suggesting a modern Cicero (fig. 2), suited him, and the beautiful rounded truncation emphasized the face. He strongly disliked Louis-Michel Van Loo’s painting of him, displayed at the Salon of 1767 (fig. 3): “I like Michel; but I like the truth better. . . what will my grandchildren say, when they come to compare my sad writings with this cute, laughing, effeminate old flirt? My children, I tell you it is not I.”<sup>17</sup> Conversely, the writer found himself in step with the ideas of Mme Therbouche, who painted a portrait of

him around the same time (fig. 4): “When the head was done, there was the matter of the neck, and the top of my clothing hid it, which somewhat displeased the artist. To put an end to that vexation, I went behind a curtain, undressed, and appeared before her as an academic model. . . I was nude, completely nude. She painted me and we chatted with a simplicity and innocence worthy of the earliest centuries.”<sup>18</sup>

Houdon understood what Diderot wanted and produced a portrait in keeping with his ideal. Did the two men speak with one another about the conception of the bust? Did the writer pose for the sculptor? It is difficult to believe that he did not, as the face seems very real even today. The artist created a likeness that reflected not a fleeting moment but an enduring quality, corresponding with the philosopher’s own criteria: “A portrait may look sad, somber, melancholic, serene, because these states are permanent; but a laughing portrait is without nobility, without character, often even without truth, and as a result is foolishness.”<sup>19</sup> Likewise, in its lack of adornment, the bust follows the *Encyclopédie*’s recommendations that a portrait show “respect for individuality, naturalness, truthfulness; distrust for accessories . . . attributes . . . poses contrary to the character of the model.”<sup>20</sup> Finally, Houdon attempted to convey the liveliness of the writer’s eyes and to suggest, by means of the parted lips, the brilliance of his conversation. Diderot knew the difficulty: “Portraits are so difficult that Pigalle told me he had never done



4. Bertonnier, Diderot, engraving after Mme Therbouche’s painting of 1767, BNEst.



Back views of cats. 19 and 20



Back views of cats. 21 and 22

one without being tempted to give up on it. In fact, life, character, and physiognomy dwell on the face.”<sup>21</sup>

With his portrait of Diderot, Houdon perfected what would be key to his formidable success: the transcription of the gaze. His technique, which he did not invent but which he refined throughout his career, was to carve a depression for the iris and define the pupil with a hollow at the bottom,<sup>22</sup> leaving a bit of the material in relief along the edge of the iris to allow for the play of shadow and light and to simulate the lifelike quality of the eyes. In contrast to the extreme sensitivity of the modeling of the eyes and the flesh, Houdon treats the hair as a dense mass, with individual strands incised on the temples. On the reverse, on the long upper edge of the truncation, he carved fine striations like those found on the backs of finished marbles. In the masterful bust of 1771, which is Houdon’s earliest known portrait,<sup>23</sup> the sculptor captured the ideal image of Diderot, with his profile worthy of a medal, balanced between the thinker’s timeless state—equaling the Ancients—and the vivacity of the curious mind open to its time. “Is not Houdon . . . the sculptor Diderot demands, and of whom he dreams?”<sup>24</sup>

GUILHEM SCHERF

#### PROVENANCE

##### + Louvre terracotta +

Commissioned by Prince Dmitrii Alekseevich Golitsyn, Russian ambassador to France, according to a letter from Diderot to his sister dated 23 Mar. 1770: “Le prince de Gallitzin fait faire mon buste” (Diderot [ed. 1955–1970], 10:40–41); most likely identical with the bust displayed at the Salon of 1771, no. 281 (no record of medium); retained by the sculptor until his death (?); posthumous sale of contents of Houdon’s studio, Paris, 15–17 Dec. 1828, no. 17 (*cachet de l’atelier* probably added at this time); collection of François-Hippolyte Walferdin (1795–1880), physicist and politician, a native of Langres; donated in his name by his heirs, 1880.

##### + Versailles marble +

Collection of Robineau de Bougon, member of the House of Deputies; donated by Robineau to King Louis Philippe for the Musée de Versailles and accepted 22 Nov. 1838 (AMN, S8); came to the museum in 1843.

##### + Langres bronze +

On 29 Aug. 1780 the municipal council of Langres, Diderot’s native city, asked the philosopher for permission to have his portrait done to adorn one of the rooms in city hall (Tourneux 1913, 186–187). As Diderot’s daughter recalled: “In 1780 . . . the mayor and four municipal magistrates wrote my father to ask him for a portrait they would pay for, requiring only that he give the artist the time needed. My father replied to his compatriots as he ought to have done; he sent them the bronze bust M. Houdon had executed of him. It was placed in a room at city hall, on a small cabinet containing the *Encyclopédie* and his books. The day it was set in place, they held a corporate dinner, placed the bust atop a table, and drank to its health. These details, given my father by the mayor, brought him very sweet moments. The city sent some trifle or another to M. Houdon, who, for his part, responded by sending the gentlemen plasters of the bronze bust they had honored”

("Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de la vie et des ouvrages de Diderot, par Madame de Vandeuil, sa fille," *Mémoires, correspondance et ouvrages inédits de Diderot*... [Paris, 1830], 1:60). Diderot's and Houdon's gestures and the appreciation of the municipal council of Langres are documented in an exchange of letters (Diderot [ed. 1955–1970], 15:187–188, 228–231, 233–236). The bust is mentioned in Houdon's autograph list of works (ca. 1784) under the year 1781: "Un buste en bronze de M<sup>r</sup> Diderot, déposé dans l'hôtel de ville de Langre, sa patrie."

#### + Stockholm plaster +

Most likely acquired by the comte de Creutz, Swedish ambassador to Paris, in 1783 when Houdon executed the bust of Gustav III. Sent to the king and installed in his bedroom at the former Haga summerhouse (posthumous inventory of Gustav III, 1792, National Archives, Stockholm, K 50). Became part of the Nationalmuseum collection in 1928.

#### EXHIBITIONS

##### + Louvre terracotta +

Possibly Paris, Salon cat. 1771, no. 281; Paris 1865, no. 3662; Paris 1878, no. 536; *Diderot* [exh. cat., Bibliothèque Nationale] (Paris, 1963–1964), no. 335; Paris 1984–1985, 455–456, no. 132, ill.; Frankfurt 1999–2000, 134–136, no. 79, ill.

##### + Versailles marble +

Versailles 1928, no. 8.

##### + Langres bronze +

Versailles 1928, no. 9, ill.; Paris 1928, no. 15.

##### + Stockholm plaster +

Paris 1928, no. 16; *Catherine the Great & Gustav III* [exh. cat., Nationalmuseum] (Stockholm 1998–1999), no. 242, ill.; *Face to Face: Portraits from Five Centuries* [exh. cat., Nationalmuseum] (Stockholm, 2001), no. 76, ill.

#### REFERENCES

##### + Louvre terracotta +

Délerot and Legrelle 1857, 34, 41–43; J. Assézat and Maurice Tourneux, "Iconographie," *Œuvres complètes de Diderot* (Paris, 1877), 20:111; Maurice Tourneux, "Hommages rendus à Diderot par ses compatriotes (1780–1781)," *BSHAF* (1913), 190; Vitry 1928a, 12; Giacometti 1929, 2:37; Réau 1964, 1:353–354, 2:30, no. 115, pl. LIV; Francis Watson, "Diderot and Houdon: A Little-Known Bust," in *The Artist and the Writer in France: Essays in Honour of Jean Seznec* (Oxford, 1974), 16–17; Arnason 1975, 21–22, pl. 12a; Hecht 1994, 30, ill.; Jeannette Geffriaud Rosso, *Diderot et le portrait* (Pise, 1998), 54–57, ill.; Louvre cat. 1998, 422, ill.; Sauerländer 2002, 19, figs. 4–5.

##### + Versailles marble +

Montaignon and Duplessis 1855, 169; Délerot and Legrelle 1857, 180; Assézat and Tourneux 1877, 111; Soulié 1880, no. 855; Tourneux 1913, 190–191; Vitry 1928a, 12; Giacometti 1929, 2:38; Réau 1964, 1:353, 2:30, no. 115, pl. 55; Arnason 1975, 23; Versailles cat. 1993, 124, no. 493, ill.; Geffriaud Rosso 1998, 59–61, ill.

##### + Langres bronze +

Montaignon and Duplessis 1855, 169–170; Délerot and Legrelle 1857, 44, 180; Vitry 1907b, 207, no. 97; Tourneux 1913; Vitry 1928a, 12; Vitry 1928b,

ill. 60; Giacometti 1929, 2:39, ill.; Réau 1964, 1:78–79, 353, 2:30, no. 115; Arnason 1975, 23, pl. 12b; Geffriaud Rosso 1998, 57–59.

#### + Stockholm plaster +

Giacometti 1929, 2:39; Bengt Dahlbäck, "Mycket likt. Nagra data och reflektioner om fyra porträttskulpturer av Houdon," *Arsbok f. svenka Stat. Konstsaml. Stockholm* (Stockholm, 1964), 12:99–104, ill.; Réau 1964, 2:30, no. 115; *Nationalmuseum Stockholm. Illustrated Catalogue—Swedish and European Sculpture* (Stockholm, 1999), 301, ill.

#### RELATED WORKS

##### Marbles

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (inv. 1974.291); H. 54 cm; inscribed on back: "Mr Diderot, fait en 1773 par houdon"; on front of marble counterbase: "Il eut de grands Amis et, quelques bas jaloux / le Soleil plaît à l'aigle, et blesse les hiboux"; text attributed to Abbé Le Monnier, reproduced below an engraving by Chenu after Garand's portrait of Diderot (see Diderot [ed. 1995a], 83 n. 69 [*Salon de 1767*]). Stroganov collection (Louis Réau, "L'Art français du XVIIIe siècle dans la collection Stroganov," *BSHAF* [1931], 65); Stroganov sale, Berlin, 12–13 May 1931, no. 225, ill. (see Diderot to Falconet, 30 May 1773: "I am very close to M. and Mme de Strogonoff"; in Diderot [ed. 1955–1970], 12:229); given to the Metropolitan by Charles Wrightsman in 1974. Hecht 1994 establishes with certainty that the bust in the Metropolitan's collection and that said to be housed at The State Hermitage Museum are actually the same work; errors especially in Réau 1964, 1:353, 2:30; London 1972, no. 381, ill.; Watson 1974; Arnason 1975, 21–22; and New York 1981, no. 1.

Musée du Louvre, Paris (inv. RF 1520), on marble base; H. 43 cm (with base: 56 cm), W. 27 cm, D. 21.8 cm; inscribed on back: "Houdon Sculcit [sic] 1775"; bequeathed by Charles-Denis (known as Albert) Caroillon de Vandeuil (1837–1911), descendant of the sitter, along with the portrait painted by Louis-Michel Van Loo (see text above and Louvre cat. 1998, 427, ill.).

##### Plasters

Houdon sent five plasters to the municipality of Langres after the bronze was installed at city hall on 30 Apr. 1780. As Diderot wrote to his daughter, Mme de Vandeuil, 28 July 1781: "I was afraid that plaster casts had been made from my bust, and that it might at least have lost its color. Houdon was very generous toward our municipal officers; he sent them, or is about to send them, five terracottas. They may not be able to appreciate such a present" (Diderot [ed. 1955–1970], 15:254). Mme de Vandeuil corrected the word "terracottas" to "plasters." A plaster painted terracotta color; H. 52 cm; with *cachet de l'atelier* on back, is at the Musée d'art et d'histoire, Langres, listed in catalogues since 1873; see Montagu 1966, pl. 3.

Schlossmuseum Gotha (inv. P 36); H. 56.7 cm, W. 38.5 cm, D. 23.3 cm; acquired directly from Houdon by Duke Ernst II of Saxe-Gotha, who had met Diderot through Frédéric-Melchior Grimm during a stay in Paris in 1768 as crown prince; see Schuttwolf 1995, 140–141, ill.

Formerly Royal Castle, Berlin (see Seidel 1900, no. 191; Paris 1928, 33, under no. 15); bronzed plaster; H. 56 cm; *cachet de l'atelier* on back; acquired directly from Houdon by Henry of Prussia; see Giacometti 1929, 2:39; and Rheinsberg 2002, 442–443.

Private collection; bronzed plaster with *cachet de l'atelier*; offered to François Tronchin by Diderot's daughter, Mme de Vandeuil; see Réau 1964, 2:30, no. 115; and *De Genève à l'Ermitage. Les Collections de François Tronchin* [exh. cat., Musée Rath] (Geneva, 1974), no. 17: "Genève, André Givaudan collection."



Signature on cat. 20

Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, Munich (inv. 65/3); bronzed plaster on marble base; H. 46.2 cm; inscribed "Houdon 1780"; fragments of *cachet de l'atelier* on back; acquired by the museum in 1965; see *Bayerisches Nationalmuseum. Bildführer 2. Kostbarkeiten* (Munich, 1975), 78–79, no. 57, ill.

Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven (inv. 1977.72); painted terracotta color; H. 57.2 cm, W. 27.9 cm, D. 24.5 cm; *cachet de l'atelier* on back; gift to the museum from Mrs. Charles Seymour Jr., 1977. See Worcester 1964, 26–28; ill.; and *Handbook of the Collections: Yale University Art Gallery* (New Haven, 1992), 184, ill.

Numerous plasters date from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Castings were made of the Versailles marble in 1838 by Jacquet for the historical galleries of the château de Versailles (Versailles cat. 1993, 124, no. 494). The Louvre's plaster cast workshop made copies beginning in 1883; distributed since 1928 through the Musée de sculpture comparée at Le Trocadéro (Rionnet 1996, 266, no. 1122; Enlart and Roussel 1910, 221, G 146). One of these recent plasters (painted terracotta color) was in the bedroom of writer Paul Léautaud (today in the Musée Carnavalet, Paris).

#### Bronze

Tourneux 1913, 184 (ill. p. 191), mentions a bronze pointed out by Anatole France in an antique dealer's shop before it was acquired by an "American art lover" (unlocated).

#### Terracotta

Assézat and Tourneux 1877, 111, notes that Walferdin, prior owner of the terracotta now at the Louvre, "had electroplated and plaster reductions made" from the bust. Giacometti 1929, 2:39, reports: "my teacher Gustave Deloye made casts after the terracotta *Diderot* in the Louvre, at the request of Walferdin; reworked with a tool, painstakingly respecting all the values of the model, they constitute remarkable casts, which, over time, have taken on a patina that might easily allow them to be confused with old versions."

#### Reductions

Efforts have been made to identify the "Tête en marbre de petite proportion" exhibited at the Salon of 1789 (no. 249) as a reduction of the bust of Diderot,

which may be depicted on the upper shelf at the back of the artist's studio as painted by Boilly in 1804 (cat. 66), between busts of d'Alembert and John Paul Jones.

Musée d'art et d'histoire, Langres (inv. 905.1.4); marble; H. 33 cm, W. 13 cm; inscribed on back: "Houdon F 1789"; gift of A. de Vandeuil, 1905; see Roland May, *Les Collections des musées de Langres—Diderot* (Langres, 1986).

Formerly J. Strauss collection; then Henri Piazza collection; plaster; H. 28.5 cm; inscribed "Houdon 1780" (Paris 1928, no. 17; Giacometti 1929, 1:162, ill.); sale, Galerie Charpentier, Paris, 9–10 June 1935, no. 232.

Formerly at the Besançon museum as a gift of Senator Oudet (Castan, *Musée de Besançon. Inventaire des richesses d'art de la France* [1889], 160); bronze; H. 28 cm; inscribed on lower edge of truncation: "D'après le buste d'Houdon tiré du cabinet de M. Walderdin"; listed in Paris 1928 under no. 17 and by Giacometti 1929, 2:38; destroyed in the Besançon theater fire of 1958.

Sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 6 Mar. 1972, no. 119; H. 28.5 cm with wood base; ill. on cover: "Petit buste en réduction... Terre cuite. Signé." This questionable little bust displays a significant variation in its particularly thick eyebrows.

#### Boilly paintings

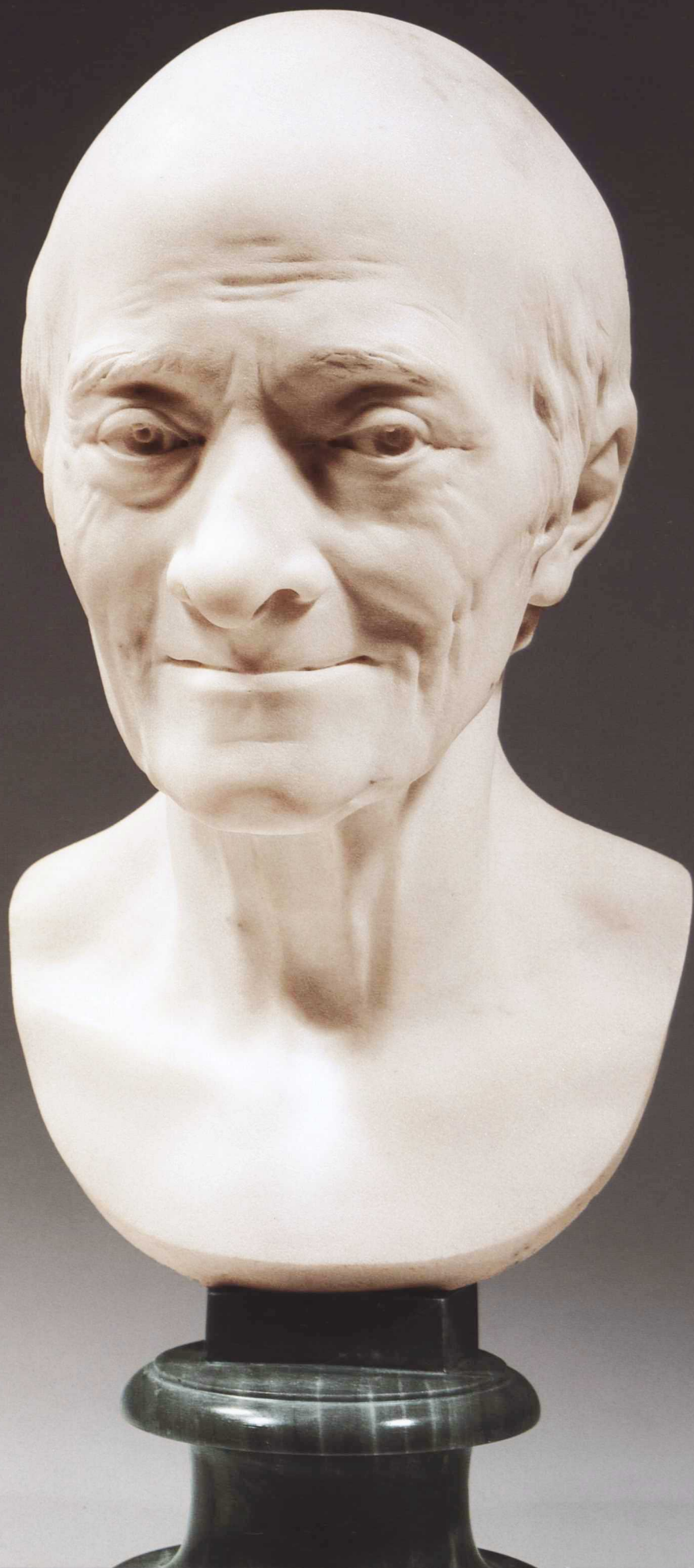
Bust of Diderot depicted in Boilly's two paintings of *Houdon in His Studio* (cat. 66), on the shelf to the right, next to the bust of Benjamin Franklin.



Dedication on cat. 20

1. Watson 1974, 16. Golitsyn sometimes acted as representative for the empress.
2. Hecht 1994, 32.
3. Charles-Nicolas Cochin influenced Elie Fréron in his criticism for *L'Année littéraire*, where Houdon's works are cited approvingly. Hecht 1994, 32, notes Golitsyn's classical taste, which supposedly led him to appreciate Houdon's submissions.
4. The friendship between Dmitrii Golitsyn and Houdon was consolidated in 1774, with the prince's commissioning of two funerary monuments from the artist; see cat. 57 and Dulac 1997.
5. "I received the last plasters [by Collot] you sent me [from St. Petersburg]. I thank you both [Falconet and Collot] and transmit to you not my praise, which you would little value, but that of the art masters who have taken them away from me. Ordinarily one does not request, one does not take away, one does not hang in one's studio things one does not respect. Mlle Collot is hanging in the homes of Le Moine, Guiart, Houdon, etc." (Diderot [ed. 1955–1970], 10:248).
6. "So, Falconet, you speak of Mlle Collot as if I didn't know her. Did I not submit to her modeling tool and hold her gaze for a week or two?" Two terracotta busts of Diderot were fired in 1766 at Sèvres, one of them for Grimm (Diderot to Falconet, 6 Sept. 1768 and beginning of Nov. 1766; see Diderot [ed. 1955–1970], 8:135 and 6:348).
7. "One of the good portraits of me is the bust by Mlle Collot, especially the last, which belongs to my friend M. Grimm. It is good. It is very good. It has replaced another in his home that her master M. Falconnet had done and which was not good. When Falconnet saw his student's bust, he picked up a hammer and shattered his own in front of her. That is honest and courageous. The bust, falling to pieces under the artist's blows, revealed two beautiful ears that had been preserved in their entirety under a shameful wig that Mme Geoffrin had dressed me up in after the fact. M. Grimm was never able to forgive Mme Geoffrin for that wig" (Diderot [ed. 1995a], 84 [*Salon de 1767*]).
8. Diderot to Falconet, 6 Aug. 1769; see Diderot (ed. 1955–1970), 9:97. For Diderot's posing for Lemoyne, see Diderot (ed. 1995b), 405 (*Pensées détachées sur la peinture*).
9. Diderot (ed. 1995b), 242 (*Salon de 1771*).
10. Marie-Louise Becker, "Marie-Anne Collot. L'Art de la terre cuite au féminin," *L'Estampille—L'Objet d'art*, no. 325 (June 1998), 74, fig. 3, despite the absence of documents, identifies a terracotta bust of Diderot (Musée national de céramique, Sèvres; H. 35 cm with base) as "the scale model of the 1766 bust for the manufacture of the biscuit porcelain," following the hypothesis of Assézat and Tourneux 1877, 109–110. Stylistically, however, the work is quite unlike the 1772 marble, and the treatment of the eyes too closely follows Houdon's to accept that attribution and date without reservation. The plaster at the Manufacture de Sèvres is dated 1780–1789 in Bourgeois and Lechevallier-Chevignard 1914, no. 192, pl. 40.
11. See above note 5.
12. *Mémoires secrets. Lettre sur le Salon de 1771* (see Fort 1999, 97); *Journal encyclopédique* (Deloynes XLIX, no. 1320; MacWilliam 1991, 213); and Daudet de Jossan, *Lettre de M. Raphaël le Jeune* (Deloynes IX, no. 141; MacWilliam 1991, 214).
13. Fort 1999, 123. The editor of *Mémoires secrets* describes a portrait of Diderot without a sculptor's name, but alongside three other busts by Houdon (*Lalande, Dauvergne, and Capperonnier*).
14. "Buste de Mr Diderot, et a été exécuté en marbre" (Vitry 1907b, 198, no. 11, no date given).
15. The dedication to Robineau was presumably inscribed on the Versailles marble "out of gratitude for the cost of execution borne by him" (Tourneux 1913, 190–191); see also Assézat and Tourneux 1877, 111.
16. Louvre cat. 1998, ill. p. 520.
17. Diderot (ed. 1995a), 81–82 (*Salon de 1767*).
18. Diderot (ed. 1995a), 375 (*Salon de 1767*).
19. Diderot (ed. 1984), 68 (*Essais sur la peinture*).
20. From the article "Portrait" in the *Encyclopédie*. See also Edouard Pommier, *Théories du portrait. De la renaissance aux lumières* (Paris, 1998), 422–423; and Diderot (ed. 1995b), 445 (*Pensées détachées sur la peinture*): "When the clothing of a people is shabby, art ought to leave aside the costume. What does statuary have to do with your jackets, your trousers, your rows of buttons?"
21. Diderot (ed. 1995b), 448 (*Pensées détachées sur la peinture*).
22. A comparable technique can be found especially in Gian Lorenzo Bernini and Jean-Baptiste Defernex. For Defernex' bust of Mme Favart (1757, terracotta; see Louvre cat. 1998, 328, ill.), the artist carved a depression for the iris but without defining the pupil as Houdon did.
23. "His Diderot of 1771 was almost his initial stroke and his masterstroke all at once" (Vitry 1928c, 136).
24. Délerot and Legrelle 1857, 35.





## ✦ François-Marie Arouet, called Voltaire (1694–1778)

Dated 1778

White marble with dark gray inclusions and veining on gray marble base

H. 36.8 cm (with base: 48.2 cm), W. 21.4 cm

Inscribed on back and proper right edge of truncation: LE PRÉMIER FAIT PAR HOUDON. 1778

Musée des Beaux-Arts, Angers (inv. MBA 54 [1881S])

Consistent with the inscription “le premier fait par Houdon,” this distinguished marble bust of Voltaire “tête nue” is considered to be Houdon’s first portrait of his famous sitter. The subtlety and refinement of the carving convey the physical frailty of the old man, while the sharply cut eyes, with their pupils looking slightly to the side, attest to his undiminished intellectual clarity and moral authority. An enigmatic smile graces the wide toothless mouth and deepens the many wrinkles on the sunken cheeks, adding to the ironic expression of the face. The back of the bust is finished in Houdon’s characteristic manner, with short striations cut horizontally from the edges of the truncation and in a variety of directions in the center. Following the classical formula first used for the portrait of Diderot (cats. 19–22), the bust presents Voltaire with an abbreviated, undraped torso and “nude” head, save for the sparse remains of his natural hair. This appears to have been the underlying model for Houdon’s more elaborate versions of Voltaire with wig and in contemporary costume (cat. 24), with fuller hair and headband, or dressed in antique garment (cat. 25).

On 10 February 1778, at the age of eighty-three and after nearly thirty years in exile, the celebrated philosopher, author, and man of letters returned to the French capital for a last time.<sup>1</sup>

Welcomed by Parisians with admiration and respect, Voltaire immersed himself in intense activity, meeting people (among them Denis Diderot, Jean Le Rond d’Alembert, and Benjamin Franklin), visiting the Académie française and other institutions, and collecting honors of all kinds. The sage received enthusiastic ovations from the audience when he attended the presentation of his play *Irène* at the Comédie-Française on 30 March, and a laurel wreath was placed on his head upon his entrance. After the performance came the legendary moment when the actors spontaneously moved his bust to the stage and crowned it with wreaths and flowers.<sup>2</sup> Contrary to popular belief,<sup>3</sup> the sculpture used for this homage was not the Voltaire “à la française” by Houdon (cat. 24)—the marble of which entered the collection of the Comédie Française only in February 1779—but an earlier portrait, probably a plaster by Jean-Baptiste II Lemoyne of 1748, which Jean-Jacques Caffieri had donated to the theater in honor of Voltaire’s arrival in Paris.<sup>4</sup>

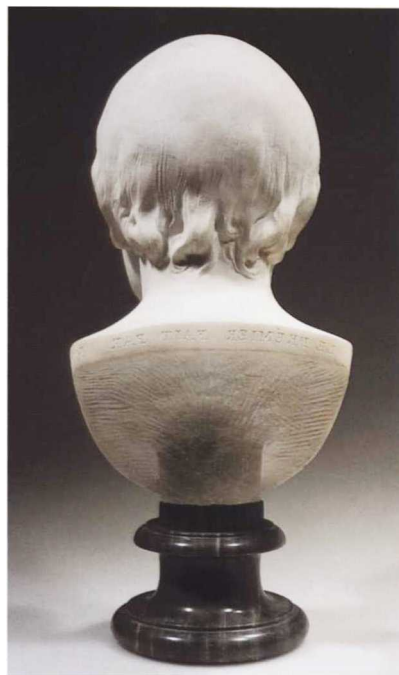
Around the same time Houdon, who, unlike many artists of his day, had never traveled to Voltaire’s retreat at Ferney, executed his first representation of the patriarch. Frédéric-Melchior Grimm recalls that Voltaire agreed to sit for Houdon after seeing the sculptor’s newly finished portrait of Molière and that it

took but two or three sessions, which the philosopher attended cheerfully.<sup>5</sup> These sittings must have taken place in the second half of March, since until then Voltaire was seriously ill with a hemorrhage he had suffered only fifteen days after his arrival in Paris. The bust was completed by 16 April 1778 when François Métra noted: “All of Paris goes to the studio of M. Houdon to see a bust of M. Voltaire that is without question the closest likeness of all the portraits one has done of this patriarch.”<sup>6</sup> Of the numerous portraits done of Voltaire in the previous sixty years, this was the only one that completely satisfied the sitter and his fans. Grimm marveled, “The eyes have so much life, an effect of light so ingeniously handled, that M. Greuze himself, in seeing the bust for the first time, initially thought that the eyes were made of enamel or some other colored material.”<sup>7</sup> Consequently, and even more following Voltaire’s death on 30 May 1778, Houdon’s studio turned into a public attraction, drawing crowds of people who wanted to see this much-acclaimed, lifelike image.<sup>8</sup>

Although the bust of Voltaire “tête nue” was not officially included in any of the Salons,<sup>9</sup> it was the most often reproduced version of Houdon’s portraits of the philosopher and exists in multiple examples in marble, bronze, plaster, and terracotta. Its generically classical format—bare-chested and with a short, curved truncation—is based on prototypes found in ancient Roman portrait sculpture and coinage. Having introduced this type with the bust of Diderot (cat. 19) in 1771, Houdon repeatedly used it later for representations of intellectuals and men of ideas, such as for d’Alembert in 1779 (cat. 27), the comte de Buffon in 1781 (cat. 28), or George Washington in 1785. Like the Romans, he successfully combined a realistic depiction of the idiosyncrasies of a particular face with the idealization of the sitter’s spirit and character, thus placing Voltaire on a par with the ancient philosophers and writers.

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Detail of signature  
on cat. 23



Back view of cat. 23

#### PROVENANCE

From the collection of Toussaint Grille (1766–1850), Angers, and possibly identical with a marble sold for 700 francs from the estate of Claude-Joseph Clos, “ami particulier” of Voltaire, Paris, 18 Nov. 1812, 55, no. 57: “Le buste en marbre de Voltaire, sur socle bleu turquin, et sous sa cage de verre, placé sur une gaine à jour plaquée en ébène, avec ornements de cuivre doré, et garnie de glaces sur les trois faces. Ce buste est le premier fait par M. Houdon en 1778,” which reappeared in the Doyen sale, 6 Mar. 1826, no. 51; perhaps Duchamp sale, Angers, 14 Feb. 1848, 12, no. 4; bought for 90 francs after Grille’s death, Angers, 28 Apr. 1851, 6, no. 57, by Leclerc-Guillory (1789–1858), who donated it to the city of Angers in 1854; deposited at the museum, where it remains today.

#### EXHIBITIONS

London 1972, 252–253, no. 390, pl. 57; *Les Anneaux de la mémoire. Nantes-Europe, Afrique, Amériques* [exh. cat., Château des ducs de Bretagne] (Nantes, 1992–1994), 124; *Autour de David d’Angers. Sculptures du XVIIIe siècle et du début du XIXe siècle dans les collections des musées d’Angers* [exh. cat., Musée des Beaux-Arts] (Angers, 1994–1995), 42–43, no. 7, ill. p. 45; Paris 1994, 228, no. 281; *L’Édit de Nantes* [exh. cat., Nantes and Pau] (Paris, 1998–1999), 105, ill. p. 92; Frankfurt 1999–2000, 136–137, no. 80, ill.

#### REFERENCES

Jouin 1870, 91, no. 33; Jouin 1881, 145, no. 34; *Inventaire général des richesses d’art de la France. Province. Monuments civils* (Paris, 1885), 3:85; Henry Jouin, *Histoire et description des Musées d’Angers* (Paris, 1885), 85; Gonse 1904, 43–44, ill.; Lami 1910–1911, 1:419; Giacometti 1918–1919, 2:350; Marcel Valotaire, *Le Musée d’Angers* (Paris, 1928), ill. p. 159, pl. 57; Giacometti 1929, 2:159–161; Morant 1950, 7–8, pl. 3; Réau 1964, 1:359, 2:45, no. 202F, pl. CV.

## RELATED WORKS

## Documented versions of Voltaire "tête nue"

Among the multitude of versions of Voltaire "tête nue," which appeared in sales from the eighteenth century on, only the following shall be mentioned.

*Bronze and marble*

Two busts, one in bronze and one in marble, sold for 7,500 and 5,000 livres, respectively, in Houdon's studio sale, 8 Oct. 1795, 13–14, nos. 70, 79; and a marble "Buste de Voltaire" offered in posthumous sale of contents of Houdon's studio, 15–17 Dec. 1828, 15, no. 12 (as opposed to no. 11: "Buste habillé de Voltaire").

*Plaster*

A plaster version from the collection of Prince Henry of Prussia in the Schlossmuseum, Berlin, before World War II (H. 47 cm; *cachet de l'atelier*); mentioned in the inventory drawn after Henry's death in 1802 as one of four busts installed on carved wall brackets in the "Thurm-Kabinette" (tower room) on the second floor of Schloss Rheinsberg (GS T APK, I. HA Rep. 133, no. 190, fol. 13v) and recorded there in a watercolor by W. Streckfuss ca. 1880; transferred ca. 1895 to the museum in Berlin, where it remained until its disappearance during the war. See Rheinsberg 1985, rev. ed., ill. pp. 69–70.

*Print*

Engraving by Augustin de Saint-Aubin (see fig. 1) shows the bust in a round frame without its socle and in profile to the right against a dark background. For a list of other engravings after the bust see Desnoiresterres 1879, 117–118.

## Principal extant versions of Voltaire "tête nue"

*Plaster*

Schlossmuseum Gotha (inv. P 72); H. 37.5 cm (with base: 48.3 cm), W. 22.2 cm; painted to resemble verdigris bronze (Schuttwolf 1995, 150, no. 58, ill.); probably identical with the bust mentioned in Klebe 1796, 103, as located in the palace of Prince August of Saxe-Gotha, brother of Ernst II, "am äußersten Ende der Vorstadt vor dem Siebeleber Thore": "Eins derselben [Zimmer] enthält... mehrere Büsten, worunter sich die von Voltaire und Rousseau, die Houdon in Paris verfertigt hat, auszeichnen."

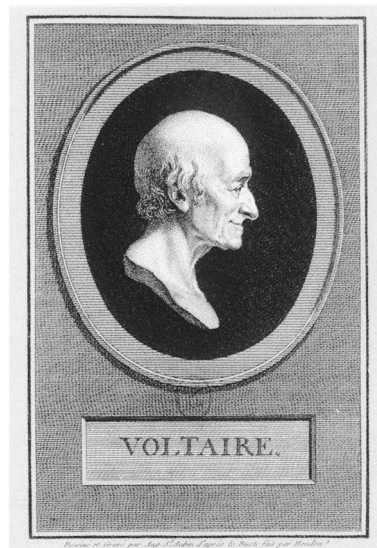
*Marbles*

Musée Lambinet, Versailles (inv. 648); H. 36 cm (with base: 46.5 cm), W. 20.5 cm; inscribed on proper left edge of truncation: "Houdon. 1778"; reportedly from scholar and politician Pierre-Claude-François Daunou (1761–1840); bought by the city of Versailles from Docteur des Etangs in 1885. See Gendre 1997, 119, no. 189, ill.

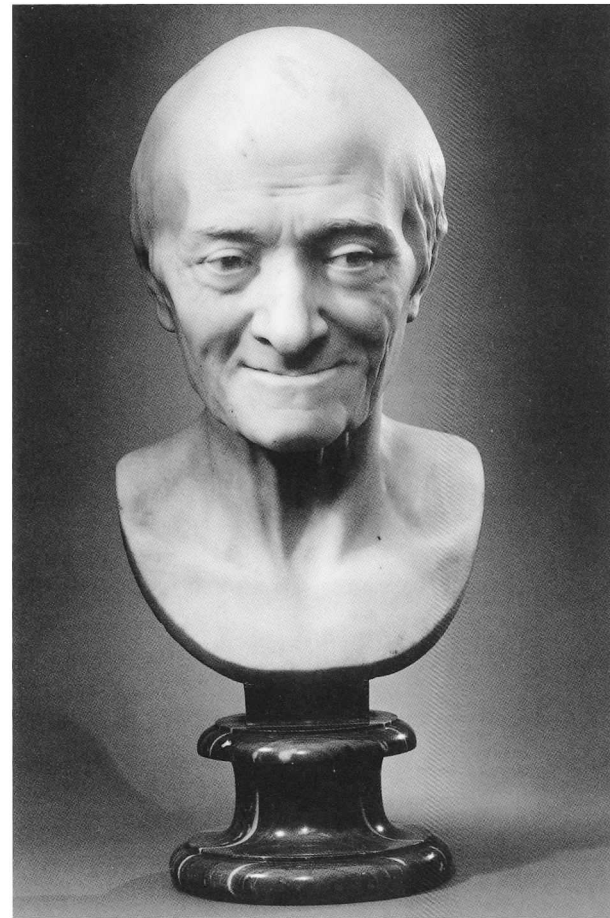
Musée du Louvre, Paris (inv. RF 3520); H. 35 cm (with base: 45.5 cm), W. 19.5 cm; inscribed on back edge of truncation: "houdon f. 1778"; gift of the comtesse Marie-Louise Biver in 1981. See Louvre cat. 1998, 2:431, ill.

Deutsches Historisches Museum, Berlin (inv. Pl 95/15); H. 33.8 cm, W. 20 cm; inscribed on back edge of truncation: "houdon f. 1778"; acquired in 1995 from Galerie Koller, Zurich. See Koschnick 1997, 255, ill.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (inv. 1972.61) (see fig. 2); H. 36.6 cm (with base: 48 cm), W. 21 cm; inscribed on proper left edge of truncation: "HOUDON. 1778"; from collection of Count Aleksandr Sergeevich Stroganov in St. Petersburg; Stroganov sale, Berlin, 12–13 May 1931, no. 224, for 26,000 Marks; Thomas Fortune Ryan, New York; in 1972 acquired from Mrs. John Barry Ryan. See *The Wrightsman Collection* (New York, 1973), 5:402, ill. p. 399.



1. Augustin de Saint-Aubin, Bust of Voltaire, ca. 1778, engraving, BNEst, Hénin Collection.



2. Houdon, Bust of Voltaire, 1778, marble, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

National Gallery of Art, Washington (inv. 1963.10.240); H. 36.6 cm (with base: 44.8 cm), W. 21.2 cm; inscribed on proper right edge of truncation: "HOUDON. 1778"; *cachet de l'atelier* on back; reportedly from collection of Mme Denis, niece of Voltaire; Chester Dale Collection through Parke-Bernet, 20 Nov. 1942, 16, no. 25. See NGA cat. 1994, 110, ill.

#### Bronzes

Musée du Louvre, Paris (inv. RF 345); H. 35 cm (with base: 45 cm), W. 20.8 cm; inscribed on proper left edge of truncation: "HOUDON.1778"; discovered in 1871 by sculptor Adolphe-Victor Geoffroy-Dechaume "dans les décombres d'un monument public" burned down during the Commune in Paris and given by him to the state in 1876; Dépôt des marbres; at the Louvre since 1880. See Louvre cat. 1998, 2.422, ill.

Pushkin Museum, Moscow (inv. 94); H. 34.5 cm (with base: 45.3 cm), W. 20.6 cm; inscribed on proper left edge of truncation: "Houdon.1778"; acquired by Catherine II of Russia through Grimm for 2,000 livres, along with a plaster of Houdon's bust of Voltaire "à la française," present location unknown (see cat. 24, Related Works); received in St. Petersburg before 1 Oct. 1778; transferred from the Hermitage to the Pushkin in 1927. See *SIRIO* 1878, 95, 104, 107–108; *SIRIO* 1885, 19, 25; see also Réau 1932, 21, 25, 27, 29, 30, 33.

#### Undesignated busts of Voltaire (all versions) in sales during Houdon's lifetime

##### Marbles

Etablissement de l'Elysée, 13 Aug. 1798, no. 92 (with bust of Rousseau); Boullongne, 8 May 1787, no. 240; Choiseul-Praslin, second sale, 9 May

1808, no. 48; Quentin Crawford, 20 Nov. 1820, no. 418; [Bertrand], 2 June 1824, no. 122; comtesse de Looz, 21 June 1825, no. 173.

##### Bronzes

In the context of his trip to the U.S. in 1785, Houdon put a bronze of Voltaire up for sale in Philadelphia for 30 louis, which had not sold by Oct. 1800 (BMV, F 946, nos. 33–34, 38, 43, 49). [Leboeuf], 8 Apr. 1783, no. 120; Bergeret, 24 Apr. 1786, no. 495; [D'Espagnac et Tricot] par Lebrun, 22 May 1793, no. 193 (with bust of Rousseau); Anonymous, 29 Nov. 1793, no. 41; Anonymous, 6 May 1795, no. 58; Le Bas-Courmont, 26 May 1795, no. 75 (see [Leboeuf] sale); Porché-Vaubal, 30 Aug. 1797, no. 110 (antique drapery); Verdun-Bouquet, 26 Dec. 1798, no. 177 (antique drapery); Montaléau, 19 July 1802, no. 306; Clos, 18 Nov. 1812, no. 58 (with bust of Rousseau); Rocheux, 29 Jan. 1821, no. 66; Varroc et Lafontaine, 28 May 1821, no. 222.

##### Plasters

[Chevalier] par Lebrun, Paris, 28 Nov. 1785, no. 104 (with bust of Rousseau); Etablissement de l'Elysée, 13 Aug. 1798, no. 83 (with busts of Molière and Rousseau); Anonymous, 13 Dec. 1824 (with busts of Franklin and Washington).

##### Terracottas

Dubois-Verrier et Claudion frère, 12 June 1783, no. 57 (with bust of Rousseau); Haudry posthumous sale, Orléans [1800], 31, no. 49.

1. For contemporary sources see Damilaville 1878.

2. See Grimm's report in *Corr. littéraire*, 12:69–73.

3. E.g., Arnason 1975, 52, 112 n. 121.

4. Cf. Guiffrey 1877, 276; Desnoiresterres 1879, 96–101; and Monval 1897, 40. The event and the bust are documented in Jean-Michel Moreau le Jeune's contemporary illustration, engraved by Charles-Etienne Gaucher in 1782 (BNest, Ob<sup>1</sup>).

5. May 1778, *Corr. littéraire*, 12:104. The sentimental anecdote about another coronation with laurel at this last sitting, told by the marquis de Villeveille almost twenty-five years after Voltaire's death, lacks credibility; see Willibald Sauerländer, *Jean-Antoine Houdon. Voltaire. Eine Einführung* (Stuttgart, 1963), 11–12; excerpts reprinted in Réau 1964, 154.

6. Métra 1787–1790, 6:164; see also Bachaumont 1780–1789, 11:198.

7. *Corr. littéraire*, 12:104.

8. *Corr. littéraire*, 12:104–105; 13 June 1778, Métra 1787–1790, 6:291.

9. The terracotta busts of Voltaire "à la française" and "à l'antique" were shown in the Salon of 1779, as nos. 19 and 23.

## + François-Marie Arouet, called Voltaire (1694–1778)

1780

White marble with gray veining on separate, modern, white marble base

H. 61.7 cm (with base: 80.3 cm), W. 53.8 cm

Inscribed on back: VOLTAIRE / HOUDON, F. ANNÉE / 1778.

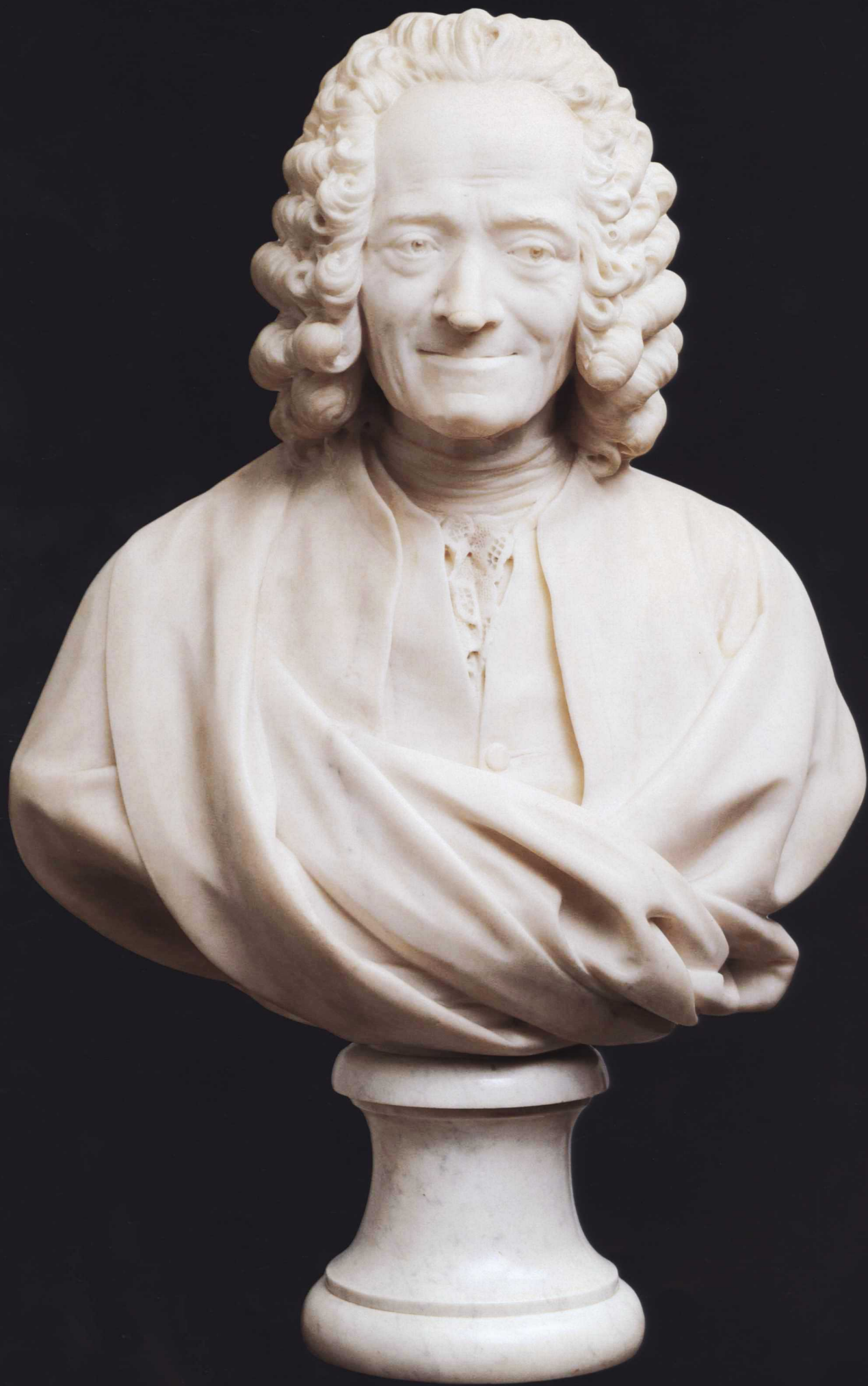
Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften Archiv (inv. VZLOBO-0029)

Houdon's bust of Voltaire "à la française," a masterpiece of great beauty and subtlety, radiates the vitality of the French patriarch. It presents the celebrated philosopher in the French costume of his time, with a heavy, old-fashioned wig and the hint of his proverbial sardonic smile. The cloaklike garment around his shoulders and chest lends the sitter greater dignity and authority, one of the first instances in which Houdon turned to the conservative portrait style made popular under Louis XV and used for members of the court and the aristocracy. Voltaire is not the ancient Seneca or Socrates here, but the gallant who frequented the courts of Europe. Frederick II insisted on having this type of bust rather than the version "à l'antique": "Let's not insult his country by giving him a costume that would make him unrecognizable; Voltaire thought in Greek, but he was French. Let's not disfigure our contemporaries by giving them outfits of a nation that is now vilified and degraded under the tyranny of the Turks, their conquerors."<sup>1</sup>

Voltaire's relations with the Prussian King Frederick the Great were generally stormy, as both men had unyielding egos.<sup>2</sup> Frederick, an admirer of Voltaire's ideas and an aspiring philosopher himself, initiated their correspondence in 1736. Fourteen years later Voltaire accepted the king's long-standing invitation

to join his illustrious court in Potsdam as a well-paid companion and language teacher. At first delighted by the hospitality and freedom of expression he enjoyed there, Voltaire soon became the center of quarrels and scandals, which led to a breach with the king. When he hastily left Prussia in 1753, he was disillusioned and his friendship with Frederick had soured. Yet Voltaire and the king resumed their correspondence despite their differences, continuing it until Voltaire's death in 1778.

In 1770 Frederick had contributed 200 ecus to the subscription for Jean-Baptiste Pigalle's ill-fated statue of Voltaire organized by a group of French philosophes.<sup>3</sup> Eight years later, after Voltaire had died, the French mathematician and coeditor of the *Encyclopédie*, Jean Le Rond d'Alembert, approached the king about investing in another sculpture of the patriarch, this time for Frederick's own collection.<sup>4</sup> In a long letter of early July 1778 d'Alembert recalled Voltaire's triumphal return to Paris—but also his last hours, full of concerns about his burial and his thwarted attempt to regain the Church's approbation. D'Alembert pleaded with Frederick to set an example for other European monarchs by giving Voltaire not only the honor denied him by the French authorities but a dignified funeral and a religious service as well. In this context d'Alembert men-





Back view of cat. 24

tioned Houdon's bust of Voltaire for the first time, elaborating in his next letter that it was "made of terracotta, waiting to be executed in marble," and that it was "worthy of being placed in His Majesty's collection and given by Him to the academy in Berlin."<sup>5</sup> For almost two and a half years Houdon's bust was a recurring subject in correspondence between the *encyclopédiste* and the king.<sup>6</sup> D'Alembert also encouraged Frederick to write his own *Eulogy to Voltaire*, which was read on 26 November 1778 at the Akademie der Wissenschaften, Berlin;<sup>7</sup> he suggested a memorial service that, secretly organized by the Protestant king, was held in the Catholic church in Berlin on the second anniversary of Voltaire's death;<sup>8</sup> and he argued for the erection of a commemorative monument to Voltaire in that same church.

By September 1779 d'Alembert specified that Houdon's bust of Voltaire, executed in marble, would cost 1,000 ecus (Reichsthaler), or 3,000 French livres, and was available in two variants, one "à l'antique," the other — not as picturesque but of perfect likeness — with a wig. Although interested, Frederick was hesitant. In October 1779 he deferred any possible acquisition to the following year, owing to the expenses of the War of Bavarian Succession. He postponed the purchase again from May to September 1780, when full payment would be made. Pressed repeatedly by d'Alembert, the king finally decided he

wanted the bust of Voltaire in contemporary clothing. But he balked at the idea of a cenotaph to the philosopher in the Catholic church, arguing that neither the architectural setting nor the religious context was suitable. While d'Alembert remained adamant about this proposed monument, he urged the king to acquire two busts of Voltaire, one for his personal collection and one for the academy. In November 1780 Frederick put an end to all discussion, saying he would place a bust of this rare and unique man in the "sanctuary of sciences," where he would be at home, not in the church, where his ghost would be indignant and where, after Frederick's death, there would be countless chances that some fanatic would mutilate the likeness of this apostle of tolerance. The bust was mentioned a last time 15 December 1780, when d'Alembert announced that it was completed and ready to be shipped.<sup>9</sup>

On 8 February 1781 the director of the "French studio" at the Prussian court, Jean-Pierre-Antoine Tassaert, delivered Houdon's marble bust of Voltaire by royal decree to the Akademie der Wissenschaften, Berlin.<sup>10</sup> One of the French members of the academy, Dieudonné Thiébauld, recalled the occasion, noting that from his new vantage Voltaire seemed to be able to see, hear, and spy on all the academicians gathered before him, and wondering if they could continue to meet in the face of mocking the philosopher's expression. Thiébauld thought it remarkable that Frederick had never seen the bust, even when it passed through Potsdam in a crate on the river, nor did he want to see it.<sup>11</sup>

ULRIKE D. MATHIES

#### PROVENANCE

Given by King Frederick II of Prussia to the Akademie der Wissenschaften, Berlin; delivered 8 Feb. 1781 and installed in the conference room; still in the possession of the academy.

#### EXHIBITIONS

Paris 1900c, 66, no. 35, ill. p. 14; Berlin 1910, 48, no. 239, ill. (and 2nd rev. ed., 37, no. 32, ill.); Berlin 1912, 15, no. 10, pl. 19; Berlin 1955, 71, ill. p. 43; *Barock und Klassik. Kunstzentren des 18. Jahrhunderts in der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik* [exh. cat., Schallaburg] (Vienna, 1984), 220, no. 11.73, ill. p. 221; *Friedrich II. und die Kunst. Ausstellung zum 200. Todestag* [exh. cat., Neues Palais] (Potsdam, 1986), 137, no. X.7; *Kunst in Berlin 1648–1887* [exh. cat., Altes Museum] (Berlin, 1987), 160–161, no. D97; *Voltaire in Potsdam* [exh. cat., Altes Rathaus] (Potsdam, 1991), 117, no. 1, pl. 1; *Friedrich der Große. Sammler und Mäzen* [exh. cat., Kunsthalle der Hypo-Kulturstiftung] (Munich, 1992–1993), 92, no. 30, ill. p. 93; Paris 1993–1994, 228, no. 280.





1. Houdon, Bust of Voltaire, after 1778, plaster, Residenz, Ansbach, Bayerische Verwaltung der staatlichen Schlösser, Gärten und Seen.



2. Houdon, Bust of Voltaire, 1778, terracotta, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Orléans.

#### REFERENCES

Protocol book of meetings, Akademie der Wissenschaften, Berlin; meeting of 8 Feb. 1781 (Akademiearchiv, Bestand Preussische Akademie der Wissenschaften [1700–1811], no. I-IV-32); “Assemblées publiques,” *Nouveaux mémoires de l’Académie royale des sciences et belles-lettres. Année 1781* (Berlin, 1783), 7; Dieudonné Thiébault, *Mes souvenirs de vingt ans de séjour à Berlin* (Berlin, 1804), 5:289–292; Johann David Erdmann Preuss, ed., *Urkundenbuch zu der Lebensgeschichte Friedrichs des Grossen* (Berlin, 1832–1834), 3:128, no. 26; *Œuvres de Frédéric le Grand*, ed. J.D.E. Preuss (Berlin, 1846–1856), 25:122–169; “Corr. Frédéric le Grand,” 1857, 176–177; Damilville 1878, 92–124; Desnoiresterres 1879, 115–116; Dierks 1887, 61–62, 145 (mistakenly listed as terracotta); Seidel 1892, 1892, 64–65; Seidel 1900, 33–34, ill. after p. 34; Lami 1910–1911, 1:420; Giacometti 1918–1919, 2:27, 354; Giacometti 1929, 2:162–163; Mansfeld 1955, 172–174, no. 28; Réau 1964, 1:81, 156, 357–358; 2:45, no. 202; Arnason 1975, 52, 112 n. 128.

#### RELATED WORKS

##### Documented versions of the bust of Voltaire “à la française,” with or without drapery

On 4 June 1778 the Académie française decided to commission a painting after Houdon’s bust of Voltaire for their main assembly hall, as a pendant to a copy of Nicholas de Largillière’s portrait of the twenty-four-year-old Voltaire. Although Houdon granted permission, the idea was abandoned and the bust itself acquired; a terracotta presented as a gift from Jean Le Rond d’Alembert in a public session paying tribute to the late philosopher on 25 Aug. 1778.

In Jan. 1779 Houdon honored a promise to d’Alembert to give plasters of the bust to each academician, who responded by granting him free lifetime admission to their meetings, a copy of their dictionary, and a bag with 100 *jetons* (*Registres* 1895, 3:435, 436, 440, 442, 447). Houdon also sent a bust to the Loge des Neuf Soeurs on 26 Feb. 1779 (Bachaumont 1780–1789, 13:294–295).

A terracotta of the bust with drapery at Salon of 1779, no. 219, as “Buste en terre cuite,” with Houdon’s bust of Molière. A marble “Buste de Voltaire,

coëffé en perruque & posé sur piédouche; hauteur 24 pouces [61 cm],” sold for 11,810 livres in Houdon’s studio sale, 8 Oct. 1795, 14, no. 78; and a marble “Buste habillé de Voltaire” appeared in the posthumous sale of the contents of Houdon’s studio, 15–17 Dec. 1828, 15, no. 11.

Besides the present marble, Frederick the Great acquired a plaster in the same format, which he gave to the library in Berlin (now lost): “Die Berliner Bibliothek aber bekam eine schöne Gipsbüste des verewigten Voltaire von dem berühmten Pariser Bildhauer Houdon”; “Die Berliner Gipsbüste ist ein Abguß der bekleideten Büste von Houdon, welche 1778 gearbeitet und im Foyer des Théâtre français, Molière’s Büste, von demselben Houdon, gegenüber aufgestellt ist” (Preuss 1832–1834, 4:211 and n. 1).

Through Grimm, Catherine II acquired for 2,000 livres a plaster version of Voltaire with a wig (location unknown), along with a bronze of the variant “tête nue” (see cat. 23, Related Works).

A terracotta-colored plaster, probably “à la française,” was bought by Thomas Jefferson in July 1789 and shipped to the U.S. on his return from France that fall. It was installed alongside Houdon’s bust of Jacques Turgot in the entrance hall at Monticello, Jefferson’s home in Virginia (Monticello 1993, 215–216, 434).

#### Principal extant versions of the type with drapery

##### Marble

Comédie-Française, Paris (inv. S 189); H. (with base) 80 cm; inscribed across front of base: “François Marie Arouet de VOLTAIRE. né à Paris en 1694 et mort en 1778”; on right side of base: “Fait par Houdon Sculpteur. 1778”; placed at the Comédie-Française, 18 Feb. 1779, “Pour les entrées de Dezède auteur de la musique des *Deux Pages*” (inventory book of the Comédie Française). See Monval 1897, 40–41, no. 38.

##### Plasters

Residenz, Ansbach (inv. AnsRes P20) (see fig. 1); H. 61 cm (with base: 72.5 cm), W. 54 cm; painted terracotta color; *cachet de l’atelier* on proper left side of back; probably acquired by Margrave Alexander in Paris; recorded in Fischer 1786, 60, as installed in the Residenz at Ansbach in a room next to the library holding the coin collection: “Das Hochfürstliche Münzkabinett . . . findet sich neben der Bibliothek in einem sehr schönen, mit Antiken,



3. Bust of Voltaire, after 1780, engraving, BNEst, Hénin Collection.

Gemälden, und einer Sammlung von Gemmen und Büsten gezierten Zimmer. Erst vor kurzem ist das zu Paris verfertigte Brustbild Voltärs dahin geliefert worden." See Bogyay 1964, 117–120, figs. 8–10; *Paradies des Rokoko*. 2: *Galli Bibiena und der Musenhof der Wilhelmine von Bayreuth* [exh. cat., Bayerische Verwaltung der staatlichen Schösser, Gärten und Seen] (Bayreuth, 1998), 152, no. 39, ill.

Staatliches Museum, Schwerin (inv. 5924); H. 63 cm (with base: 74.5 cm), W. 54 cm; *cachet de l'atelier* on lower center of back of truncation; from collection of the duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin. See Schwerin 2000, 180, no. 6, ill.

#### Principal extant versions of the type without drapery

##### Marbles

Musée du Louvre, Paris (inv. RF 1426); H. 48 cm (with base: 63 cm), W. 44.3 cm; inscribed: "HOUDON. 1778"; purchased from Colonel "Bou...ville" in 1848 by the French ministry of the interior; transferred to the Louvre in 1906. See Louvre cat. 1998, 2:426, ill.

Musée national du château de Versailles (inv. MV 852; MR 2189); H. 53 cm (with base: 66 cm), W. 41 cm; inscribed on proper left side: "Houdon. F 1782"; bought from M. Sellier by Alexandre Lenoir in 1801 for the Musée des monuments français for 500 francs; transferred to the Galerie d'Angoulême in the Louvre in 1821; then to Versailles in 1832. See Versailles cat. 1993, 372, no. 1741, ill.

National Gallery of Art, Washington (inv. 1942.9.127); H. 52.7 cm, W. 45.5 cm; inscribed on center back: "AROUET DE VOLTAIRE, / NÉ À PARIS

EN 1694, ET MORT EN 1778"; on truncation of proper right arm: HOUDON, F. 1778"; reportedly executed for the Lamorinière family, France, and taken by them to England in 1870/1871; Duveen Brothers, Inc., London, by 1900; sold 8 Nov. 1901 to Peter A.B. Widener, Pennsylvania. See NGA cat. 1994, 110, ill.

##### Plaster

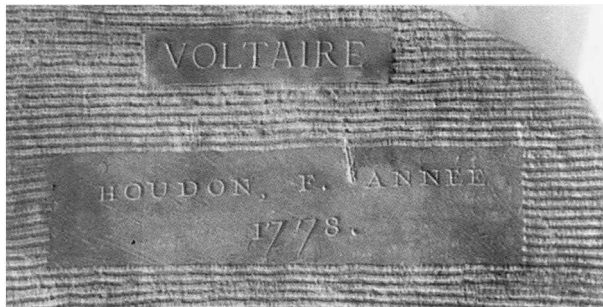
Musée des arts décoratifs, Paris (inv. 19084); H. 54.5 cm (with base: 67 cm), W. 45 cm; Dupré bequest in 1913.

##### Terracotta

Musée des Beaux-Arts, Orléans (inv. 1693) (see fig. 2); H. 49 cm (with marble base: 60 cm), W. 42 cm; inscribed on truncation of proper right arm: "houdon f. 1778"; *cachet de l'atelier* on truncation of proper left arm; from collection of François-Pascal Haudry (1718–1800); Haudry sale, Orléans [1800], no. 49; Vandenberghe collection; acquired ca. 1848 by M. Dupuis and donated to the museum by Mlles Dupuis in 1887. See Dijon and Orléans 1992, 81, no. 9, ill.

##### Prints

Two undated engravings show the Berlin marble on a round base, from below and to the left against a dark background, one with a French inscription — "Monsieur de Voltaire, d'après le buste donné par le Roi de Prusse à l'Académie de Berlin" — and the other German (BNest, Hénin Collection, D 285374 and D 285375) (see fig. 3).



Signature on cat. 24

1. See Frederick's letter of 22 June 1780 to d'Alembert, in Preuss 1846–1856, 25:156, no. 221.

2. See Henning and Henning 1988, 328–331, and index; Frederick A. Spear, *Bibliographie analytique des écrits relatifs à Voltaire 1966–1990* (Oxford, 1992), 48–51, nos. 340–369, and index.

3. See Frederick's correspondence with d'Alembert, 6 July–26 Sept. 1770, in Preuss 1846–1856, 24:488–489, 491–492, 497–498, 501, nos. 77, 79, 82, 85.

4. On Frederick's involvement with d'Alembert, who was considered by some to have been the secret presi-

dent of the Akademie der Wissenschaften, Berlin, see van Treese 1974.

5. Second postscript, dated 3 July 1778 and letter of 15 Aug. 1778, in Preuss 1846–1856, 25:114, 116, nos. 200, 201.

6. See letters Preuss 1846–1856, 25:117–118, 122, 124, 126, 128–129, 136, 141, 148, 150, 152, 156–157, 159, 162–163, 165, 167–169, nos. 202, 205–209, 212, 214, 217–227.

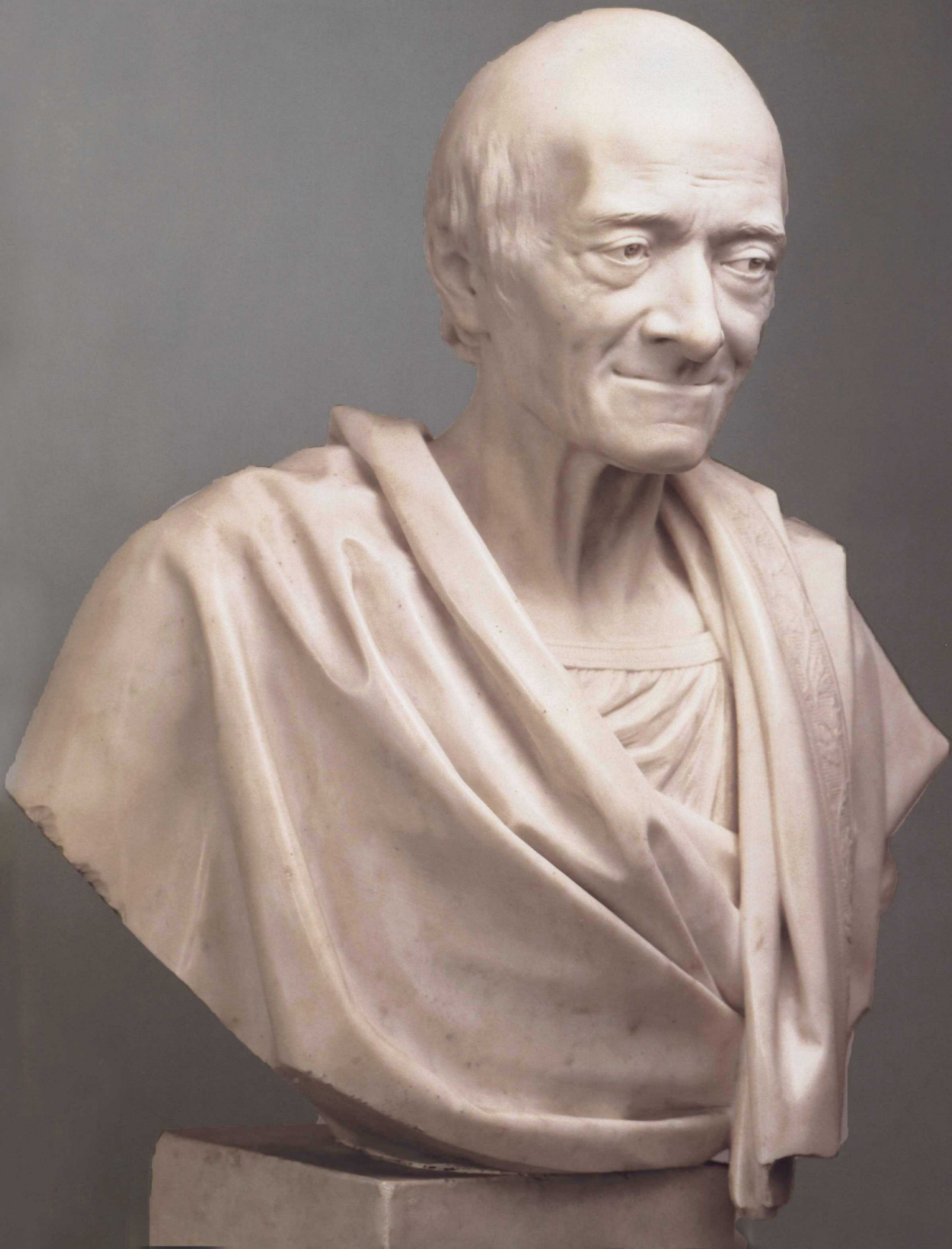
7. See Preuss 1846–1856, 7:50–86.

8. Described in Thiébault 1804, 5:292–303.

9. The bust bears the date 1778, the year of the conception of its first model.

10. Preuss 1832–1834, 3:128, no. 26. See also the handwritten protocol book of the meetings of the academy. The event was also published under "Assemblées publiques" in the journal of the academy (Berlin, 1783), 7.

11. Thiébault 1804, 5:291–292.



## + François-Marie Arouet, called Voltaire (1694–1778)

Dated 1778

White marble on a separate, square, white marble base

H. 58.5 cm (with base: 67.7 cm), W. 50.1 cm

Inscription on proper left edge of truncation, filled with black wax:

*Ordonné Par / S. M. J. / L'Impératrice de / Toutes / les Russies / Fait par Houdon / en 1778.*

The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg (inv. H CK. 7)

Among Houdon's different renderings of Voltaire's likeness, the marble bust commissioned by Catherine II—in the year of the philosopher's death—is the most classical in style. The subject is depicted “à l'antique,” not only with a bare head but in a Roman toga, deliberately evoking the image of an ancient Roman orator. Catherine II had read Voltaire's writings voraciously during her long ascendancy to power, and she had started to correspond with the author as soon as she assumed political control over her vast empire in 1762. The letters between this enlightened absolutist ruler and the “aubergiste de l'Europe” form one of the outstanding epistolary exchanges of the Age of Enlightenment. Catherine's involvement with the philosophes extended to inviting Diderot to complete the *Encyclopédie* in Russia after he encountered problems with French censors in 1762 and offering to bury Voltaire in Russian soil in 1778 when the French clergy opposed giving a decent burial to a man known for his atheist views and mockery of the Catholic Church. Both Catherine and her philosophe friends were keenly aware of the enormous propagandistic potential of their correspondence.

The circumstances of Voltaire's triumphant return to the French capital on 10 February 1778, just a few months before

his death on 30 May, are well known, as is his veritable apotheosis: the crowning of his bust with a laurel wreath in his presence on the stage of the Comédie-Française two months earlier (30 March 1778).<sup>1</sup> Frédéric-Melchior Grimm appears to have informed Catherine II by late February 1778 of Voltaire's fragile health. That there were plans to commission a bust can be deduced from a letter Catherine wrote to Grimm on 13 April 1778, confirming that such a portrait would give her great pleasure but expressing dismay that Voltaire's health should have been compromised by his last journey to Paris.<sup>2</sup> On receiving news of Voltaire's death soon after, Catherine plunged into a profound and possibly genuine depression, as she wrote to Grimm on 21 June 1778: “I feel a sense of universal discouragement and a great contempt for all the things of this world.”<sup>3</sup> When communicating her disgust that the French clergy had refused an honorable burial to one of the greatest thinkers of his age, she even asked to Grimm to send Voltaire's body to Russia, where she could give her mentor “the most precious tomb possible.”<sup>4</sup> Whether or not she received the body, she said, she would certainly have a monument constructed. This eventually led her to commission the *Seated Voltaire* (Frank essay, fig. 2). She also directed Grimm to secure Voltaire's library and whatever

remained of his papers,<sup>5</sup> and she requested the plans and a model of Voltaire's house, which she intended to reconstruct in the gardens of Tsarskoye Selo as a sort of shrine to her mentor.<sup>6</sup> Against this background Catherine's commissions assume an altogether different character than simply the collecting of busts as tokens of the widely celebrated friendship cult in late eighteenth century Europe.

On 11 August 1778 the empress increased from 1,500 to 2,000 livres the amount she was willing to pay for a bronze bust of Voltaire "tête nue" and a plaster of Voltaire "à la française" (cats. 23 and 24), signaling her appreciation for Houdon, the artist who would execute them.<sup>7</sup> On 1 October 1778 she expressed her complete satisfaction with Grimm's commissions upon their safe arrival in St. Petersburg. She added, however, that she preferred the bronze bust over the other representations: "The famous desk [the so-called Chesme-Desk by Augustin-Barnabé de Mailly] is the ornament of my hermitage, as well as the two busts of Voltaire; I like the bust without a wig better; you know of my aversion to wigs and busts with wigs in particular; it always seems to me that wigs are used to inspire laughter."<sup>8</sup> On 30 October 1778 Catherine repeated her preference for the Voltaire "tête nue": "I have already informed you of the arrival of the busts by Houdon; since then I have not stopped looking at the one without the wig, whereas the one with the wig does not interest me in the slightest."<sup>9</sup>

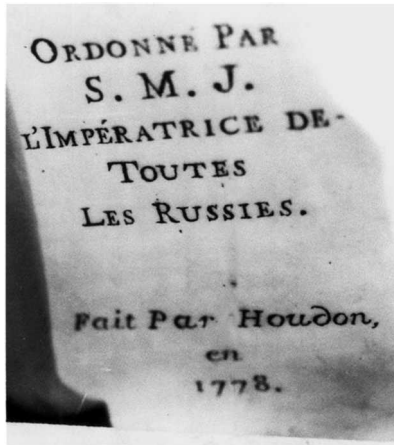
When Grimm finally sent the empress the receipt for these two busts on 8 November 1778, he informed her that work on the marble bust was well under way: "The one that Houdon does in marble advances greatly. I judge that it will be ready by the end of the year, exhibited throughout the months of January and February as something belonging to our august Empress, in order to satisfy the artist's vanity, and in March it will leave for Rouen to be sent to its destination by the first ship."<sup>10</sup> In the same letter Grimm mentioned that Voltaire's niece, Mme Denis, was commissioning from Houdon a life-size statue of Voltaire, sitting in his chair and draped in the manner of the ancients, which she intended to present to the Académie française; the model seemed charming to Grimm. Suggesting to Catherine that she commission from Houdon a similar full-scale image, but this time standing, he hastened to add that he believed that the artist would probably die from joy and pride to receive such a commission.

The marble bust "à l'antique" was indeed presented at the Salon of 1779, where it received considerable attention, along with the empress' other Voltaire-related commissions:

That [bust] will be placed in the cabinet of the Empress of Russia, who, never having been able to enjoy the presence of this famous man, wants to multiply his effigies everywhere in her palace. She will also own a statue of him by the same artist in gilded bronze; this really is the old man of Ferney, he is clad in his night gown, he is seated in his armchair, the hands supported by the arms [of the chair]; he comes back from a walk, he is tired, ready to sleep. This is the familiar scene that the author has chosen; but, despite the lassitude of his body, his soul is awake, and the sardonic snigger of this figure characterizes the harvest of ridicules that the satirical philosopher has made during his last meditations; he amuses himself on his own account at the expense of the fools, the priests, the fanatics, which he will once again subject to general derision. One has got to admit that in this small figure, less than a foot tall, there is more genius than in those of the court [meaning the series of "Great Men"], the Corneille excluded.<sup>11</sup>

By September 1779 the finished marble bust had reached Grimm for shipment to St. Petersburg, and it is once more mentioned in the surviving correspondence between Catherine II and her Paris agent. When Grimm asked how much he should pay for the bust, Catherine replied that he should give it the price he considered appropriate.<sup>12</sup> Unfortunately, there is no documentation of her response to the bust after it reached St. Petersburg, but on a journey to Russia in 1790–1792 Fortia de Piles saw it in the middle of the gallery overlooking the hanging garden of the New Hermitage—in other words, next to the corridor that connected the Winter Palace with the imperial throne room. This indicates that during Catherine's lifetime it was awarded a central position in ceremonial as well as symbolic terms.<sup>13</sup> Despite the empress' turning away from the French ideal as a result of a Revolution she abhorred, Houdon's bust, then considered to be among the most truthful renderings of the "old man of Ferney," remained in the vicinity of her throne.

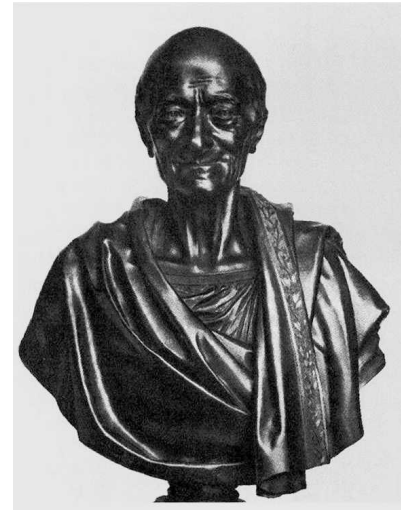
CHRISTOPH FRANK



Signature on cat. 25



1. Houdon, Bust of Voltaire, 1778, plaster, Schlossmuseum Gotha.



2. Houdon, Bust of Voltaire, 1778, bronze, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin. Untraced since World War II.

#### PROVENANCE

Commissioned by Catherine II in 1778, likely at the suggestion of Frédéric-Melchior Grimm; exhibited at the Salon of 1779; still with Grimm in Sept. 1779 before shipment to St. Petersburg, where it appears to have remained at the Winter Palace ever since (see text above); mentioned in Houdon's list of his own works (ca. 1794) under the year 1778: "4 Buste[s] de differents costumes de Mr de Voltaire, tous exécutés en marbre et en bronze."

#### EXHIBITIONS

Paris, Salon cat. 1779, no. 223; Paris 1994, 228, no. 279.

#### REFERENCES

Fortia de Piles 1796, 3:21; Desnoiresterres 1879, 111–121, esp. 118; Dierks 1887, 145–146; V. Vereshchagin, "Proizvedeniya Gudona v' Rossiui," *Starye Gody* (June 1908), 337–338; Vitry 1907b, 201, no. 56; Réau 1914, 44–45; Réau 1917, 141–145; Giacometti 1918–1919, 1:72–74; 2:29, 353–354; 3:63;

Réau 1924a, 190–191; Giacometti 1929, 2:162, 302–303 n. 6.; Réau 1964, 1:79–81, 355–359; 2:44–45, no. 202; Arnason 1975, 52, fig. 116; Guilhem Scherf, "L'Iconographie sculptée de Voltaire," in Paris 1994, 224–225.

#### RELATED WORKS

Schlossmuseum Gotha (inv. P 37) (fig. 1); plaster, H. 74.7 cm, W. 49.8 cm, D. 32.5 cm. See Schuttwolf 1995, 151, no. 59; also Guilhem Scherf in Frankfurt 1999–2000, 138, no. 81; the latter believes it to be the original model for the marble.

Staatliche Museen zu Berlin; untraced since World War II (fig. 2); bronze; H. 74.5 cm; signed: "f. [fait] p. [par] houdon en 1778"; collection of R. Lessing, Berlin; given by the latter to the museum in 1905. See E. F. Bange, *Die Bildwerke in Bronze und in anderen Metallen*, vol. 2, *Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Die Bildwerke des Deutschen Museums*, ed. Theodor Demmler (Berlin and Leipzig, 1923), 45, no. 2923.

1. Bachaumont 1780–1789, 11:106–107, 191ff, 238; and Paris 1994, 95–96, no. 90.

2. *SIRIO* 1878, 86. The commission was reconfirmed by the empress in a letter to Grimm on 16 May 1778 (*SIRIO* 1878, 89). Both Grimm and Diderot were close acquaintances of Houdon, as can be deduced from a number of sources, including a letter from Diderot to Grimm of 2 Sept. 1772; see Diderot (ed. 1955–1970), 12:113–114, no. 765.

3. This is repeated in another letter of 1 Oct. 1778: "I do good for doing good, and then that is all; well, that is what has kept me from the discouragement and the indifference for the things of this world which I have felt at the news of Voltaire's death. Furthermore, he is my master; it is he or rather his writings that have formed my spirit and my head. I have told you this more than once, I think: I am his pupil" (see *SIRIO* 1878, 94 and 102).

4. This extraordinary plan was also disseminated in the media: "One pretends, moreover, that the Empress of Russia, who honored Monsieur de Voltaire of a most intimate correspondence, has indeed suggested to erect him a mausoleum on her estates" (Bachaumont 1780–1789, 12:99).

5. Regarding the sale of Voltaire's library by Mme Denis to Catherine II see Karp 1998, 252–305; and Sergei Karp, *Quand Catherine II achetait la bibliothèque de Voltaire* (Ferney-Voltaire, 1999).

6. Nothing came of the project; see Paris 1986, 93, no. 144.

7. *SIRIO* 1878, 95. For Grimm's reply see *SIRIO* 1885, 19.

8. *SIRIO* 1878, 104. On the Chesme-Desk, part of the same round of commissions, see Denis Roche, "La Fameuse Ecritoire d'Augustin Barnabé de Mailly,

peintre en émail," *La Renaissance de l'art français et des industries de luxe* 3 (May 1920), 197–202; and Sergei Karp, "Perepiska Grimma s Verzhennom," in *Russko-francuzskie kul'turnye svjazi v epochu Prosvescenija: materialy issledovanija. Sbornik pamjati G. S. Kucerenko*, ed. Sergei Karp (Moscow, 2001), 132–166.

9. *SIRIO* 1878, 107–108.

10. *SIRIO* 1885, 25.

11. Bachaumont 1780, 13:245–246.

12. *SIRIO* 1885, 65–66; and *SIRIO* 1878, 161.

13. Fortia de Piles 1796, 3:21.



## + Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712 – 1778)

Dated 1778

Plaster, painted terracotta color

H. 58 cm (with base: 68 cm)

Abbaye royale de Châalis, Institut de France (inv. 429)

By 1765 Jean-Jacques Rousseau had published *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, *Emile*, and the *Contrat social*, works that established him as one of the greatest French writers of the century. Endorsing a return to nature, the nurturing of children, and the universal right to liberty and happiness, his writings brought him international fame and generated bitter controversy. Rousseau himself led a troubled, itinerant existence, often driven into exile, alienating those who befriended him, including Diderot, Frédéric-Melchior Grimm, and Mme d'Épinay. His differences with Voltaire are legendary. After spending time in England and the French provinces in the late 1760s, when he wrote his *Confessions*, he returned to Paris in 1770 in financial straits and grew increasingly misanthropic. About 1776 the marquis René-Louis de Girardin, an artist and highly cultivated gentleman, offered Rousseau and his wife a place to live on his estate at Ermenonville, north of Paris, where he had created “natural” gardens inspired by Rousseau’s writings. Rousseau moved there in May 1778 and lived peacefully until his death on 2 July.

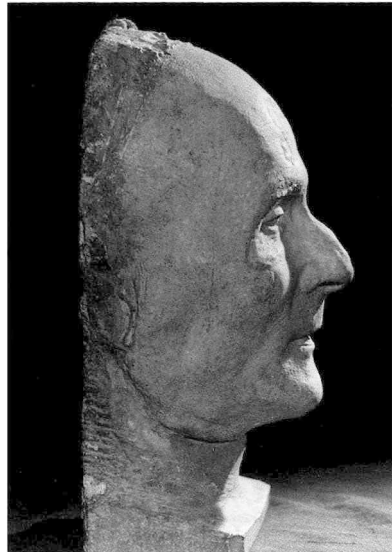
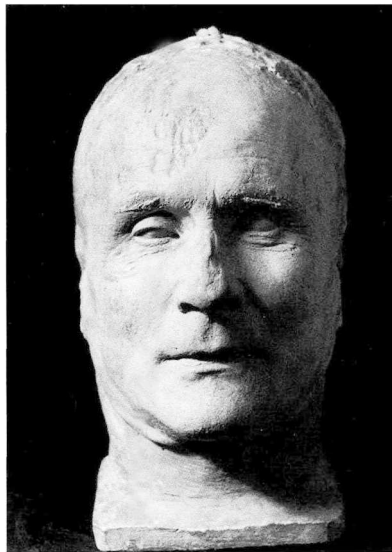
Immediately following Rousseau’s death Girardin sent for Houdon in Paris, asking him to come and make a death mask of the revered philosophe. Houdon wrote that he “received at midnight . . . an express letter from M. de Girardin, who sent it

to me, knowing of my admiration for the great man, and his constant refusal during his lifetime to allow his bust to be made, something that I have since done, and that has generally been found to resemble him.”<sup>1</sup> Having recently done portraits of other great Enlightenment figures, including Diderot and Voltaire (see cats. 19–25), Houdon was the obvious choice to record the features of Rousseau. His *Death Mask of Rousseau* survives (fig. 1 a–b) and is a moving work that records every nuance in the writer’s lined and sensitive face, including injuries to his forehead and nose resulting from a fall just before he died. The eyes are open with a few lashes caught in the plaster, and the thin mouth almost seems to smile.

Since Houdon reportedly saw Rousseau only once, and by his own account never had a sitting, he had to rely on other sources as well as the death mask to capture the philosopher’s appearance.<sup>2</sup> Maurice Quentin de La Tour had shown a pastel portrait at the Salon of 1753 that inspired many copies,<sup>3</sup> including an excellent engraving by Augustin de Saint-Aubin (fig. 2). Houdon too shows Rousseau wearing a short, tightly curled wig, a coat of a plain material with three large round buttons, a vest, and a cravat and jabot. Yet the extraordinary liveliness of the bust and the intelligent, sensitive expression of the eyes and



1a-b. Houdon, Death Mask of Rousseau, 3 July 1778, gray-white plaster, Musée Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Bibliothèque publique et universitaire, Geneva.



mouth are all Houdon's invention. It was immediately appreciated as a compelling likeness.

Houdon had completed a bust of Rousseau by at least 14 November 1778, when "all of Paris" was apparently visiting his studio to see portraits of Rousseau, d'Alembert, and Franklin (cats. 27 and 43).<sup>4</sup> The present bust, executed for Girardin and signed and dated 1778, was delivered to Ermenonville on 5 July 1779, three days after the anniversary of Rousseau's death. Girardin's son Stanislas, who had known Rousseau well, wrote in his journal:

M. Houdon, one of the most famous sculptors in Paris, also sent my father the bust of Jean-Jacques, the

resemblance of which is striking, especially when looking at it in profile; a smile of merriment is on his mouth; he is the first artist who makes a cavity for the eyes and indicates the pupils, which gives his portraits a feeling of life that is frightening when looking at them a long time. That impression is all the greater in this one, since the features of the original are so arresting and he has given to this plaster a terracotta color that resembles that of flesh. M. Houdon had all the more merit in making this bust such a good likeness since he had only seen Rousseau one time, ten or twelve years ago, and that it is only after the mask that he made of this philosopher after his death that he managed, so to speak, to bring him to life.<sup>5</sup>

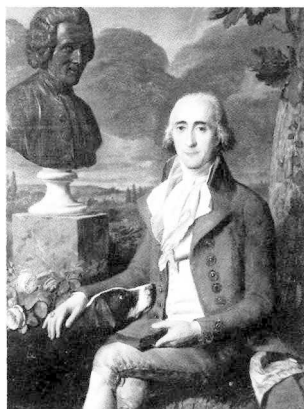
On 17 July 1779 "Rozier" wrote to Girardin: "I just learned that you had [Rousseau] modeled after his death, that you will have his bust; I beg you, my hands joined, to permit me to ask you for one of them, or rather to ask your sculptor to cast one for me."<sup>6</sup> Girardin must have been extremely pleased with the sculpture, for he had his own portrait painted with the bust of Rousseau beside him (fig. 3).

There is disagreement in the literature as to whether the present bust is identical with that shown at the Salon of 1779 (no. 220) as belonging to Girardin. The Salon catalogue lists the work under the rubric "bust in terracotta," but there are sculptures in other media (gilt bronze and marble) in the same group. Girardin is recorded as having only one bust of Rousseau, in plaster painted to resemble terracotta, and it was in his possession by July 1779, thus it was possibly the same bust exhibited at the Salon: "What fire . . . in the last one [Rousseau], whose piercing look seem to penetrate into the most hidden innermost folds of the human heart! There is above all . . . a certain point of view from which the illusion is so complete and the gaze so direct and so vivid that one believes this bust to be alive, so that one cannot stand it and the first reaction is to withdraw."<sup>7</sup>

As the Revolution approached, Rousseau became a political hero for the Republican cause, and his ideas of personal freedom, equality, and the virtues of the common man were often cited as sources of inspiration in the movement against oppression. On 21 December 1790 the Constituent Assembly voted to erect a monument to Rousseau; and Houdon, assuming he would be awarded the commission, submitted a terracotta model (lost). But the assembly decided to open a competition.



2. Augustin de Saint-Aubin, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, ca. 1777, engraving after Maurice-Quentin de La Tour, BNEst.



3. Attributed to Jean-Baptiste Greuze, Marquis René de Girardin, ca. 1780, oil on canvas, Institut de France, Musée de Châalis.

In a brochure published in Paris 5 June 1791 and addressed to the president of the Société des amis de la constitution, Houdon protested:

When the National Assembly voted to erect a statue of J.-J. Rousseau, several deputies . . . imagined that, having executed the bust with the best likeness that has been done up until now of this great man, I could have some claim perhaps or at least some well-founded hope to be the artist chosen to do that statue; all the more that, Jean-Jacques being dead, alone in possessing the mask, I could almost say that the likeness was my property, since no matter what artist is chosen . . . the head could not be by him, since he will be obliged to take my bust, if he wants Jean-Jacques to be a good likeness.<sup>8</sup>

The project went through a number of delays and changes until it was abandoned altogether in 1798.<sup>9</sup>

#### ANNE L. POULET

##### PROVENANCE

The original plaster, based on death mask taken by Houdon 3 July 1778 (see text above); delivered to the marquis René-Louis de Girardin (1735–1808), 5 July 1779 (see Gillet 1924, 327–328); remained in his family's possession until the death of the marquis Fernand de Girardin; purchased by the Institut de France, which placed it on deposit at the Abbaye de Châalis in 1923.

##### EXHIBITIONS

Paris, Salon cat. 1779, 45, no. 220, under "Buste en terre cuite [sic]": "J. J. Rousseau. Appartenant à M. le Marquis de Gerardin [sic]."

#### REFERENCES

*Les Connaisseurs ou la matinée du salon des tableaux* (Paris, 1779), 16 (Deloynes XI, no. 199); L'Abbé Aubert, "Exposition des tableaux au salon du Louvre en 1779..." (Paris, 1779), 220 (Deloynes XI, no. 203); *Encore un rêve, suite de la pretresse. A Rome et se trouve à Paris chez Valade* (Paris, 1779), 25 (Deloynes XI, no. 207); Bachaumont 1780, 326–327, letter 3, 28 Sept. 1779; "Lettres sur les Salons de 1773, 1777 et 1779 adressées par Du Pont de Nemours à la Margrave Caroline-Louise de Bade," *AAF*, n.s. 2 (Paris, 1908), 119–120; Comte de Girardin, *Iconographie de Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Portraits, scènes, habitations, souvenirs* (Paris, 1908), 264, no. IIII; Hippolyte Buffenoir, "Jean-Jacques Rousseau et Houdon," *Mercure de France* 97 (July 1912), 14–44; Paul Vitry, "Les Monuments à J.-J. Rousseau de Houdon à Bartholomé," *GBA* 8, 4th ser. (1912), 100, ill. p. 99; André Martin-Decaen, *Le Marquis René de Girardin (1735–1808)* (Paris, 1912), 113; Hippolyte Buffenoir, *Les Portraits de Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Etude historique et iconographique, souvenirs, documents, témoignages* (Paris, 1913), 1:212; Alexis François, "Review of Buffenoir, 1913, vol. I," *Annales de la Société Jean-Jacques Rousseau* 10 (Geneva, 1914–1915), 220–222; Giacometti 1918–1919, 2:308; Adrien Bovy, "Les Bustes de Jean-Jacques Rousseau par Houdon," *La Semaine littéraire*, no. 1384 (10 July 1920), 318–321; Louis Gillet, "Le Buste de Rousseau de la collection de Girardin au Musée de Chaalis," *Beaux-Arts*, no. 21 (15 Dec. 1924), 326–328, ill.; Louis Gillet, "La Collection Girardin au Musée de Chaalis. Le Reliquaire de Jean-Jacques," *Revue des deux mondes* 29 (Sept. 1925), 134–161, esp. 143–148; Paris 1928, 66; Giacometti 1929, 2:135; Réau 1964, 1:81–82, 96, 180, 360–363; 2:41; Worcester 1964, 68; London 1972, 248; Arnason 1975, 48–49, III n. 116; *Le Musée des Beaux-Arts d'Orléans. Musée et monuments de France* (Paris, 1996), 114.

#### RELATED WORKS

Of the three variant types of Houdon's busts of Rousseau—contemporary dress with wig, nude without wig, and wearing a toga with a philosopher's band in his hair—there are many more examples of the first, especially in plaster and terracotta, but no definitive study has yet determined their number, dates, and authenticity. A partial list of busts with eighteenth-century provenances follows.

##### Death mask

Musée Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Bibliothèque publique et universitaire, Geneva (inv. 378) (see figs. 1a–b); gray white plaster; H. (chin to top of head) 22.4 cm (with base: 30.5 cm), W. 16.1 cm; executed 3 July 1778 (see text above); posthumous sale of contents of Houdon's studio, Paris, 15–17 Dec. 1828, 15, no. 15 (to M. Hazard for 655 francs) (Réau 1964, 1:119); Gossuin sale, Paris, 14 May 1860 (bought in); posthumous sale of Mme Gossuin, 14 May 1861 (to Emile Raspail for 346 francs); by inheritance to his son Julien Raspail; sold by latter to the library in Geneva, 1952. See Philippe Burty, "Mouvement des arts et de la curiosité. Le Masque original de J.-J. Rousseau," *GBA* 6 (1860), 358–359; and Auguste Bouvier, "Note sur le masque mortuaire de Rousseau par Houdon," *Annales de la Société Jean-Jacques Rousseau* 33 (1953–1955), 295–297, ill.

##### Contemporary dress with wig

###### Terracottas

Musée des Beaux-Arts, Orléans (inv. 1692), H. 50 cm (with base: 60 cm), W. 46 cm; inscribed on truncation of proper right arm: "houdon. 1778"; open at back; *cachet de l'atelier* at center back, upper edge of truncation; collection of François-Pascal Haudry (1728–1800); his posthumous sale,

Orléans [1800], 31, no. 50; Vandenberghe collection; acquired ca. 1848 by M. Dupuis; given to museum in 1887 by the Mlles Dupuis. See Girardin 1908, 264, no. 1115; Réau 1964, 2:41.

Musée de l'École nationale supérieure des beaux-arts, Paris (inv. MU 1245); H. 47.5 cm (with base: 58.5 cm), W. 44.5 cm, D. 28 cm; inscribed on truncation of proper right arm: "houdon 1778"; *cachet de l'atelier* on back. See Eugène Müntz, "Le Musée de l'École des beaux-arts," *GBA* 4, 3rd ser. (1890), 54–55; and Rabaud 1938, 112.

Musée Lambinet, Versailles (inv. 700 B); cast terracotta; H. 45.5 cm, W. 37.5 cm, D. 25 cm; inscribed on truncation of proper right shoulder: "houdon. 1779"; *cachet de l'atelier* on back; truncation in front is unusually short, showing only two buttons; reportedly from collection of "Monsieur de Boufflers, dans sa maison des Fonds-Saint-Légers (Saint Germain)." See Versailles 1928, 31–32, no. 45; and Gendre 1997, 120, fig. 190.

#### Plasters

Deutsche Staatsbibliothek, Berlin (inv. K 14); H. 55.6 cm (with base: 70 cm), W. 49.2 cm; painted terracotta color; inscribed on truncation of proper right arm: "houdon 1778"; open at back; *cachet de l'atelier* on lower back edge of truncation; from Poelchau collection. See Erich Biehahn, *Kunstwerke der Deutschen Staatsbibliothek* (Berlin, 1961), 191, pl. 55.

Staatliches Museum, Schwerin (inv. Pl 281); H. 56.4 cm (with base: 68.6 cm), W. 48.5 cm; inscribed on truncation of proper right arm: "houdon. 1778"; painted terracotta color; open at back; *cachet de l'atelier* at center of lower back edge of truncation; probably purchased by Prince Friedrich Franz of Mecklenberg-Schwerin on his trip to Paris in 1782 or shortly thereafter. See Steinmann 1911, 212, 216–217, fig. 9; and Schwerin 2000, 182, no. 7, ill.

#### Nude without wig

##### Plasters

Schlossmuseum Gotha (inv. P 30); painted bronze color; H. 37.8 cm (with base: 46.4 cm), W. 22.4 cm, D. 24.1 cm; inscribed on proper right edge of truncation: "houdon f 1778"; probably acquired by Ernst II from Houdon; probably identical with version mentioned in Klebe 1796, 103; "Verzeichniss der im sogenannten Antiken-Saale befindlichen Abgüsse, Büsten pp." (undated, ThStA Gotha, ca. 1804–1827, fol. 6r), no. 40, under "Cap: III": "Eine Büste von Houdon (Rousseau)." See Schuttwolf 1995, 152, no. 60, ill.

Musée des arts décoratifs, Paris (inv. 17537); painted terracotta color; H. 37 cm (with base: 49 cm), W. 21.5 cm; inscribed on truncation of proper right shoulder: "houdon f. 1778"; *cachet de l'atelier*; gift of Mme Edouard Tresca, 6 Dec. 1910. See Buffenoir 1913, 218.

#### Wearing toga and headband, with base in form of a herm

Musée du Louvre, Paris (inv. LP 1729); bronze; H. 45 cm (with base: 60 cm), W. 30.5 cm, D. 23.3 cm; inscribed on truncation of proper right shoulder:



Back view of cat. 26

"houdon. f. 1778"; collection of Bertrand Barère de Vieuzac (1755–1841); Louvre acquired from him in 1838. See Louvre cat. 1998, 2:421.

Paris, Salon cat. 1791 (published edition), 37, no. 484: "Onze morceaux de Sculpture, Bustes tant en marbre qu'en Terre cuite, Plâtre, & Bronze..."; *La Béquille de Voltaire au Salon...* (Paris, [1791]) (Deloynes XVII, no. 439), 42: "Remarquez à côté, un buste de Rousseau très-ressemblant, par M. Houdon; et au dessus un autre Rousseau en pied, qui l'est moins."

#### Reduction, unknown type

Paris, Salon cat. 1789, 47, no. 247, under "Têtes en marbre de petite proportion": "J. J. Rousseau." See *Les Elèves au Salon ou l'Amphigouri* (Paris, 1789), 43: "Aux portraits que tu en fais, je les reconnais ces charmants modèles... nos sublimes J. J. Rousseau et Buffon." No example is known.

#### Sales in Houdon's lifetime

Dubois-Verrier et Claudion Frères, Paris, 12 June 1783, no. 57: "Le buste de Voltaire d'après M. Houdon. Terre cuite. Vendu avec le buste de J.-J. Rousseau.

Ces deux morceaux ont encore le mérite de ressembler parfaitement." [Chevalier] by Lebrun, Paris, 28 Nov. 1785, no. 104: "Les bustes en plâtre de Voltaire et de J. J. Rousseau par Houdon. H. 18 pouces [45.7 cm]."

[D'Espagnac et Tricot] by Lebrun, Paris, 22 May 1793, no. 193: "Deux bustes en bronze, l'un celui de J. J. Rousseau et l'autre celui de Voltaire, élevés sur leurs piédouches en marbre. Adjugés 620 livres à Haudry."

L'Elysée, Paris, 13 Aug. 1798, no. 83: "Trois bustes Molière, Voltaire et Rousseau en plâtre, réparés par Houdon"; no. 92: "Deux bustes en marbres, Voltaire et Rousseau d'après le modèle de Houdon."

Haudry, Orléans, [1800], 31, "Terres-cuites," nos. 49 and 50, 185 and 186, "Quatre bustes posés sur colonnes, représentant: Voltaire, J.-J. Rousseau, Molière et La Fontaine par Houdon—H. 18 p [45.7 cm]."

#### Boilly paintings

A terracotta-color bust of Rousseau in contemporary dress and wig appears at the left side of the lower shelf in the background of both versions of Boilly's paintings of *Houdon in His Studio* (see cat. 66).

1. Letter from Houdon to Camus, president of the Comité des pensions, Feb. or Mar. 1791 (see Buffenoir 1913, 1:228).

2. Letter from David d'Angers to M. Duriez, 6 Jan. 1839, said that M. Bégler, a former assistant to Houdon, had seen Rousseau posing for his master. Given Houdon's own testimony, this is doubtful (see Buffenoir 1913, 1:219).

3. See Girardin 1908, 44–47.

4. Métra 1787–1790, 7:117.

5. See François 1914–1915, 221 n. 2; and Gillet 1924, 327–328.

6. See François 1914–1915, 221 n. 1.

7. Bachaumont 1780, 326–327, letter 3, 28 Sept. 1779.

8. Houdon, *Réflexions sur les concours en général, et sur celui de la statue de J. J. Rousseau en particulier* (see Buffenoir 1913, 233–235).

9. See Gisela Grammacini, "Sur le projet d'élever un monument en l'honneur de Rousseau," in *La Révolution française et l'Europe 1789–1799* [exh. cat., Galeries nationales du Grand Palais] (Paris, 1989), 3:893–902.

## ✦ Jean Le Rond d'Alembert (1717–1783)

Probably 1802

White marble with gray veining on round wood base

H. 41.43 cm (with base: 52.55 cm), W. 28.4 cm, D. 23.5 cm

Inscribed on truncation of proper right shoulder: *houдон. f. 1779*

Yale University Art Gallery, Gift of McA. Donald Ryan, B.A. 1934, and William H. Ryan, Class of 1921S (inv. 1957.47.1)

Houdon's portrait of the mathematician, scientist, and man of letters Jean Le Rond d'Alembert, one of the key figures in the Paris Enlightenment, has been preserved in only two known works: the present marble, depicting d'Alembert "à l'antique" with bare head and neck (following the format of Houdon's *Diderot*, cats. 19–22); and a plaster of him wearing a wig and contemporary dress (fig. 1). Unlike Houdon's busts of the other philosophes, namely those of Voltaire and Jean-Jacques Rousseau (see cats. 23–26), his likeness of d'Alembert was not reproduced in multiple versions and materials and was not shown in a Salon exhibition until 1801. Even contemporary documents and sales catalogues record only a few copies.

The reason for the small dissemination may stem in part from the mathematician's elusive personality and his apparent lack of popularity with the masses. Coeditor of the *Encyclopédie* with Diderot from 1747 to 1758, an avid participant in the Parisian salons and academies, and a longstanding correspondent of Voltaire and Frederick the Great, d'Alembert stood at the center of the intellectual movement of his time.<sup>1</sup> Defying his illegitimate (although aristocratic) birth, he rose to prominence as a brilliant scientist and sought-after conversationalist, always eager to keep his financial and institutional independence.

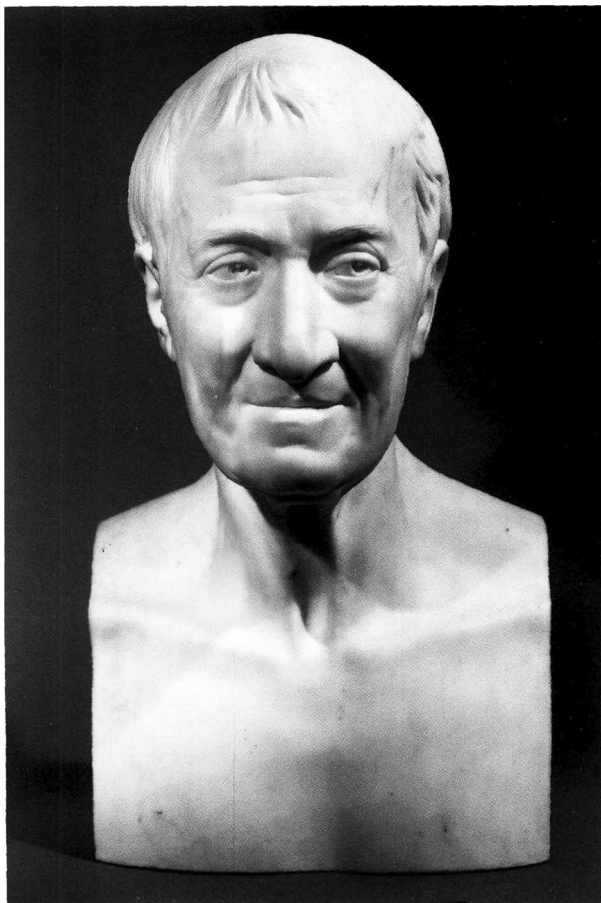
At age twenty-four he was appointed a member of the Académie royale des sciences, and at thirty-seven he was elected to the Académie française, of which he later became permanent secretary. While infamous for his anticlerical and pugnacious attitude and his devastating wit, he was also characterized as tepid, shy, and emotionally immature.<sup>2</sup> By the time Houdon executed his portrait, d'Alembert was in his early sixties and already past the prime of his career. He had been in poor health and complaining of a failing mind for a few years, but the death of his long-time love, the salon hostess Julie de Lespinasse (1732–1776), struck him a great blow, which was exceeded only by his belated discovery of her passionate affairs with other men.

When Voltaire died on 30 May 1778, d'Alembert, relying on his preeminent role in the academies as well as his connection to the Prussian king, made it his mission to avenge his old friend and mentor, whom the authorities had denied a decent burial and religious service.<sup>3</sup> Probably around the same time, his relationship with Houdon, who had just created a sensation with his portraits of Molière and Voltaire (cats. 11 and 24), became more amicable. As presiding secretary of the Académie française, d'Alembert approached the sculptor in early June asking for permission to have a painting made after the newly finished





1. Houdon, Jean Le Rond d'Alembert, 1778, plaster (before its repainting in 1985), Staatliches Museum, Schwerin.



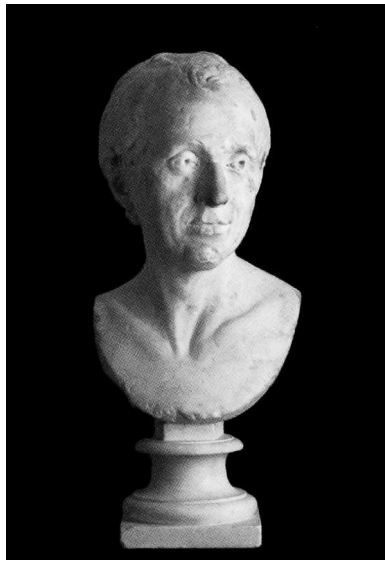
2. Houdon, Barthélemy, ca. 1802, marble, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, cabinet des médailles.

bust of the late patriarch—a favor that Houdon graciously granted, contrary to his usual practice.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, Houdon promised to give plaster copies of the bust to “most” academicians, as d’Alembert announced on 10 June, eventually including every single member. D’Alembert in turn avidly promoted Houdon’s work; he not only talked Frederick II into acquiring a marble of Houdon’s *Voltaire* “à la française” (cat. 24) for the Akademie der Wissenschaften in Berlin but also personally offered a terracotta version of it and a cast of the *Molière* to the Académie française.<sup>5</sup> The Académie française, for its part, formally rewarded Houdon for his acts of generosity and showered him with gifts, including lifetime admission to all of their meetings. Following the mathematician’s death, Houdon expressed his lasting loyalty to his academic supporter by donating his bust of d’Alembert to the Académie royale des sciences (see Related Works).

There is no documentary evidence that d’Alembert ever sat for Houdon, but the first version of his portrait must have been created during the second half of 1778, corresponding to the date that appears on the plaster in Schwerin (fig. 1).<sup>6</sup> On 14 November 1778 François Métra recorded that “all of Paris” flocked to Houdon’s studio to see the busts of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, d’Alembert, and Benjamin Franklin (see cats. 26 and 43).<sup>7</sup> Although apparently well received, the portrait of d’Alembert in contemporary French dress and wig was never shown at the Salon. More than twenty years later, and long after d’Alembert’s death, Houdon introduced a variant, which represents the sitter without drapery or wig. It is mentioned in a review of the Salon of 1801 written by Mme de Vandeuil, Diderot’s daughter, for Jacques-Henri Meister, who was continuing to distribute the *Correspondance littéraire* from Zurich: “a bust of *d’Alembert* by [Houdon], tête nue; I do not find it as good, in terms of resemblance, as the less beautiful one with a wig.”<sup>8</sup> The marble, exhibited a year later under its own number, was welcomed by the critics: “The citizen Houdon exhibited several very beautiful portraits. Those of the abbé Barthélemy and d’Alembert are of perfect likeness. It is probable that he executed them to be placed in the Bibliothèque Nationale. At least, that is what we would want. It is to be hoped that the portraits of famous men, who made French literature illustrious, be placed in this precious depository.”<sup>9</sup>

Despite its date of 1779, the present marble has all the stylistic earmarks of Houdon’s late works and is almost certainly identical with the one shown in the Salon of 1802.<sup>10</sup> A comparison with the bust of Barthélemy (fig. 2), mentioned as the

3. Félix Lecomte, Jean Le Rond d'Alembert, 1774, marble, Musée du Louvre, Paris.



companion piece for the proposed installation in the Bibliothèque Nationale, reveals striking similarities in the quality of its carving, the treatment of the hair, and details such as the wrinkles around the eyes. As Houdon often did for variants of his portraits, he based the marble on the model he executed in 1778/1779, simply removing the accessories and adjusting the features and the torso to the new format “à l'antique.” He was possibly influenced by another portrait of d'Alembert, executed by Félix Lecomte in 1774 for the sitter's close friend Claude-Henri Watelet, a member of the Académie française (fig. 3). This bust, copied by Guillaume Francin after 1798 for Alexandre Lenoir's Musée des monuments français,<sup>11</sup> depicts the mathematician without draperies and “bare-headed, as was his practice when he worked.”<sup>12</sup> D'Alembert himself referred to it in a letter to Voltaire, when he made clear that he would not sit for yet another portrait: “Poncet came to my house with a letter from you . . . and I thanked him for his good intentions, saying that a famous sculptor from this country had just done a bust of me, and that he could make a copy of it if he wanted to do so.”<sup>13</sup> Probably owing to d'Alembert's shyness about being modeled, Houdon's marble bust remains one of the few sculptural images of the famous philosophe.

ULRIKE D. MATHIES

#### PROVENANCE

Possibly identical with bust mentioned in Gimpel 1963, 411: “5 janvier [1930]. — Un nouveau Houdon . . . a été découvert par M. Souffrice . . . c'est le *Portrait de d'Alembert*. Il l'a montré à Giacometti qui . . . l'a reconnu”; acquired in 1931 by John Barry Ryan, New York, through Arnold Seligman, Rey and Co., New York, as “from the collection of Octavien de Puygallarde, Paris”; presented to the university in 1957 by McA. Donald Ryan and William H. Ryan.

#### EXHIBITIONS

Possibly Paris, Salon cat. 1802, 72, no. 429: “D'Alembert,” along with “S. S. Barthélemy” and “Etude de femme,” under “Houdon . . . Bustes en marbre,” as “Ils appartiennent à l'auteur”; Worcester 1964, 63–65, ill.; London 1972, 248–249, no. 384; New York 1981, no. 6; *Europa 1789. Aufklärung, Verklärung, Verfall* [exh. cat., Hamburger Kunsthalle] (Hamburg, 1989), 107, no. 32, ill.

#### REFERENCES

Dierks 1887, 112; Lami 1910–1911, 1:416; Giacometti 1918–1919, 2:51–53; Giacometti 1929, 2:1–2; Charles Seymour, “Houdon's Marble Bust of d'Alembert,” *Yale University Art Gallery Bulletin* 25, no. 2 (Oct. 1958), 4–15; Réau 1964, 1:79, 354–355; 2:25, no. 79; Arnason 1975, 49, 98, 111–112 n. 117, fig. 110, pls. 50 and 143g.

#### RELATED WORKS

##### Version “tête nue”

A bust in an unspecified medium was exhibited at the Salon of 1801 but not listed in the catalogue (see text above).

##### Variant with contemporary French dress and wig

Staatliches Museum, Schwerin (fig. 1); only known example of this type; plaster painted glossy orange-red in 1985; H. 44 cm (with base: 53.5 cm), W. 29.3 cm; inscribed on truncation of proper right shoulder: “houdon 1778”; acquired by prince of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, Friedrich Franz, after visiting Houdon's studio in Dec. 1782. See Steinmann 1911, 217–219, fig. 11; Mansfeld 1955, 159–160, no. 39; and Schwerin 2000, 178, no. 5, ill. p. 179.

##### Unspecified type

Terracotta in Houdon's studio sale, 8 Oct. 1795, 17, no. 99: “Le Buste de d'Alembert, sur piédouche en marbre Sainte-Anne; hauteur totale 20 pouces” (300 livres).

Plaster in posthumous sale of contents of Houdon's studio, 15–17 Dec. 1828, 15, no. 16, sold for 9 francs, along with busts of Robert Fulton and the comte de Buffon: “Plâtre peint. — Buste de J. L. d'Alembert, mort le 29 octobre 1783” (Réau 1964, 1:119).

Houdon's bust of d'Alembert, which he gave to the Académie royale des sciences after the sitter's death, was installed at the public session on 21 Apr. 1784 in which d'Alembert's disciple Condorcet read his eulogy. According to Bachaumont 1780–1789, 25:288: “M. Houdon, whose chisel seems especially devoted to perpetuating the image of famous men, made a gift to the academy of a bust of the deceased. It has just been put in place, and it is before this image that M. de Condorcet burned his incense.”

##### Erroneous mentions

No bust of d'Alembert by Houdon was bought by Swiss banker Rodolphe-Ferdinand Grand (1726–1794), as maintained in Réau 1964, 1:340; Réau misinterpreted an entry in Benjamin Franklin's journal, dated 21 July 1784,

that reads: "Count de Haga [pseud. for King Gustav III of Sweden] sends his card to take leave. M. Grand tells me he has bought here my bust with that of M. D'Alembert or Diderot, to take with him to Sweden. He set out last night" (*The Writings of Benjamin Franklin*, ed. Albert Henry Smyth [London, 1907], 10:357). The bust of Diderot acquired by the Swedish king on his sojourn to Paris is still in the collection of the Nationalmuseum Stockholm (see cat. 22).

The incorrect assumption of the existence of a marble bust of d'Alembert by Houdon in The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, repeatedly

mentioned in the older literature (Lami 1910–1911; Giacometti 1918–1919, 2:52; Giacometti 1929, 2:2), was corrected in Louis Réau, "Catalogue de l'art français dans les musée russes," *BSHAF* (1928), 305, no. 70.

#### Print

An 1805 engraving by Augustin de Saint-Aubin after Houdon's bust "tête nue" shows the sitter in left profile within an oval medallion; see Emmanuel Bocher, *Les Gravures françaises du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris, 1875–1882), 5:26, no. 64.



Signature on cat. 27

1. For more biographical information see Kafker and Kafker 1988, 2–8, and references therein; still the standard monograph is Ronald Grimsley, *Jean d'Alembert (1717–83)* (Oxford, 1963).
2. On the contradictory appraisals of d'Alembert's character see van Treese 1974, 7–12.
3. See John N. Pappas, *Voltaire and d'Alembert* (Bloomington, IN, 1962), 165–169.
4. On this and the following see *Registres 1895*, 3:435, 436, 440, 442, 447; and cat. 24, Related Works.
5. *Registres 1895*, 3:443–444; and cat. 11, Related Works.

6. Cf. Houdon's inventory of his own works, which lists the bust under the year 1779 (Vity 1907b, 203, no. 63).
7. Métra 1787–1790, 7:117.
8. See Maurice Tourneux, "Lettre de Mme de Vandeuil, née Diderot, sur le Salon de l'an X," *BSHAF* (1912), 136.
9. "Ouverture du Salon d'exposition annuelle des peintres vivans," *Journal des arts* (published in Réau 1964, 79).
10. Seymour 1959, 12–15, already argued for a late dating, which was supported by Arnason in Worcester 1964, 63–64, then disputed in Arnason 1975, 111–112 n. 117.

11. Musée national du château de Versailles (inv. MV 857; LP 519); see Paris 1989, 1:159, no. 215, ill. p. 160.
12. For a description of the later full-length statue of d'Alembert by the same artist in the withdrawn Salon cat. of 1791, see Scherf 1997, 57.
13. François-Marie Poncet was a sculptor based in Rome. For this letter of 25 Mar. 1776, see *Œuvres complètes de d'Alembert*, ed. A. Belin (Paris, 1821–1822), 5:235. Réau 1964, 1:79, 355, erroneously associated this passage with Houdon's bust. For Voltaire's recommendation and follow-up letters (6 Feb., 8 Feb., and 12 Apr. 1776), see *Correspondance. Voltaire*, ed. Theodor Bestermann (Paris, 1977), 12:417, 420, and 506; nos. 14480, 14485, and 14583.





## + Georges-Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon (1707–1788)

Dated 1781

Bronze on gray-veined marble base

H. 47.5 cm (with base: 60 cm), W. 31 cm, D. 20 cm

Inscribed on right shoulder: *houdon. f. 1781.*

Musée d'art et d'histoire, Neuchâtel (inv. AP 9033)

Georges-Louis Leclerc, the comte de Buffon, was born at Montbard in Burgundy. A mathematician, he became a *membre associé* of the Académie royale des sciences in 1733. He was named director of the Jardin du Roi (later the Muséum national d'histoire naturelle) in 1739. Ten years later he published, at the king's expense, the first three volumes of his *Histoire naturelle*, which he continued to produce for years. He became a member of the Académie française in 1753. Buffon, who was sometimes criticized by the Paris Enlightenment circle, lost his wife in 1769 at an early age and found consolation in Mme Suzanne Necker's admiration for him (she was beside him when he died).<sup>1</sup>

There is an extensive Buffon iconography. A 1761 painting by François-Hubert Drouais shows him in magnificent French attire (Musée Buffon, Montbard), and many engravings popularized that vain image. In 1772 Jean-Baptiste Defernex created a plaster bust, exhibited at the Académie de Saint-Luc in 1774, which depicted Buffon with a large drapery and his new coat of arms as comte (Musée Buffon, Montbard).<sup>2</sup> Augustin Pajou's marble, exhibited at the Salon of 1773, portrayed a less haughty man: collar open, lips closed, with an emphasis on his intellectual energy.<sup>3</sup> Pajou had received a royal commission in

1773 for the colossal statue of Buffon "as a philosopher"<sup>4</sup> — that is, half-draped and heroized — and he carved a bust after it, personally commissioned by the comte d'Angiviller, that featured Buffon's leonine mane (fig. 1). Houdon took these images into account when he was commissioned to do a portrait of the illustrious man in 1782, at the height of Buffon's fame and a few years before his death.<sup>5</sup>

The commission came from Catherine II of Russia. She wrote Frédéric-Melchior Grimm in 1781, asking him to "get me a white marble bust of M. de Buffon and to please have Houdon do it"; she added that "M. de Buffon has a very distinguished place in my thoughts and . . . I regard him as the foremost mind of his kind in this century."<sup>6</sup> On 14 December 1781 Buffon wrote Catherine II: "The bust Houdon is working on can never express to my great empress the intense and deep feelings within me: seventy-four years portrayed in this marble could only cool it further. I therefore ask permission to have a living being accompany it; my only son, a young officer in the National Guard, will bring it to the feet of your august person."<sup>7</sup> On 13 April 1782 Grimm informed Catherine: "Tomorrow the last chisel mark will be given to the bust of M. de Buffon; day after tomorrow it will be packed." In June 1782 the younger Buffon arrived



1. Augustin Pajou, Georges-Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon, 1773, marble, *Muséum national d'histoire naturelle, Paris.*

to be the best likeness; but the sculptor could not render in stone those black eyebrows that shade black eyes, very active under beautiful white hair. The hair was dressed when I saw him, though he was ill; that is one of his obsessions. . . . He has papers put in his hair every day, which are put to the iron twice rather than once; or at least it used to be the case that, after getting his hair curled in the morning, he very often had it done again for supper. He's coiffed with five loose curls; his hair, tied at the back, fell to the middle of his spine."<sup>10</sup> Houdon used great care in rendering his subject's hair, which is all the more prominent in that all accessories were omitted to focus attention on the face. He used here the formula of the *Diderot* (cat. 19) established ten years before.

The superb Neuchâtel bronze is dated 1781, referring to the date of the original model, and it exemplifies the bronze-casting abilities of Houdon and his studio: "the casting [is] excellent and the entire surface reworked and chased with meticulous care."<sup>11</sup> It is almost contemporary with the bronze *Diderot* sent to Langres (cat. 21) and possesses many of the same qualities. The bust of Buffon is "full of fire," noted a critic at the Salon of 1783.<sup>12</sup> Houdon captured the lively expression that contemporaries found compelling in the sitter: "as soon as he began to chat with us, we could see a metamorphosis coming about; his face became animated to the point that one could say with

with the bust in St. Petersburg, where he dined with Catherine II in her palace of Tsarskoye Selo, and she reported, "The bust of his father is installed at the Hermitage."

The inscription on the Hermitage marble indicates that it was carved in 1782. The Louvre marble is undated but may have been the version exhibited at the Salon of 1783, as the other known marble had already been sent to Russia. Why did Houdon carve two marbles almost simultaneously? He may have begun with the bust now at the Louvre but abandoned the idea of sending it to Russia when he realized that the block had a disfiguring gray vein along the left side of the face, from the shoulder to the top of the head.<sup>8</sup> Art enthusiasts tended to favor very white marble.<sup>9</sup>

Houdon's sculpture reproduces the classical style of truncation that Pajou used in 1773 but shows Buffon with curled hair. A visitor noted in 1785: "I find the bust of him by Houdon



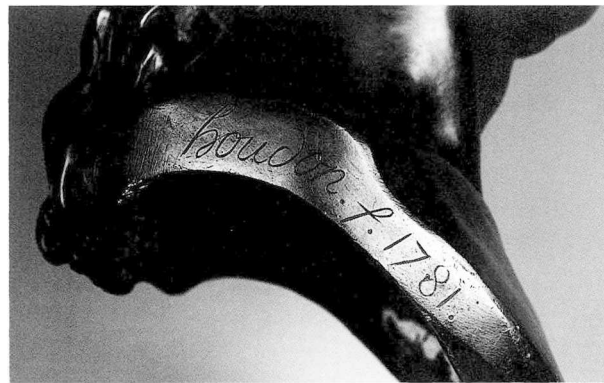
2. Houdon, Georges-Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon, 1781, plaster, *Staatliche Museum, Schwerin.*

complete truth that genius sparkled in his eyes.”<sup>13</sup> Houdon shows Buffon here as if he were speaking. He may have also been trying to evoke Buffon’s myopia:<sup>14</sup> “The weakness of his sight, which, in not allowing him to make anything out, prevented him from fixing his gaze, gave his discourse an imposingly prophetic and inspirational aspect.”<sup>15</sup> Brière subtly noted the difference between Houdon’s portrait and Pajou’s (fig. 1): “There is more delicacy, penetration, and fidelity in Houdon, and a tendency toward the imposing, the theatrical, in Pajou: Houdon sees the man, and Pajou wants us to perceive the genius.”<sup>16</sup>

As with his portraits of Voltaire, Rousseau, and d’Alembert, Houdon wanted to offer an alternative version of this bust. Thus beginning in 1781, while keeping the same head, he added a half-open shirt. This more contemporary style was preferred by the princes of Mecklenburg-Schwerin (fig. 2) and Henry of Prussia. It is also recognizable in the paintings Boilly did of Houdon’s studio (see cat. 66).

The reduction of the bust that Houdon exhibited at the Salon of 1789 was part of his commercial strategy. In his *mémoire* to Bachelier in 1794 he reported that since the Revolution he had cast several busts, including the *Buffon*; and he continued to sell them under the Empire. In April 1804 Dominique-Vivant Denon informed the minister of the interior that Houdon possessed busts of Voltaire, Buffon, and Franklin, which the agriculture society of Ambert wanted to erect in its hall: “he sells them for 72 francs apiece for the heads alone, and for 96 francs if you want them with the shoulders.”<sup>17</sup> One might call this the democratization of the “Great Men.”

GUILHEM SCHERF



Signature on cat. 28

#### PROVENANCE

Presumably the bronze in Houdon’s studio sale, 8 Oct. 1795, no. 69: “Figures et bustes en bronze. Par le citoyen Houdon. . . . Le buste de Buffon posé sur piédouche en marbre. Haut. totale 22 pouces [59.4 cm].” Probably in collection of Nicolas Demidoff; sale of his son Anatole Demidoff, Paris, 8–13 Apr. 1839, 27, no. 309: “Buffon par Houdon, beau buste en bronze”; see *Anatole Demidoff, Prince of San Donato, 1812–70* [exh. cat., The Wallace Collection] (London 1994), 9, 115. Acquired by James de Pourtalès and given the same year to the library of the city of Neuchâtel; then transferred to the museum.

#### REFERENCES

Délerot and Legrelle 1857, 181; Brière 1913, 354–357, ill.; Versailles 1928, 18, under no. 4; Franck Bourdier, “Buffon d’après ses portraits,” in *Buffon* (Paris, 1952), 176, pl. 19; Réau 1964, 1:365–366, 2:27, no. 94; Arnason 1975, 114 n. 164.

#### RELATED WORKS

##### Nude versions

##### Marbles

The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg (inv. H ck. 225); H. 53 cm, W. 33 cm; inscribed: “HOUDON, F. 1782”; commissioned by Catherine II and completed in 1782 (Réau 1932, 112–114, 119, 123); included on Houdon’s autograph list (ca. 1784) under the year 1782: “Une tête à l’antique de Mr le comte de Buffon, en marbre, envoyée à l’impératrice de Russie” (Vitry 1907b, 207, no. 101). See also Réau 1917, 148–150, ill.; Z. Zaretskaïa and Nina Kosareva, *La Sculpture française des XVIIe–XXe siècles au musée de l’Ermitage* (Leningrad, 1963), 162, nos. 66 and 67, ill.; Z. Zaretskaïa and Nina Kosareva, *La Sculpture de l’Europe occidentale à l’Ermitage* (Leningrad, 1970), no. 129, ill.; and Nina Kosareva, “Masterpieces of Eighteenth-Century French Sculpture,” *Apollo* (June 1975), 448–449, fig. II.

Musée du Louvre, Paris, bequest of Jacques-Edouard Gatteaux, 1881 (inv. RF 379); H. 46.5 (with base: 64.5 cm), W. 28.9 cm, D. 29.1 cm; inscribed on truncation of right shoulder: “houdon f.” Most likely the bust in the Salon of 1783, no. 248: “Buste de M. le Comte de Buffon; il a été exécuté en marbre aux frais de S.M. l’Impératrice de toutes les Russies.” Houdon’s studio sale, 8 Oct. 1795, no. 77 (H. 59.4 cm); [Gontau] sale, 29 July 1796, no. 38; shown at both Versailles 1928, no. 4; and Paris 1928, no. 9. Réau



Back view of cat. 28

1964, 2:27, calls it “probably a work of the studio, executed by an assistant,” but Arnason 1975, 114 n. 164, sees it as an autograph piece, as does the present author. See also Louvre cat. 1998, 423, ill.

#### Plasters

Shown Dec. 1784 at the Société des Beaux-Arts, Montpellier (no. 157), loaned by Abraham Fontanel, director and curator of the society’s collections: “Le buste de M. le comte de Buffon. Morceau réparé par l’artiste lui-même” [version “à l’antique”?]. See Claparède (ed. 1993), 45–46.

Musée des Beaux-Arts, Dijon (inv. 3985); H. (with base) 63 cm, W. 31 cm, D. 26 cm; *cachet de l’atelier* on back; acquired in Paris in 1951. Considered the original plaster model for the Hermitage marble in Réau 1923; Pierre Quarré, “Sur un buste de Buffon au Musée de Dijon,” *Annales de Bourgogne* 30, no. 2 (Apr.-June 1958), 134; and Réau 1964, 2:27. Arnason 1975, 114 n. 164, agrees the bust is of high quality but not necessarily the original model. See also Montagu 1966, pl. 8; and Dijon and Orléans 1992, 66, no. 25, ill.

Muséum national d’histoire naturelle, Paris; H. 53 cm; inscribed: “Houdon F.” See Marthe Digard, “Quelques œuvres d’art du Muséum d’histoire naturelle depuis la Révolution,” *BSHAF* (1936), 163–164, for its prerevolutionary provenance.

Private Collection, New York; tinted plaster; *cachet de l’atelier* on back, with annotation in ink: “Georges, Louis, Le Clerc, Comte de Buffon, il m’a fait cadot de ce buste quelques mois avant sa mort arrivée à Paris” (now fragmentary); undoubtedly from Jules Strauss collection (Paris 1928, no. 10; Paris sale, 27 May 1949). See *Houdon: An Exhibition of Sculpture from the Collection of Michael Hall, Esq.* [exh. cat., Salander-O’Reilly Galleries] (New York, 1998), 50–53, no. 14, ill.

Musée Dumont, Semur-en-Auxois, acquired between 1854 and 1885 (on loan to the Musée Buffon, Montbard); painted terracotta color; H. 60 cm; inscribed: “Houdon f. 1782”; *cachet de l’atelier* on back. See J. Pontefract, “Inventaire des collections de sculptures modernes et de peintures du musée de Semur-en-Auxois” (master’s thesis, Université de Dijon, 1970–1971), 1:329; and *Buffon en sculpture du XVIIIe au XXe siècle*, by Hélène Trompar-ent [exh. cat., Musée Buffon] (Montbard, 1998), no. 4, ill.

Formerly Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC; tinted plaster; inscribed: “Houdon f / 1782”; *cachet de l’atelier* on back; from the New York art market, 1966; sale, Christie’s, New York, 1 Nov. 1989, no. 58, ill.

Modern castings of the Louvre marble distributed by the museum’s workshop beginning in 1908 (Rionnet 1996, 266, no. 1120) and by the publisher Lorenzi (copy at the Musée Frédéric Blandin de Nevers, inv. NS 137).

#### Terracotta

Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco (inv. 1936.5); H. 59.7 cm; inscribed on front, below truncation: “houdon.f.1782”; sale, Sussman, Paris, May 1922, no. 65, ill. (*cachet de l’atelier* present). See Worcester 1964, 74–76, ill.; Washington 1976, 67, no. 116, ill.

#### Variants with open shirt

##### Plasters

Posthumous sale of contents of Houdon’s studio, 15–17 Dec. 1828, no. 24; sold for 9 francs along with the plasters of Jean Le Rond d’Alembert and Robert Fulton (Gandouin 1893–1907, 29).

Staatliches Museum, Schwerin (inv. Pl. 274), painted terracotta color; H. 63 cm; inscribed on truncation of right arm: “houdon f.1781”; *cachet de l’atelier* on back; acquired from Houdon in 1782, soon after the crown princes of Mecklenburg-Schwerin visited Paris. See Schwerin 2000, 186, no. 9, ill.

Stiftung Preußische Schlösser und Gärten, Potsdam-Sanssouci, Skulpturensammlung (inv. 123); painted terracotta color; H. (with base) 61 cm; inscribed “houdon: f 1781”; acquired from Houdon by Prince Henry of Prussia. See *Bildhauerkunst des 18. Jahrhunderts in Potsdam*, by Saskia Hüneke [exh. cat., Orangerie im Neuen Gärten] (Potsdam, 1983), 53, ill. p. 55, no. 43; Rheinsberg 1985, no. 100; Rheinsberg 2002, no. VII. 49.

Château de Coppet, Switzerland; painted terracotta color (or terracotta?). No indication of provenance among papers at Coppet (the author wishes to thank the comte d’Haussonville for his help), but a strong friendship existed between Buffon and Mme Necker. Réau 1964, 2:27, gives as provenance the A. Lazard collection, Paris.

Museum and Art Galleries, Glasgow; bronzed plaster; H. 61 cm; inscribed: “houdon”; *cachet de l’atelier* on back. See Arnason 1975, fig. 135.

##### Stone

Reubell sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 7–8 Feb. 1934, no. 185, ill.; H. 53 cm.

Château de Montaigu, Nancy (annex to the Musée Lorrain); from the Edouard Salin collection; base different from that in Reubell sale.

##### Bronze

Houdon cast busts of Buffon and other luminaries after the Revolution, but it is not known which formats he used (*mémoire* to Bachelier, 11 Oct. 1794).

#### Boilly paintings

Bust depicted in Boilly’s canvases of *Houdon in His Studio* (cat. 66), on shelf at right between busts of Benjamin Franklin and Sophie Arnould.

## Reductions

Paris, Salon cat. 1789 (no. 248): “Tête en marbre de petite proportion.”

Collection of the Honorable Irvin Laughlin, Washington, DC, marble (Paris 1928, 29). Bourdier 1952, 177, cites this as well as one in the Grandidier collection as “appearing to be mediocre works of the studio.”

## Prints

Print inspired by variant with open shirt, inscribed: “Buffon / Dessiné d’après le Buste de Houdon par Delafontaine / Gravé par Dupréel,” BNEst (N2, microfilm D 100663).

Subject shown in French dress, with cravat and lace frill, not corresponding to types conceived by Houdon; inscribed: “Le comte de Buffon / de l’Académie Française / dessiné par Bounieu d’après le buste de M. Houdon / gravé par Hubert,” BNEst (N2, microfilm D 100643).

1. On Buffon, see Jacques Roger, *Buffon, un philosophe au Jardin du Roi* (Paris, 1989); and James David Draper in Paris and New York 1997–1998, 275–298.

2. Montbard 1998, fig. 1.

3. Louvre cat. 1998, 507, ill.

4. According to the terms of Pajou’s report; see Furcy-Raynaud 1927, 239. On this key statue, see Draper in Paris and New York 1997–1998, 280–289, ill.

5. Bourdier 1952 cites a fairly large number of busts after or inspired by Houdon’s. For most of them, their quality and their current locations are problematic.

6. For letters between Grimm and Catherine II see Réau 1932, 71, 112–114, 119, and 123.

7. Buffon 1860, 113.

8. The author wishes to thank Jean-René Gaborit for this observation. Despite flaws in the marble, the Louvre bust is very finished in its execution, with the fine regular striations on the back that characterize other finished marbles by Houdon. This supports the hypothesis that this was the bust exhibited at the Salon of 1783.

9. *Mémoires secrets* (London, 1782), 17:199, praises the “dazzling whiteness” of the marble *Diana*, whereas *Lettre d’Artiomphile à Madame Mérard de Saint-Just sur l’exposition au Louvre en 1781* (Deloynes XII, no. 277; MacWilliam 1991, 321) criticizes the *Seated Voltaire* because of flaws in the marble. See also the two busts of Cagliostro (cat. 14).

10. Hérault de Séchelles, *Voyage à Montbard* (Paris, 1890), 5.

11. Brière 1913, 354.

12. *Lettre aux auteurs du Journal de Paris* (Deloynes XIII, no. 312).

13. Vigée-Lebrun 1984, 2:245. She met Buffon in 1785.

14. Draper in Paris and New York, 1997–1998, 291.

15. Comte d’Angiviller, quoted in Roger Saban, “Le Testament de Buffon,” in *Buffon 88*, actes du colloque international pour le bicentenaire de la mort de Buffon . . . (Paris, 1992), 100.

16. Brière 1913, 357.

17. Vivant Denon (ed. 1999), 1999, 2:166, letter of 3 Apr. 1804.



## + Antoine Louis (1723–1792)

Dated 1782

White marble on marble base

H. 66 cm (with base: 82 cm), W. 70 cm, D. 36 cm

Inscribed under right shoulder: HOUDON, F. 1782

Musée de l'histoire de la médecine, Paris (inv. NL 205)

Antoine Louis was born in Metz, the son of a military surgeon. After studying with the Jesuits, he served in the army. Then in 1743 he went to Paris, where he became an associate surgeon attached to the Hôpital de la Salpêtrière from 1744 to 1749 and won the friendship of the celebrated surgeon François Gigot de La Peyronie. In 1745 he was awarded the annual prize of the Académie de chirurgie; in 1746 he was elected an associate member; in 1750 he was made a full member of the academy. Recommended to Diderot by La Peyronie in 1747, he was one of the first *encyclopédistes* and wrote more than 475 articles for the *Encyclopédie* on subjects related to anatomy, surgery, and the art of medicine. Diderot personally knew and respected him.<sup>1</sup> In 1757 Louis became a professor of physiology at the Collège de chirurgie, where he remained for forty years and delivered many historic lectures. He also taught at the Hôpital de la Charité between 1757 and 1761, but internal quarrels led him to abandon the hospital and join the armies of the Seven Years War. In 1764 he was elected secretary for life of the Académie de chirurgie, then in 1769 he became a lawyer, receiving a doctorate from the Faculté de droit, Paris. His qualifications as a medical jurist would lead him to collaborate with Voltaire in the Calas and Sirven affairs. In addition to his contributions to the

*Encyclopédie*, he wrote a considerable number of works in his discipline, including the famous *Dictionnaire de chirurgie* in 1772.

Louis was less productive in the 1780s, as his aggressive, polemical, sarcastic personality worked against him. He “was generally regarded by the surgeons and by most of his colleagues as a rigid faultfinder for whom they felt more respect than friendship. He was criticized with good reason for not having the kindness, the indulgence, that casts a veil over the imperfections of men, which there is never any advantage to lifting.”<sup>2</sup> After 1774 he refused to publish the academy’s reports and did not compose the articles attributed to him in the *Encyclopédie méthodique*. He was arrogant and grew to be a bitter old man, though honored by flattering visits from the Austrian emperor Joseph II and Benjamin Franklin.<sup>3</sup> In 1792, in the interest of making executions more humane, he, with the help of a German harp manufacturer named Schmitt, perfected the machine that was first called the “Louison,” and later the “guillotine.”

An important personage, Louis was portrayed several times. An early plaster bust by Jean-Jacques Caffieri, signed and dated 1748,<sup>4</sup> already showed the surgeon’s physical characteristics: high forehead, arched eyebrows, large nose, deep creases on either side of a fleshy mouth, and heavy chin. A profile portrait





1. Anonymous, Antoine Louis, 1780s, terracotta, *Musée de la Révolution française*, Vizille.

2. Cathelin, Antoine Louis, 1789, engraving after Jean-Baptiste Greuze, *BNEst*.



medallion by Jean-Siméon Chardin in 1757 still projected a youthful and sober image.<sup>5</sup> A terracotta bust recently acquired by the museum in Vizille (fig. 1) is closer to Houdon's portrait.<sup>6</sup> That work is composed in an almost identical manner: the sitter wears the same open robe with the edges folded back, a wide belt, and the same wig tightly hugging the head; the face is heavy, the chin fat. Only the eyes are different. In Houdon's bust the iris is characteristically carved into a deep bowl, with a deeper indentation in the center to animate the pupil; in the other there is only a slight notch in the center of the barely incised iris. The expression on the face thus differs significantly. In Houdon's portrait Louis has a searching look, whereas in the other he radiates the benevolence of a distinguished, well-fed citizen. The painting by Jean-Baptiste Greuze (see fig. 2) is quite different—with Louis writing and in French costume—but the oblique gaze comes from Houdon (whom the painter knew well from the *Loge des Neuf Soeurs*, where they sat side by side).

Sculpted portraits of surgeons in the eighteenth century did not follow a single formula. In three busts by Jean-Baptiste II Lemoyne—those of La Peyronie in 1748 and Germain Pichaut de La Martinière in 1759 (both *Ecole de médecine*, Paris) and that of Claude-Nicolas Lecat, ca. 1743 (*Musée des Beaux-Arts*, Rouen)—the sitters wear French suits, as also in Augustin Pajou's 1779 terracotta of Jean-Baptiste Andouillé (Private Collection). In contrast, Jean-Baptiste Pigalle was more interested in the human presence of his subjects and lingered on facial expression rather than representing a precise costume in his busts of Antoine Ferrein in 1771 (*Musée de l'histoire de la médecine*, Paris) and Georges-Martin Guérin in ca. 1775 (*Musée du Louvre*, Paris).

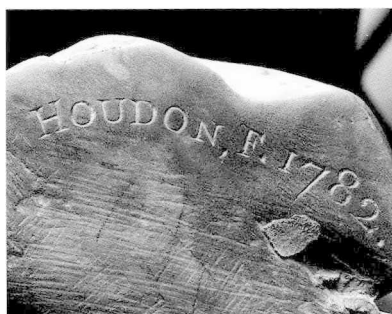
Houdon's portrait of Louis is different. It shows the surgeon dressed in the ceremonial robe of a professor and doctor of law, with the hood visible on the left shoulder. That symbol of his high position as well as the form of the collar and the large knotted belt are almost identical in Houdon's busts of magistrates like Miromesnil in 1777 and Aymard Jean de Nicolay in 1779 (see cat. 30 and its fig. 1). Louis was thus represented by Houdon, probably at his own request, as a professor and eminent jurist, a distinction befitting his credentials. That iconography set him apart from depictions of his medical colleagues, which probably did not displease him.

Houdon admirably captured the qualities of his subject's impulsive temperament. The eyes emit a caustic look, the nostrils are dilated, the lips slightly open, the neck as thick as a bull's. The wig, forming a large mass, is fully sculpted in

back with regular marks made by a fine drilling tool, while the back of the torso, hollowed out with a slight central support, is finished with striations. The marble is white, except for a few dark inclusions on the face. Only a few tool marks are visible, especially on the details of the costume, which is superbly carved (in particular, the magnificent knot of the belt—a piece of pure, almost abstract sculpture). Louis must have liked the bust, for he considered donating it to the Académie de chirurgie in 1788. His general interest in sculpture is well documented, moreover: he commissioned busts of prominent men of Metz and gave them to the municipality.<sup>7</sup> Why did he not do the same for his own portrait bust? Perhaps he thought that a work by Houdon deserved to remain in the capital or that his status as an illustrious man of Metz should be displayed in Paris.

## GUILHEM SCHERF

Signature on cat. 29



## PROVENANCE

Included on Houdon's autograph list of works (ca. 1784) under the year 1782: "Un buste en marbre de Mr Louis, secrétaire de l'Académie de chirurgie pour y être placé" (Vitry 1907b, 207, no. 100). In his testament of 24 May 1788 the sitter, who was unmarried, bequeathed the bust to the Académie de chirurgie; he rescinded the bequest in a new testament of 13 May 1792. According to Dubois 1859, xxxiv: "si l'Académie jugeait que son buste en marbre méritât cet honneur, il voulait qu'on le livrât à l'Académie; en 1792, il n'est plus question de cette disposition, et si l'Académie de médecine possède aujourd'hui ce morceau précieux, dû au ciseau de Houdon, c'est qu'elle l'a acheté à beaux deniers comptants de Sédillot." On 31 May 1792 the students of the Ecole de chirurgie requested without success that the bust be installed in their lecture hall (records of the Académie de chirurgie, at the library of the Académie nationale de médecine; MS 26 [26]).

## EXHIBITIONS

Paris, Salon cat. 1783, no. 245; Versailles 1928, 26, no. 29; Paris 1928, 52, no. 47; Paris 1937, no. 1044.

## REFERENCES

Pahin de la Blancherie in *Nouvelles de la République des lettres et des arts*, 4 Dec. 1782, 277, no. XXXV; Délerot and Legrelle 1857, 117, 181; E.-Fréd. Dubois, ed., *Eloges lus dans les séances publiques de l'Académie royale de chirurgie de 1750 à 1792 par A. Louis* (Paris, 1859), xxxiv; Legrand 1911, 165–166, pl. 75; Vitry 1928a, 12; Vitry 1928b, ill. p. 59; Réau 1928a, 343, ill.; Giacometti 1929, 2:110–111; Vitry 1937a, no. 33, pl. 33; Réau 1964, 1:343–344, 2:36, no. 152, pl. 75; Arnason 1975, 64, fig. 134, pl. 72 (detail).

## RELATED WORKS

Musée de l'histoire de la médecine, Paris, anonymous marble reduction; see Legrand 1911, 165–166.

Musée Lambinet, Versailles, plaster cast.

Engraving by Miger, dated 1766, after lost painting by Jean-Siméon Chardin exhibited at the Salon of 1757, BNEst (N2, microfilm D 198398).

Engraving of 1789 by Cathelin after Jean-Baptiste Greuze (Musée des Beaux-Arts, Metz), BNEst (N2, microfilm D 198392). See Georges Wildenstein, "Un Greuze inconnu," *Beaux-Arts* 4 (1931), 5, ill.

1. Kafker and Kafker 1988, 231–235.

2. Paul Sue in Dubois 1859, 448.

3. "Un peu gâté par l'adulation qu'il aimait, Louis était très sensible aux témoignages ostensibles de sa capacité" (Sue in Dubois 1859, 447).

4. See Cécile Navarra-Le Bihan, "L'Inventaire après décès du sculpteur Jean-Jacques Caffieri," *GBA* (2001), 119 n. 16.

5. See Pierre Rosenberg, *Tout l'œuvre peint de Chardin* (Paris, 1983), 101, 104, ill., including a portrait Chardin had already done of the surgeon André Levret.

6. Inv. MRF 2001–14; H. 75 cm, W. 56 cm, D. 35 cm; without inscription.

7. Sue in Dubois 1859, 442.



## ✦ Armand-Thomas Hue, Marquis de Miromesnil (1723–1796)

Dated 1777

White marble with small gray inclusions on separate square light gray marble base

H. 65.3 cm (with base: 83.5 cm), W. 66.3 cm

Inscribed across the back edge of truncation: A. T. HUE. [MARQUIS] DE MIROMENIL, FAIT PAR HOUDON EN 1777

The Frick Collection, New York (inv. 1935.2.78)

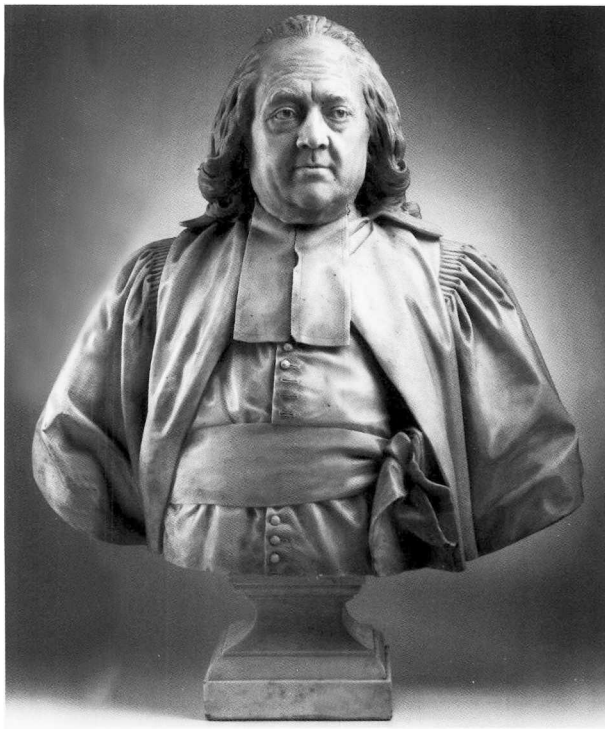
In the Salon of 1775 Houdon, who was thirty-four and still only a candidate for membership in the Académie royale, exhibited a remarkable group of sculptures: a statue of a *Bather*, a model for the tomb of Duchess Louise Dorothea of Saxe-Gotha, and a number of very fine portrait busts, including those of Sophie Arnould and Christoph Willibald Gluck (cats. 8–10) and of the minister of finance, Jacques Turgot, and the recently appointed minister of justice, the marquis de Miromesnil. Although Houdon had exhibited portraits in the Salons of 1771 and 1773, it was in 1775 that he first showed an array of the great figures of the day and established himself as one of the most accomplished portrait sculptors in Europe. Bachaumont recognized the extraordinary talent of Houdon in the portrayals of Turgot and Miromesnil: “I come back to the expressions of the heads that I admire especially. For, along with that quality of eminence and look of beneficence and humanity that I notice, aside from the truthfulness of the features that make them recognizable at the first glance, I find there the refinements of genius of which more vulgar artists never even dream.”<sup>1</sup>

From a distinguished Norman family that had been ennobled in the sixteenth century, Armand-Thomas Hue de Miromesnil was born near Orléans in 1723. He served as first

president of the *parlement* of Rouen from 1757 until 1771, when the *parlements* were dissolved. In 1774 Jean-Frédéric Phélypeaux, comte de Maurepas, suggested to the new king, Louis XVI, that Miromesnil be appointed *garde des sceaux*, or minister of justice. On 24 August 1774 Miromesnil received the seals of that powerful office from the king, a post he retained until his resignation in 1787. Regarded as a loyal, energetic, and honest minister who carried out his duties skillfully and with moderation, he was awarded the prestigious Order of Saint-Esprit in 1781. Following his service to the king, he retired to his château de Miromesnil near Dieppe, where he became involved in local cultural and historical activities, especially the Académie de Rouen. At the time of the Revolution he was arrested and briefly imprisoned in Paris in 1794. Upon his release he returned to his property in Normandy, where he died in 1796.<sup>2</sup>

The marble portrait of Miromesnil now in the Victoria and Albert Museum, signed and dated 1775 (see Related Works), is probably the one exhibited in the Salon of that year. Houdon executed a second marble portrait of Miromesnil, now in the Frick Collection, signed and dated 1777, which is virtually identical to the earlier one, except that it does not have the broken nose and the deep fissure in the marble at the left shoulder.

Both portraits were executed at the apogee of Miromesnil's political career, shortly after he was named minister of justice. Representing him to the waist, the sculptor has given great importance to the magisterial robes and wig of the sitter. This work recalls some of the seventeenth-century busts by Gian Lorenzo Bernini and Alessandro Algardi that Houdon had seen in Rome, not only in its half-length truncation but in the attention lavished on the textures of the pleats of the robe, the buttons, the sash and superbly carved bow, and the fine hemmed collar at his neck. This is the first time Houdon used this format, and it is one to which he returned for portraits of other prominent political figures such as Aymard-Jean de Nicolay in 1779 (fig. 1) and Antoine Louis in 1782 (cat. 29). The wig is a tour de force of carving, conveying in an abstract style the thick, lifeless mass of powdered hair, which serves as a foil for the great refinement and sensitivity seen in the modeling of the face. The backs of both busts of Miromesnil are beautifully finished—hollowed out on either side of a central post of support with the surface covered in delicately chiseled striations. Both busts bear an elaborate inscription that includes the name of the sitter, his title, Houdon's name, and the date. On the Frick bust the word “Marquis” was effaced, probably at the time of the Revolution.



1. Houdon, Aymard-Jean de Nicolay, 1779, white marble, Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth.



2. Jean-Louis Anselin, A. T. Hue, Mr de Miromesnil, 1791, engraving, BNEst.

Bachaumont gives an interesting description of the bust in his review: “M. de Miromesnil is a very good likeness, but heavily dressed; his magistrate’s cassock has those stiff and hard pleats that art should carefully avoid, and the wig especially is of an enormous volume; it is a huge block of marble by which he is crushed and that is not yet finished. It is true that that ornament is entirely unattractive. . . . I see in the *Garde des Sceaux* the profound composure, the scrupulous and vigilant exactitude of the man to whom the laws have been entrusted, whose function is only to conserve, to maintain, or to reinforce.”<sup>3</sup> Houdon has been able to reveal the inner character of his sitter as well as his appearance, a skill that sets him apart from most other portrait sculptors. The notable achievement of the sculptor is that, while giving great weight to the costume and the status it represents, the sitter’s individual personality shines through and dominates the work.

Although it is known that Houdon did some portraits on his own initiative, this is unlikely to have been the case with the *Miromesnil*. The fact that he exhibited a marble at the Salon of 1775, a large and expensive work depicting a man who had only recently been raised to a position of prominence, suggests that it was a commission, probably from the sitter who wished to commemorate his appointment as minister of justice. It is possible that Houdon kept the 1775 bust in his studio because of the



Back view of cat. 30

broken nose and the imperfection in the marble and that that is the bust sold after the sculptor's death.<sup>4</sup> He then created the present work in flawless marble, which was acquired by Miromesnil and remained in his family until the early twentieth century. Houdon executed a third marble, now in Montpellier (see Related Works), which repeats the same basic format but includes the cross of the Order of Saint-Esprit on a ribbon around the sitter's neck and embroidered on his robe (now effaced). Miromesnil received this award in February 1781, providing a date after which this third bust must have been executed. The identification of the decoration is confirmed by an engraving dated 1791, done by Jean-Louis Anselin after Houdon's bust (fig. 2).

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Probably commissioned by Miromesnil or a member of his family. Miromesnil's eldest daughter, Anne-Angélique-Armand-Georgette (1751–1828), who in 1769 married Paul-Charles Cardin le Bret (1748–1804), inherited the château de Miromesnil and its contents (AN, 512. AP. 8, "La Succession de Armand Thomas Hue de Miromesnil décédé le 18 messidor an IV" [6 July 1796]). According to Jean-Benoît-Désiré Cochet, *Les Eglises de l'arrondisse-*

*ment d'Yvetot* (Paris, 1852), 1:229, Mme Le Bret installed the bust at the château de Bretteville (Seine Inférieure): "Marquis de Miromesnil, garde-des-sceaux de Louis XVI, dont le salon conserve un buste en marbre blanc, fait en 1777, par Houdon, l'un des plus habiles sculpteurs du siècle dernier. La figure, en albâtre, est d'une beauté ravissante. Ce portrait a été déposé ici par Mme Le Bret, fille de l'illustre chancelier, morte à Bretteville en 1828"; it is listed in an unpublished inventory of the château de Bretteville in Dec. 1856: "Salon... buste, l'un en marbre blanc" (AN, Fonds Miromesnil, 512 AP.42, p. 4). She left her entire fortune (including the bust) to a descendant of Miromesnil's younger brother, Antoine-Guillaume-François de la Motte Ango (1776–1832), the marquis de Flers; the bust was inherited by Marie Armand, marquis de Flers; then by his nephew, Henri de Courtivron; it was acquired by Wildenstein, Paris, by 1913 (Brière 1913, 351); sold to Ledyard Blair, New York, 5 May 1919, for \$120,000 (Gimpel 1963, 118); and purchased by The Frick Collection in April 1935.

#### EXHIBITIONS

New York 1981, no. 5.

#### REFERENCES

Adolphe Joanne, *Itinéraire général de la France. Normandie* (Paris, 1866), 148; Vitry 1907b, 201, under 1777, no. 50: "Le buste de marbre de Mr de Miroménil, garde des sceaux de France"; see also 198, under no. 25: "Médail- lon de Mad. de Miroménil"; Lami 1910–1911, 415; Brière 1913, 351; Giacometti 1918–1919, 2:275–276; Giacometti 1929, 2:116; *The Frick Collection Cata- logue* (New York, 1955), 12:102–103; Hodgkinson 1970, 120–126, ill.; Réau 1964, 1:325–327; 2:37–38, no. 163, pl. LXXV, 163B; Arnason 1975, 31–32, fig. 81, pl. 22; Eric Gibson, "Jean-Antoine Houdon's Armand-Thomas Hue, Marquis de Miromesnil," *Sculpture* 13, no. 2 (Mar.-Apr. 1994), 40–41, ill.

#### RELATED WORKS

##### Documented versions

Paris, Salon cat. 1775, no. 253: "Le buste de M. le Marquis de Miromesnil, Garde des Sceaux."

Posthumous sale of contents of Houdon's studio, Paris, 15–17 Dec. 1828, 17, no. 32: "Marbre blanc. Buste de Hue de Mirosmenil, garde-des-sceaux, mort le 6 juillet 1793 [sic]"; sold for 81 francs (Réau 1964, 1:119).

##### Extant versions

###### Marbles

Victoria and Albert Museum, London (inv. A 19–1963); H. 67.6 cm (with base: 87.16 cm); inscribed at back edge of truncation: "A. T. HUE MARQUIS DE MIROMENIL GARDE DE SCEAUX. HOUDON. F. 1775"; probably in Salon of 1775, no. 253; Paris art market, 1898, as from the Goulaine family in Normandy; E. Lowengard, Paris, 1906; Vanderbilt collection, Paris; private collection, Connecticut; Parke-Bernet sale, New York, 9–10 Feb. 1951, no. 311; Baron Cassel van Doorn sale, Parke-Bernet, New York, 9–10 Dec. 1955, 90, no. 272; purchased by the museum from the René Fribourg collection sale, Sotheby's, 17–18 Oct. 1963, no. 773. See Terence W.I. Hodgkinson, "French Eighteenth-Century Portrait Sculptures in the Victoria and Albert Museum," *Victoria and Albert Museum Yearbook*, no. 3 (London, 1972), 106–108, 115 nn.12–14, ill.; and Paul Williamson, ed., *European Sculpture at the Victoria and Albert Museum* (London, 1996), 165, ill.

Musée Fabre, Montpellier (inv. 895.7.64); H. 69 cm (with base: 84.5 cm), W. 63 cm, D. 35 cm; not inscribed. Although beautifully carved, this bust has suffered from overcleaning and a broken and badly repaired nose.

Bequeathed to the museum by Mme Bouisson-Bertrand in 1893. See Bajou 1989, 23–25, ill.

*Plaster*

Musée des Beaux-Arts, Orléans (inv. 1688); H. 65 cm (with base: 80 cm), W. 62 cm; painted to resemble verdigris bronze. This plaster, which is very close in its details to the marble busts of 1775 and 1777, though unsigned and undated, was acquired by the distinguished artist and amateur from Orléans, Aignan-Thomas Desfriches (1715–1800), a friend of Miromesnil. At the

dissolution of the *parlements* in 1771 Miromesnil was in financial straits and returned to his native city of Orléans. Desfriches befriended him and helped him financially, which Miromesnil never forgot. Over the years Desfriches gave Miromesnil a number of his drawings, and Miromesnil probably reciprocated by giving Desfriches a plaster cast of his bust by Houdon. The bust was a gift to the museum from Mme de Limay, née Desfriches, in 1825. See Cuénin 1997, 112–113, 151, 164, 296 n. 64, 302 n. 43; and Dijon and Orléans 1992, 80, no. 6, ill.



Signature on cat. 30 (composite photograph)

1. Bachaumont 1780, 214, letter 3, 29 Sept. 1775.

2. For a biography of Miromesnil see Jean-Benoît-Désiré Cochet, *Galerie dieppoise. Notices biographiques*

*sur les hommes célèbres ou utiles de Dieppe...* (Dieppe, 1862), 239–242; and Tribout de Morembert, "Hüe de Miromesnil," *Dictionnaire de Biographie française* (Paris, 1989), 17:1418–1419.

3. Bachaumont 1780, 214, letter 3.

4. Houdon's posthumous sale, Paris, 15–17 Dec. 1828, no. 32.

## + Mme Paul-Louis Girardot de Vermenoux, née Anne-Germaine Larrivée (1739–1783)

Dated 1777

White Carrara marble with gray inclusions

H. (with self-base) 99.57 cm, W. 59.69 cm.

Inscribed on proper right side of counterbase: A. HOUDON / FECIT AN. / 1777

The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens (inv. 27.97)

The identity of the sitter in this magnificent marble portrait bust has been widely discussed and debated in the Houdon literature. The sculpture is signed and dated 1777 and was shown by Houdon at the Salon of that year (no. 242) as “Portrait de Madame de \*\*\*.” That bust can be identified with the present marble by a sketch Gabriel de Saint-Aubin made of it in the margin of his copy of the Salon catalogue (fig. 1). The unusually large size of the bust, with the base carved from the same piece of marble, the baroque swag of drapery that wraps around the sitter’s shoulders as well as the base, the elaborate hairstyle and beautifully rendered features of the woman and her costume have all led to the assumption that she was an important personage, and a variety of proposals have been put forward as to her identity. Giacometti first suggested it was Mme du Barry, but later proposed that it was Mme de la Houze, second wife of the ambassador to Denmark.<sup>1</sup> The latter was repeated by Réau and by Arnason, but without convincing documentation.<sup>2</sup> Far more persuasive is the identification of the sitter as Mme Paul-Louis Girardot de Vermenoux, first made by Girod de l’Ain in 1956.<sup>3</sup> This proposal has been clouded by the fact that the same identification was given to a marble bust of doubtful authenticity in the collection of Edouard de Callatay in Brussels.<sup>4</sup>

The ravishingly beautiful Anne-Germaine Larrivée, born in Sedan in northeastern France in 1739, married Paul-Louis Girardot de Vermenoux from Geneva on 10 February 1756, when she was seventeen. Her husband died two years later, leaving her a wealthy widow with an infant son. Through her husband’s family, Mme de Vermenoux became part of the world of Swiss Protestant bankers in Paris. Her brother-in-law Jean Girardot de Marigny was a banker, a partner of Jacques Necker (see cat. 32), and an art collector who became one of Houdon’s most important patrons (see cats. 35, 37, 41). Her sister-in-law Marie-Jeanne Girardot de Vermenoux married the powerful Swiss banker Georges Tobie de Thellusson.<sup>5</sup>

Many men were captivated by Mme de Vermenoux’s beauty, her culture, her charm, and her noble character, among them Necker, Marmontel, and the abbé Raynal.<sup>6</sup> She was in fragile health for several years after her husband’s death, however, and went to Geneva where she was treated by the famous physician Théodore Tronchin, who grew extremely fond of her and introduced her to members of the Enlightenment circle around him. To thank him for his care she commissioned Jean-Etienne Liotard to do a portrait of her rendering homage to a bust of Aesculapis, the Greek god of medicine and an allusion to







1. Gabriel de Saint-Aubin, drawing of Portrait of Madame de \*\*\* in Salon catalogue of 1777 (detail), BNEst.



2. Jean-Etienne Liotard, Anne-Germaine Larrivée de Vermenoux, 1764, pastel on paper, inscribed "Anne Germaine de Vermenoux donné par elle / à Th. Tronchin / J. E. Liotard pinxit," Collection of X. Givaudan, Geneva.

Dr. Tronchin (fig. 2). Although dated 1764, this portrait bears a striking resemblance to the sitter in the present marble bust of 1777: in the oval shape of the face; the fine, straight nose, arched eyebrows, and large expressive eyes; as well as the coiffure, with the hair drawn up on top of the head, arranged in large, soft, loose curls that fall over the shoulders. Her small waist, emphasized by the broad sash that appears in both the pastel and the portrait bust, further confirms that both works represent Mme de Vermenoux.

Upon her return to Paris, Jacques Necker asked Mme de Vermenoux to marry him, and when she refused, he married Suzanne Curchod, her companion and the governess to her son. The Neckers remained her close friends, and she became the godmother to their daughter, Germaine, later the famous Mme de Staël. When Mme de Vermenoux hired the Swiss writer and intellectual Jacques-Henri Meister to become her son's teacher, he fell passionately in love with her and was devoted to her until her death in 1783. She willed him her heart, which he kept in a metal box and had buried with him when he died forty-three years later. Meister, who took over the *Correspondance littéraire* from Frédéric-Melchior Grimm, is believed to have entrusted Mme de Vermenoux with the writing of many music and opera reviews<sup>7</sup> and to have had a relationship with her similar to that of Grimm and his mistress Mme d'Epinay.

Houdon was the preferred sculptor of the families of Swiss Protestant bankers in Paris into which Mme de Vermenoux married, as well as the group of Enlightenment figures whom she frequented, so it is not surprising that he executed a portrait of this celebrated beauty. That her portrait was exhibited anonymously at the Salon of 1777 may have to do with her unofficial relationship with Meister. In the list of his works that Houdon compiled about 1784, the year following her death, he included under the year 1778, "Le Buste en marbre de Mad. la baronne de Vermenon [sic]."<sup>8</sup> Even though the date is wrong (Houdon often made mistakes in spelling and dating his works), the bust is almost certainly identical with the present example. A terracotta "Buste de Mme de Vermenon" is listed in the studio sale after Houdon's death (see Related Works), and it is evident that the sitter had Houdon do plaster or terracotta casts of her portrait to offer as presents to friends (fig. 3). The Swiss writer Salomon Reverdil was the recipient of one of these busts, and he wrote an effusive letter of thanks to Meister, saying that he had installed it in his "cabinet" and sent a message to his benefactress, "May I be permitted, however,

3. Houdon, Mme Girardot de Vermenoux, ca. 1777, plaster, Private Collection.



to cover with kisses and to dampen with tears the hand that offers such a desired and precious gift.”<sup>9</sup>

Meister translated the works of the Zurich writer and poet Salomon Gessner from German into French in 1777. Although Mme de Vermenoux never met Gessner, she greatly admired his writing and corresponded with him. In March 1779 she sent Gessner busts of herself and of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, accompanied by a charming letter: “For a long time I have owed you an homage of thanks. Permit me to offer it to you by sending you the bust of a friend who has never had the pleasure of meeting you, but who owes to you the sweetest moments of her solitude and who passionately wants to hold a place in your memory. To be better received she has included the sensitive philosopher whom you miss as much as she does and for whom you were the cherished poet.”<sup>10</sup>

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Salon cat. 1777, no. 242: “Portrait de Madame de \*\*\*”; possibly in sale by antique dealer Chaudesaigues, Paris, 13 Dec. 1825, no. 30: “Marbre. Buste fait par Houdon. Madame de Vermenoux”; marquise de Blaisel sale, Paris, 11 Jan. 1850, no. 15: “Un grand et beau buste de femme en marbre blanc. Signé Houdon 1777. H. 1 m.” (bought in by de Blaisel for 2,200 francs); marquis de Blaisel sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 25 May 1868, no. 1: “Magnifique buste de jeune femme du temps de Louis XVI. Marbre blanc. Environ 1 mètre de hauteur. Oeuvre d’une allure superbe. Signée et datée 1777” (12,700 francs to dealer Miallet); Adolphe de Rothschild (1823–1900); by inheritance to his great-nephew Maurice de Rothschild (1878–1957); bought from him by Duveen Brothers, Paris, 2 Nov. 1915, for \$129,978.66 as portrait of “La Clairon” (DA, JPGM, box 11, f. 100); sent on approval as “Bust of Mlle Clairon” (stock no. 26396) to Henry C. Frick, 21 June 1916, for \$225,000.00 (DA, box 452, f. 1); returned by Frick to Duveen, 20 Dec. 1919 (DA, box 12, f. 42; box 452, f. 4); sold as bust of “Baroness de la Houze” (Duveen, New York, stock no. 27314) to Mrs. A. Hamilton Rice, for her house at 901 Fifth Ave., New York, 6 Jan. 1923, for \$180,000.00 (DA, box 501, f. 3); returned by Mrs. Rice to Duveen, New York, 9 Nov. 1926 (DA, box 501, f. 4); sold by Duveen to Henry E. Huntington, 25 Jan. 1927, for \$160,000.00 (DA, box 175, f. 1, 3).

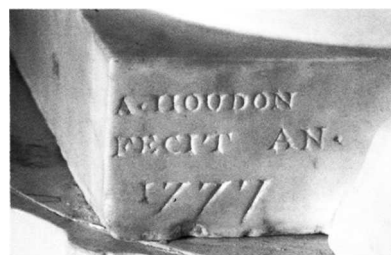
#### REFERENCES

Vitry 1907b, 202, no. 57; Lami 1910–1911, 1:420; Giacometti 1918–1919, 3:36–54; Giacometti 1929, 2:90–94, 197, 201, ill. opp. p. 90; Louis Réau, “Compléments au catalogue des bustes de Houdon,” *BSHAF* (Paris, 1951), 60–61; Edouard de Callatay, “Les Bustes Genevois de Houdon,” *Genava*, n.s. 2 (Oct. 1954), 245–251; Gabriel Girod de l’Ain, “Les Thellusson et les artistes,” *Genava*, n.s. 4 (Geneva, 1956), 146, 159–162; Wark 1959, 77–78, pls. XXXVI, XXXVIII, XXXIX, XI; Réau 1964, 1:96, 120, 121, 321–322; 2:35, pl. LXVII; Arnason 1975, 35, 109 n. 70, fig. 80, pl. 27; Girod de l’Ain 1977, 113, 116–118, 138.

#### RELATED WORKS

##### Plaster

Formerly Collection of Countess de Waresquiel, Geneva (see fig. 3); painted terracotta color; clearly represents the same sitter as the present marble but in a more truncated form. Probably one of the busts distributed by Mme de Vermenoux to family and friends (see text above), it is paired in the collection with a plaster bust of Dr. Théodore Tronchin by Houdon. They were exhibited in Versailles 1928, 31, nos. 43 and 44, as *Portrait présumé de M. Rillet* and *Portrait présumé de Mme Rillet*, loaned by Countess de Waresquiel. As Girod de l’Ain 1956, 158–160, has shown, the de Waresquiel family is directly related to the Thellusson and Girardot de Vermenoux families.



Signature on cat. 31

*Terracotta*

*Buste de Mme de Vermenon* [sic], posthumous sale of contents of Houdon's studio, Paris, 15–17 Dec. 1828, 19, no. 57.

*Drawing*

Gabriel de Saint-Aubin sketched an image of the bust in his copy of the Salon catalogue of 1777 (see fig. 1; and Dacier 1909–1921, 4:59, ill.).



Back view of cat. 31

1. Giacometti 1918–1919, 3:36–54; Giacometti 1929, 2:90–94.

2. Réau 1964, 1:96, 321–322; 2:35; Arnason 1975, 35.

3. Girod de l'Ain 1956, 158–162.

4. See Réau 1951, 61–63; de Callatay 1954, 245–251, figs. 159–161; and Edouard de Callatay, *Madame de Vermenoux. Une enchantresse au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris, 1956), 156–157, 247 n. 73, fig. 6.

5. The author would like to thank M. Jean-Bénédicte de Saussure for providing valuable information about the family of Paul-Louis Girardot de Vermenoux. See also Herbert Lüthy, *La Banque protestante en France de la Révocation de l'Edit de Nantes à la Révolution* (Paris, 1959–1961), 2:232–237.

6. For her biography see de Callatay 1956.

7. De Callatay 1956, 129–135.

8. Vitry 1907b, 202, no. 57.

9. Quoted from a letter of 29 Jan. 1779 in the Meister Archives, Geneva (de Callatay 1956, 157, 247 n. 75).

10. Quoted from a letter of 1 Mar. 1779 in the Bibliothèque de Zurich, MS V522a (de Callatay 1956, 159, 247 n. 80).



## + Jacques Necker (1732–1804)

Dated 1790

White marble with gray veining on white marble base

H. 70 cm (with base: 85.2 cm), W. 65.6 cm

Inscribed on truncation of proper right arm: *houdon. f 1790*

Musées d'art et d'histoire de la Ville de Genève (inv. 1876–3)

Houdon executed the bust of the powerful financier and statesman Jacques Necker, along with that of Jean-Sylvain Bailly (cat. 33), during the first stormy months of the French Revolution when the sitter was at the height of his popularity. The circumstances of its commission by the city of Paris in 1789 prove once again Houdon's entrepreneurial talent and underscore the competitiveness among the Parisian sculptors.

Jacques Necker was a wealthy banker and financial writer from Geneva who had rapidly risen to importance in Paris and surfaced as one of the critical figures in the early phase of the French Revolution.<sup>1</sup> Highly regarded by many for his intelligence and honesty, he was also characterized as egocentric, arrogant, obstinate, and doctrinaire.<sup>2</sup> The salons held by his wife, Suzanne, attracted key Enlightenment intellectuals, such as Diderot, Buffon, and Frédéric-Melchior Grimm, and exerted significant influence in Paris society. The Neckers' daughter was the legendary Germanophile woman of letters and salon hostess Mme de Staël.

In 1777, appointed by Louis XVI to be director general of finance (he could not hold the title of minister because he was a Protestant and a foreigner), Necker faced significant political opposition from his aristocratic enemies at court. At the same

time, he was championed by the philosophes for his ideas concerning financial reform and constitutional monarchy. The publication of his famous report "Compte rendu présenté au Roi," claiming a surplus in the state finances, earned him the reputation of a financial wizard. Though forced to resign in 1781, Necker was recalled seven years later as director general of finances and minister of state in the king's desperate but belated attempt to rescue France from imminent bankruptcy. After the summoning of the Estates General in 1789, Necker urged Louis XVI to accede to some of the demands of the newly proclaimed National Assembly and openly called for sacrifices by the aristocracy and clergy, acts that elevated him to the status of a hero in the eyes of the masses. His subsequent dismissal on 11 July 1789 became one of the driving forces that led to the storming of the Bastille, the first outbreak of violence and turning point of the French Revolution. Applauded by the populace, Necker resumed his duties until finally resigning in 1790 and retreating to his Swiss château at Coppet, thus—unlike many other moderate proponents of the Revolution—saving his head.

The decision to honor Necker by placing his sculpted portrait in the Hôtel de Ville of Paris was made jointly by the Electoral and Communal Assemblies on 30 July 1789,<sup>3</sup> the day

1. Houdon, Jacques Necker, 1789, plaster, Musée des suisses à l'étranger, Pregny-Chambésy (on loan from the Fondation Henry Necker).



2. Louis-Simon Boizot, Jacques Necker, 1789/1790, biscuit porcelain, Sèvres, Mount Vernon, Virginia.



of his first public appearance in Paris after the fall of the Bastille, in a general atmosphere of patriotic fervor.<sup>4</sup> At the suggestion of the city's new mayor, Bailly, the initial idea of a full-length statue was scaled back to the less imposing bust format, for which the Electors themselves resolved to pay (along with the bust of Bailly).<sup>5</sup> This pledge was received with great interest by artists, who viewed it as an invitation to a competition. The sculptor Louis-Simon Boizot immediately started working on a portrait of Necker, presenting a plaster model only one month later in the Salon of 1789, "made from memory since the return of this minister to Paris, the 30 July of this year" (see fig. 2).<sup>6</sup> He submitted a proposal to the mayor and the Commune of Paris, expressing his patriotic zeal and suggesting a subscription

drive for the acquisition of the bust in marble.<sup>7</sup> While Boizot was still waiting for an answer, Houdon had the committee of his district of Saint-Philippe-du-Roule intervene on his own behalf, resulting in the assembly's decision of 7 September 1789 to grant him the commission.<sup>8</sup> The next day Houdon addressed the Commune of Paris in a typically self-promoting letter that was made public not only in France but also, in English translation, in the American *Columbian Magazine*, supposedly communicated by the sculptor himself:

Gentlemen . . . Permit an artist, full of respect and gratitude for your patriotic virtues, to claim the honor of assisting you by making the bust of M. Necker. M. Houdon has already had the honor of making those of Washington and of that young Hero, the friend of Washington [Lafayette], destined to be the defender of liberty in the two worlds. M. Houdon demands only a piece of marble; and he shall feel sufficiently recompensed, if the commons permit him to dedicate his poor talents to the celebration of a great man, and of those who have acquitted their duty to the public, in decreeing M. Necker an honor which no minister, before him, ever received from the town of Paris.<sup>9</sup>

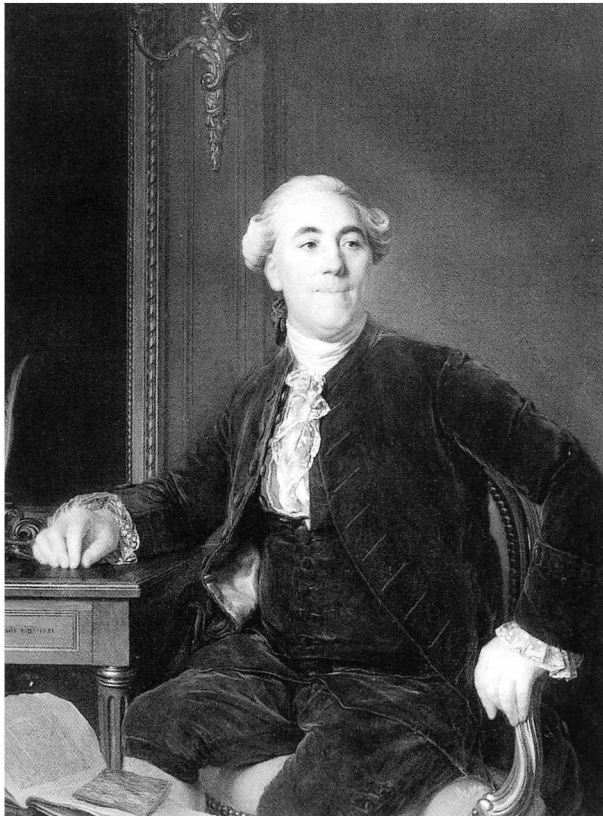
The outraged Boizot wrote a four-page pamphlet of bitter complaint about his colleague's calculating behavior, arguing in vain that his own bust had been approved by the people and was deserving of his asking price.<sup>10</sup> Houdon reported to the Communal Assembly by the end of December that, in consideration of the representatives who ordered the bust, he was eager to finish it before the new elections and that the completed marble would be on view in his studio at their convenience.<sup>11</sup> In the course of January 1790 Houdon's marble bust of Necker was quietly inaugurated in the principal assembly hall of the Paris Hôtel de Ville and the sculptor officially honored for his loyalty.<sup>12</sup>

Only two and a half years later the political climate had changed so completely that on 10 August 1792 the Communal Assembly reportedly chose to demolish the portraits in the town hall of Necker, Lafayette (installed in 1786; see cat. 45), and Louis XVI (installed in March 1790; see cat. 50), all by Houdon, as well as that of Bailly by Louis-Pierre Deseine, banning their subjects as "charlatans of patriotism."<sup>13</sup> Although "reduced to dust," according to the documents, the busts were not all completely destroyed, for the one of Lafayette was recovered and returned to Houdon, who repaired it.

The present marble bust of Necker is either the salvaged original from the town hall or, more likely, a version executed for the sitter's family whose descendants still own a model in plaster (see fig. 1 and Related Works). Like Boizot, whose likeness of Necker survives only as a reduced-size porcelain bust issued by the Manufacture de Sèvres in 1789/1790 (fig. 2),<sup>14</sup> Houdon created a very formal representation in the style made popular under Louis XV. Its ambitious half-length format and the elaborate drapery, partly covering modern French dress, lend the subject a certain majesty and place him among the nobility of the old regime. Houdon used the same devices for his portraits of Lafayette and Louis XVI, the former being already

installed in the town hall. Unlike Boizot's bust, Houdon's shows Necker with his head slightly turned, looking up and to his left — an animated posture similar to that in an earlier painting of the sitter by Joseph Siffrede Duplessis (fig. 3).<sup>15</sup> Necker's face, heavy like the rest of his body, corresponds to contemporary descriptions: "He had a large head with a long face; it was especially the length of his forehead and even more that of his chin that exceeded ordinary proportions. His eye, brown, vivid, witty, and sometimes of a charming sweetness or of a deep melancholy, was surmounted by the arch of a very high eyebrow, which gave to his physiognomy a very unusual expression. In a word his face was not of a French type."<sup>16</sup>

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3. Joseph Siffred Duplessis, Jacques Necker, 1783, oil on canvas, Château de Coppet, Switzerland.



#### PROVENANCE

Acquired in 1876 by Théodore, Frédéric, and Louise Necker, descendants of the sitter's brother, from Edmond Vernet in Lyons for 4,000 francs and donated to the museum 28 Jan. 1876 ("Journal de la Direction," AMAH; written communication from Alfred Necker, Geneva). Possibly identical with the marble bust "grandeur nature" sold in Paris, 16 Nov. 1883, no. 44, for 100 francs to the dealer Léopold Goldschmidt.

#### EXHIBITIONS

*Necker et Versailles* [exh. cat., Château de Coppet, Switzerland] (Coppet, 1955), 61, no. 189.

#### REFERENCES

Lami 1910–1911, 1:431; Giacometti 1918–1919, 2:281–282; Giacometti 1929, 123–124; John Pisteur, "Les Marbres de Houdon au Musée de Genève," *Pages d'art* (Jan. 1923), 221–222, ill.; Louis Gielly, "L'Art français au musée de Genève," *L'Art et les artistes*, n.s. 8, no. 42 (Dec. 1923), 94, 96, ill. p. 97; Bovy 1923–1924, 3:591; Réau 1924, 71; Réau 1964, 1:435–436; 2:52, no. 243, pl. 133; Arnason 1975, 88–89, fig. 170, pl. 119; Claude Lapaire, *Museum of Art and History, Geneva* (Geneva, 1991), 78, no. 96.

#### RELATED WORKS

On the marble of 1789, commissioned by the Commune of Paris, see text above.

Houdon exhibited a plaster version in the Salon of 1791 (not a marble as claimed in Giacometti 1918–1919, 2:281), listed under "Plâtres, Bustes," no. 231, in the withdrawn catalogue (Deloynes XVII, no. 432; see Scherf 1997, 57); the medium is not indicated in the published catalogue (no. 484).

The only known extant plaster, belonging to the Fondation Henry Necker, has been on loan to the Musée des suisses à l'étranger in Pregny-Chambésy, Switzerland, since 1984 (fig. 1); painted terracotta color; H. 74 cm (with base: 87 cm), W. 47 cm; traces of the *cachet de l'atelier*; from the family of Dr. Hypolyte Gosse; acquired in 1901 by Frédéric Necker (1838–1911); inherited by Henry Necker; inherited by Harold Necker in 1947; part of the family foundation since 1961 (exhibited in Versailles 1928, 30, no. 38).



Alternate view of cat. 32

1. See Jean-Denis Bredin, *Une singulière famille. Jacques Necker, Suzanne Necker et Germaine de Staël* (Paris, 1999), and references therein.

2. Charles-Auguste Sainte-Beuve, *Causeries du Lundi*, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1852–1862), 4:488–489, 7:261–294.

3. See Lacroix 1894–1898, 1:52, 56, 58, 497, 504–505, 520; 3:319, 383, 501; republished in part in Réau 1964, 1:86–88.

4. *Corr. littéraire*, 15:503–507.

5. *Procès-verbal... des électeurs*, 1790, 2:525–526; Bailly 1821–1822, 2:175.

6. Salon cat. 1789, 49, no. 236.

7. Quoted in Versailles 2001–2002, 143–144.

8. Houdon thanked the committee for its support by offering a copy of each of his busts of Necker, Lafayette, and Louis XVI; see Lacroix 1894–1898, 1:514.

9. *The Columbian Magazine* (Jan. 1790), 61.

10. Excerpts quoted in Versailles 2001–2002, 143–144, no. 38. Boizot's charge of 7,200 livres seems high indeed compared with the 2,400 livres Deseine was paid for his bust of Bailly.

11. Houdon's undated autograph letter, hitherto known only from the minutes of the Commune (Lacroix 1894–1898, 3:319), reappeared in a recent manuscript sale at J. A. Stargardt, Berlin, 13–14 Nov. 2001, 240, no. 510, ill. p. 241. The author is grateful to Christoph Frank, Rome, for this reference.

12. See Lacroix 1894–1898, 4:636; also 3:383, 501, which reproduces documents that permit one to deduce that the bust was installed between 8 and 21 Jan. 1790.

13. Tourneux 1894, 6; see also Réau 1964, 1:88.

14. See Versailles 2001–2002, 143–144, no. 38; 229, no. 78; mistaken in Réau 1964, 1:435, for a version of Houdon's bust.

15. Exhibited in the Salon of 1783 with the portrait of Mme Necker.

16. Sainte-Beuve 1852–1862, 7:265–266.

## + Jean-Sylvain Bailly (1736–1793)

Circa 1790

Pale beige terracotta on gray marble base

H. 59.7 cm (with base: 71.8 cm), W. 50 cm

Cast in clay on truncation of proper right arm: *houдон*

*Cachet de l'atelier* on lower outside edge of back of truncation

Lindenau-Museum Altenburg (inv. 4042)

Notable for its connection to the late eighteenth century history of both Germany and France, this terracotta bust of the French astronomer and politician Jean-Sylvain Bailly is the only known surviving version of Houdon's portrait of this sitter. Bailly gained recognition throughout Europe for his scientific achievements in astronomy and his scholarly studies on the history of science.<sup>1</sup> The son of a keeper of the French royal paintings collection, he devoted himself to research and publication for over three decades. A member of three academies, he was popular in the Parisian salons as well as at court and became known to the public through his investigation of the alleged healing powers of Mesmer's "animal magnetism." Esteemed for his honesty, virtue, and natural dignity, Bailly emerged as one of the leaders at the start of the French Revolution. He was chosen to represent his district in the Electoral Assembly of the Third Estate, which elected him first deputy of Paris to the Estates General in Versailles. He was the *doyen*, or presiding officer, of the Third Estate when it declared itself the country's representative body and constituted the National Assembly on 17 June 1789.

In the subsequent revolutionary events, the surrender of the monarchy, and the turmoil in Paris, Bailly received national acclaim for his firmness and courage. Named first mayor of

Paris in an atmosphere of wild enthusiasm, he performed his duties during a difficult and unsettled twenty-six-month period, striving to maintain a balance between radicalism and reaction. Along with many moderates of the early days of the Revolution, Bailly eventually lost favor with the masses and had to resign after the "affaire du Champs-de-Mars" of 17 July 1791, when he allowed the National Guard to shoot demonstrators. He spent a few months in relative obscurity writing his memoirs, but with the advent of the Terror, he was seized by the Jacobins, condemned to death by the revolutionary tribunal, and guillotined in November 1793.

At the beginning of his political career, when his reputation was at a high point, Bailly was depicted by several painters and sculptors. On 30 July 1789, in their final action before being disbanded, the Electors of Paris decided unanimously to honor their first mayor by having his bust made at their personal expense.<sup>2</sup> It has been assumed that this portrait was commissioned from Houdon,<sup>3</sup> along with the bust of Jacques Necker (cat. 32) for which the Electoral and Communal Assemblies voted on the same day. Less than seven months later the Electors inaugurated the marble bust of Bailly in an intimate and emotional ceremony among themselves,<sup>4</sup> and on 8 April 1790





1. *Louis-Pierre Deseine, Jean-Sylvain Bailly, 1789, plaster, Musée Lambinet, Versailles.*



*Fragmentary cachet de l'atelier on cat. 33*

they officially presented it to the Communal Assembly as an homage to the city of Paris.<sup>5</sup> Although it had been agreed that the celebration should be kept simple, the portrait was installed amid musical fanfare, speeches, and public applause in the principal assembly hall of the Hôtel de Ville in Paris, beneath the bust of the king and facing that of Lafayette. In this location, together with Houdon's portraits of Louis XVI, Lafayette, and Necker, it was reportedly destroyed on 10 August 1792 by order of the Communal Assembly.<sup>6</sup> While the possibility cannot be dismissed that a second bust of Bailly, by Houdon, was placed in the city hall, it is evident from the minutes of the Electoral Assembly that the discussed marble was executed by Houdon's contemporary Louis-Pierre Deseine at a cost of 2,400 livres.<sup>7</sup> A plaster bust of Bailly by Deseine appeared in the Salon of 1789, and several versions of it have been preserved (fig. 1).<sup>8</sup>

A comparison of Houdon's bust of Bailly with Deseine's reveals striking similarities. In both the sitter is depicted in his role as politician, wearing a plain cloth suit, a simple muslin

cravat, and a short cloak, as officially required for representatives of the Third Estate. His wig, with one long roll of hair above each ear and untied hair in back framed by little side curls, is old-fashioned. Thoughtfulness and intelligence emanate from his long, somber face, dominated by severe features and a large nose. In Houdon's portrait Bailly looks slightly down and to the left, whereas in Deseine's he lifts his head and turns to the right. Aside from this minor discrepancy, the two busts are distinguished only by technical differences in their modeling, which is sharp and detailed in Deseine's, broader and more generalized in Houdon's. As there is no archival indication that Deseine copied Houdon's portrait of Bailly—exhibited two years after Deseine's plaster in the Salon of 1791—and it is extremely unlikely that Houdon reproduced the work of a younger and less renowned colleague, the possibility has to be considered that both busts derive from the same prototype.

The present terracotta, probably in Altenburg since the foundation of its museum in the mid-nineteenth century,<sup>9</sup> is said to

have come, along with Houdon's portrait of the astronomer Jérôme Lalande,<sup>10</sup> from the collection of Duke Ernst II of Saxe-Gotha, who took a serious interest in astronomy. The duke conducted his own experiments, corresponded with many distinguished scientists, and built one of the most modern observatories in Europe, the "Seeberg-Sternwarte,"<sup>11</sup> which he funded from his privy purse and considered his only memorial. Yet contemporary accounts of life at the court of Gotha point toward the duchess rather than the duke as the original owner of the bust of Bailly. Charlotte Amalie was unconventional if not eccentric and—however inappropriate for her position—openly showed her admiration for the ideals of the French Revolution. She had a close relationship with the first director of the Seeberg observatory, Franz Xaver von Zach,<sup>12</sup> who shared her political beliefs and who lived and traveled with her as her Lord High Steward after the duke's death. The anti-revolutionary councilor H.A.O. Reichard tells of the duchess' fascination with the new French Republic and how she would cram the likenesses of its leaders, "from Bailly and Lafayette up to those of the Directoire," into her rooms, constantly replacing them according to the latest political developments.<sup>13</sup> While Houdon's bust of Bailly was conceived as the image of a revolutionary politician and used by the duchess as such, it represents today the pinnacle of Enlightenment achievement in French astronomy.

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#### PROVENANCE

Originally from the collection of the court of Saxe-Gotha; bequeathed by the Gotha astronomer Franz Xaver von Zach (1754–1832) to his successor, Bernhard August von Lindenau (1779–1854), who left it as part of the Lindenau-Zach-Foundation to the city of Altenburg; in 1926 it was placed in the library (Bibliothekssaal) of the museum in Altenburg, where it was identified and published by Walther Böhme.

#### EXHIBITIONS

Berlin 1955, 75, ill. p. 59.

#### REFERENCES

Theodor Demmler and Walther Böhme, "Unbekannte Büsten Houdons," *Jahrbuch der Preussischen Kunstsammlungen* 47 (1926), 212–215, figs. 3–4; Schwark 1930, 50–51, pl. 42/1; Mansfeld 1955, 232–236, 238–239, no. 61; Réau 1964, 1:436–438, 2:47, no. 208; Arnason 1975, 89–90, fig. 171.

#### RELATED WORKS

This is the only extant version.

#### Plasters

Houdon exhibited a plaster version in the Salon of 1791 (not a marble as claimed in Lami 1910–1911, 1:431; Giacometti 1918–1919, 1:123, 2:66; and Réau 1964, 2:47, no. 208), listed under "Plâtres, Bustes," no. 229, in the withdrawn Salon catalogue (Deloynes XVII, no. 432; see Scherf 1997, 57), while the medium is not indicated in the published catalogue, no. 484. The marble bust of Bailly in the Hôtel de Ville, reportedly destroyed in 1792, was executed by the sculptor Louis-Pierre Deseine, not Houdon (see text above).

A plaster version of the present bust was offered in the posthumous sale of the contents of Houdon's studio, 15–17 Dec. 1828, 16, no. 19, and



Back view of cat. 33

sold jointly with plaster busts of Emmanuel Mercier Dupaty and two unnamed sitters for 12 francs (see Réau 1964, 1:119).

#### Medallion

A medal by Pierre-Simon-Benjamin Duvivier (1728–1819), showing Bailly in right profile, is very close to both Houdon's and Deseine's busts. See Nocq 1911, 225–226, nos. 243–244, pl. XVI.

#### Misidentified marble

A marble bust of a magistrate in the Musée Fabre, Montpellier (inv. 895.7.63), inscribed 1788, was misidentified as Houdon's portrait of Bailly in the early twentieth century. See Gonse 1904, 265, ill.; repeated in Lami 1910–1911, 1:431; Giacometti 1918–1919, 2:64–66; and Giacometti 1929, 2:7–8, ill. after 1:88; corrected in Brière 1913, 362–364.



Signature on cat. 33

1. Edwin Burrows Smith, "Jean-Sylvain Bailly: Astronomer, Mystic, Revolutionary. 1736–1793," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, n.s. 44, pt. 4 (Philadelphia, 1954), 427–538, with comprehensive bibliography and list of Bailly's works. See also Seymour L. Chapin, "Bailly," *Dictionary of Scientific Biography* (New York, 1970–1990), 1:400–402. On Bailly's political career see Gene A. Brucker, *Jean-Sylvain Bailly: Revolutionary Mayor of Paris* (Urbana, 1950); and George Armstrong Kelly, "Jean-Sylvain Bailly, 1736–1793," *Victims, Authority, and Terror* (Chapel Hill, 1982), 149–210.

2. *Procès-verbal... des électeurs*, 1790, 2:524–526; Bailly 1821–1822, 2:178.

3. See, e.g., Mansfeld 1955, 217, 233; Réau 1964, 1:173, 1:437–438, 2:47, no. 208; and Arnason 1975, 89.

4. This gathering of 22 Feb. 1790 in the presence of General Lafayette is described in the minutes of the Electoral Assembly; see *Procès-verbal... des électeurs*, 1790, 3:6–21.

5. For a full account of this celebration see Lacroix 1894–1898, 4:636–646; see also the version in *Procès-verbal... des électeurs*, 1790, 3:53–61.

6. Tourneux 1894, 6.

7. Entry of 24 Mar. 1790, *Procès-verbal... des électeurs*, 1790, 3:45: "Au commencement de la séance, M. Duveyrier a fait lecture d'un aperçu des dépenses auxquelles l'Assemblée s'étoit assujéti. Il a compris, dans cet aperçu le buste de M. Bailly, pour une somme de 2,400 liv, telle qu'elle avoit été fixée par M. de Senne [sic], Auteur de ce buste. Ce prix a paru raisonnable, attendu la perfection de l'ouvrage."

8. See Anne-Marie de Lapparent, "Louis-Pierre Deseine, Statuaire, 1749–1822. Sa vie, son oeuvre" (Ph.D. diss., Ecole du Louvre, Paris, 1985), 2:35–40; Philippe Bordes and Alain Chevalier, *Catalogue des peintures, sculptures et dessins. Musée de la Révolution française* (Vizille, 1996), 174–176, no. 43, ill.

9. See Ingeborg Titz-Matuszak, *Bernhard August von Lindenau (1779–1854), "Feind der Reaction und der Revolution." Eine politische Biographie*, Veröffentlichungen aus Thüringischen Staatsarchiven 5, no. 1 (Weimar, 2000); see also *150 Jahre Lindenau-Museum Altenburg* (Altenburg, 1998).

10. Lindenau-Museum, Altenburg (inv. 4043).

11. See Peter Brosche, "Franz Xaver von Zach und die Gründung der Seeberg-Sternwarte bei Gotha 1788," *Jahrbuch der Coburger Landesstiftung* 33 (1988), 173–204, and references therein. For a collection of primary sources see Peter Brosche, ed., *Astronomie der Goethezeit. Textsammlung aus Zeitschriften und Briefen Franz Xaver von Zachs*, Oswalds Klassiker der exakten Wissenschaften 280 (Frankfurt am Main, 1995).

12. Peter Brosche, *Der Astronom der Herzogin. Leben und Werk von Franz Xaver von Zach (1754–1832)*, Acta Historica Astronomiae 12 (Frankfurt, 2001).

13. H.A.O. Reichard (1751–1828). *Eine Selbstbiographie*, ed. Hermann Uhde (Stuttgart, 1877), 288–289.



London 1840

## ✦ The Montgolfier Brothers, Joseph (1740–1810) and Etienne (1745–1799)

Dated 1783

Gilded bronze in red marble frame

H. 61.0 cm, W. 54.0 cm

Inscribed under truncation of the neck: *houdon fecit 1783*

Musée de l'air et de l'espace, Le Bourget-Paris (inv. 11242)

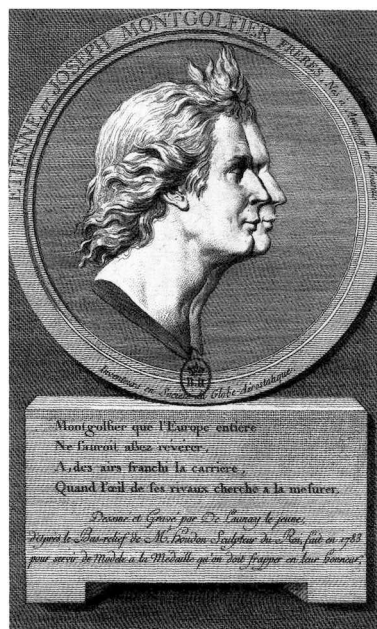
This double profile portrait by Houdon commemorates the invention of the first hot-air balloon. The two Montgolfier brothers, Joseph and Etienne, were directors of a large paper mill in Vidalon near Annonay (capital of the province of Upper Vivarais in what is currently the department of Ardèche, central France). One day, according to the baronne d'Oberkirch: "M. [Joseph] Montgolfier had covered a jar in which he was boiling a liquid with a paper folded into a cone or sphere. This paper rose into the air all of a sudden. Montgolfier replaced it, it rose again. That chance event was not lost on him. He began to think about the effect of air that had become lighter than the atmospheric air as a result of the expansion produced by heat. By reflecting on this and trying to make improvements, he finally arrived at the idea that was developed and applied in his aerostat."<sup>1</sup>

On 4 June 1783, assembly day for the Estates of Vivarais, the Montgolfier brothers, after a few attempts, made a taffeta globe filled with hot air (produced by burning wet straw and shredded wool) rise from the ground.<sup>2</sup> A report was issued the next day. But on 27 August 1783 a globe filled with hydrogen, designed by the physicist Jacques-Alexandre-César Charles and the builders Jacques-Charles Robert and Marie-Noël Robert, ascended above the Champs-de-Mars. This led to competition between the two

systems. On 12 September a tethered balloon filled with hot air was launched in front of a committee of the Académie royale des sciences; then on 19 September the first passenger flight (with animals) departed from Versailles. On 15 October a tethered hot-air balloon carried aloft the physicist Jean-François Pilâtre de Rozier; then on 21 November the first free flight departed from the château de la Muette carrying Pilâtre de Rozier and the marquis of Arlandes. Ten days later, on 1 December, Jacques Charles together with Marie-Noël Robert ascended above the Jardin des Tuileries in their hydrogen balloon. This series of flights caused a huge craze in Paris as well as in the provinces and abroad.<sup>3</sup> Thereafter, the ascent of a "montgolfière" became a fairly common and always popular spectacle.

In autumn 1783 excitement surrounded the execution of a commemorative medal: "There has been talk of a fully funded subscription raised to have a gold medal struck in honor of M. de Montgolfier. M. Houdon was commissioned for the design, M. Gâteau for the execution. Yesterday, M. Faujas de Saint-Fond, heading a deputation of contributors, presented that medal to M. de Montgolfier." In another account, "The bas-relief executed by M. Houdon to serve as the model for the medal... depicts the heads of the two brothers, Etienne and Joseph,





1. Robert de Launay, *The Montgolfier Brothers*, 1783, engraving, BNEst.

coinventors of the aerostatic balloon. M. Delaunay the Younger, a student of the famous engraver by that name, drew and engraved it with great taste: the two heads, truly appropriate for a medal, have the most perfect likeness."<sup>4</sup>

The medal was presented to the king by Pilâtre de Rozier on 30 November 1783.<sup>5</sup> It had been done in gold by Nicolas-Marie Gatteaux from a model designed by Houdon. An engraving by Robert de Launay reproduces the model, with the profiles in reverse, and includes the exergue around the circumference: "ETIENNE ET JOSEPH MONTGOLFIER FRERES, Nés à Annonay en Vivarais / Inventeurs en Société du Globe Aérostatique." The medallion is presented on a base with the inscription: "Montgolfier que l'Europe entière / Ne sauroit assez révéler, / A des airs franchi la carrière, / Quand l'œil de ses rivaux cherche à la mesurer. / Dessiné et Gravé par De Launay le jeune, / d'après le Bas-relief de M<sup>r</sup>. Houdon Sculpteur du Roi, fait en 1783 / pour servir de Modèle a la Médaille qu'on doit frapper en leur honneur" (fig. 1).<sup>6</sup> Other engravings, such as that by Roze le Noir, reproduce the profiles in the same direction as the model. This double profile by Houdon is also recognizable on a biscuit porcelain produced by the Manufacture de Sèvres; it appears on the front of the pedestal for a small monument composed of *genies*, one of whom is blowing a trumpet, and of two female figures on a balloon.<sup>7</sup> A plaster medallion is also depicted by Boilly on the wall of Houdon's studio, but with only a single profile (cat. 66).<sup>8</sup>

In 1784 Houdon, with other *sculpteurs du Roi*, took part in a competition established by the comte d'Angiviller for a monument to be erected in the Jardin des Tuileries in commemoration of the ascent from that place by Charles and Robert, on 1 December 1783, in the first manned flight of a hydrogen balloon.<sup>9</sup> Concurrently, he proposed to sculpt busts of the chief protagonists in the air adventure.<sup>10</sup> Only the bust of Pilâtre de Rozier is known with certainty to have been executed.<sup>11</sup> Those of Jacques Charles and Joseph Montgolfier were produced by Louis-Simon Boizot and Lucas de Montigny, respectively.<sup>12</sup>

Houdon's superb gilded bronze medallion, dated 1783, shows two profiles side by side, worthy of an antique cameo. It is a commanding image enlivened by the tuft of hair that rises like a flame from each man's forehead, a symbol of their genius;<sup>13</sup> the breath of that genius also seems to stir the hair flowing behind them. Houdon had executed a marble the previous year, an oval medallion of Apollo (fig. 2),<sup>14</sup> which displays a clear stylistic similarity to *The Montgolfier Brothers*. It is not known whether the sculptor executed a marble of the present composition, which circulated widely.

#### GUILHEM SCHERF



2. Houdon, *Apollo*, 1782, marble, Musée du Louvre, Paris.

## PROVENANCE

Perhaps from descendants of the sitters. Versailles 1928, no. 35: "l'original se trouvait, il y a une cinquantaine d'années, chez Mlle de Montgolfier, dernière fille survivante de l'un des aéronautes; il doit être encore conservé dans la famille"; annotation on back of an old photograph (no doubt by Paul Vitry; files of the sculpture department, Musée du Louvre) indicates the medallion was with the dealer André Camoin, organizer of the centennial exhibition in Paris. It was offered to the Musée de l'air in 1936 (museum files); acquired at the Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 31 May 1948.

## EXHIBITIONS

*Da Urbino alle rive della Loira. Paesaggi e volti europei / Portraits sculptés des Lumières au Romantisme. Autour de Jean-Baptiste Nini (1717–1786)* [exh. cat., Palazzo Ducale] (Urbino, 2001–2002), 240–243, no. 124, ill.

## REFERENCES

Réau 1964, 1:341–342, 2:56, no. 267, pl. 140; Arnason 1975, 66, pl. 74 (detail); *Le Temps des ballons. Art et histoire* (Paris, 1994), 24–25, ill.

## RELATED WORKS

## Plasters

Posthumous sale of contents of Houdon's studio, 15–17 Dec. 1828, no. 38 (medallion of Joseph Montgolfier): "plâtre peint. Portrait en bas-relief

de J. M. Montgolfier, mécanicien, l'un des inventeurs des aérostats, mort le 26 juin 1810."

Late castings at the Musée Carnavalet, Paris (inv. S 906; see Paris 1928, no. 95; "moulage ancien"; and Arnason 1975, fig. 136); and the Musée Lambinet, Versailles (lent by the castle, which received donation in 1879; see Versailles 1928, no. 35; Versailles cat. 1993, 276, no. 1269, ill.).

Casts distributed by the studio of the Musée de sculpture comparée at Le Trocadéro. See Enlart and Roussel 1910, 223, G 156.

## Prints

Engraving (reversed) by Robert de Launay, BNEst (N2, microfilm D 217216; see Giacometti 1929, 1:206, ill., and 2:220).

Engraving by Roze le Noir, BNEst (N2, microfilm D 217215), does not reverse Houdon's medallion.

## Gold medal

Engraved by Nicolas-Marie Gatteaux; inscribed on front: "JOSE. ET ETIEN. MONTGOLFIER / POUR AVOIR RENDU L'AIR NAVIGABLE"; and on back: "Expérience du champ de Mars 27 aoust / 1783. En vertu d'une souscription / sous la direct. de M. Faujas / de S<sup>t</sup> Fond." A print was made after the medal (BNEst, N2, microfilm D 217222).

1. *Mémoires de la baronne d'Oberkirch sur la cour de Louis XVI et la société française avant 1789*, ed. with notes by Suzanne Burkard (Paris, 1989), 355–356.

2. A fund was established to cover the development costs for the invention; see Bombelles (ed. 1977), 1:251, 16 Aug. 1783.

3. See *Le Temps des Ballons*, 1994, 37–39.

4. *Mémoires secrets*, 27 Oct. 1783 (London, 1784), 23:244 and 265.

5. Bombelles (ed. 1993), 3:290.

6. ETIENNE AND JOSEPH, THE MONTGOLFIER BROTHERS, born in Annonay in Vivarais / Coinventors of the aerostatic balloon"; "Montgolfier, whom all of Europe / could not adequately revere, / has unleashed the free flow of air, / when his rivals' eyes seek to measure it. / Designed and engraved by De Launay the Younger, / after the bas-relief of Mr. / houdon sculptor to the king, done in 1783 /

to serve as a model for the medal that is to be made in their honor."

7. Bourgeois and Lechevallier-Chevignard 1914, no. 7, pl. 31.

8. Perhaps it was difficult to paint two profiles clearly in perspective at this size. Yet the catalogue for Houdon's posthumous sale (no. 38) also mentions only one profile (see Related Works).

9. Furcy-Raynaud 1927, 417–421. In 1792 Houdon's model was housed in the Salle des antiques at the Louvre (depository for the royal collection of sculptures). Only the two terracotta models by Clodion are currently known (Private Collection; and The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York).

10. *Journal de Paris*, no. 337 (3 Dec. 1783), 1385: "Nous sommes instruits que M. Houdon, après avoir fait le buste de M. Montgolfier, par une suite de l'hommage qu'il rend aux brillantes expériences aérostatiques qu'on vient de faire, va y ajouter les bustes des quatre illustres voyageurs aériens."

11. Plaster exhibited at the Salon of 1789, no. 245; Houdon's posthumous sale, 1828, no. 21: "plâtre coloré."

12. Boizot's plaster is in the Musée Dunois, Beaugency (see Versailles 2001–2002, 130–131, ill.; other versions are known). There are several versions of Montigny's bust of Joseph Montgolfier; a terracotta was part of the Jacques Doucet sale, 16–17 May 1906, no. 131, ill. These are beautiful sculptures, executed with sensitivity. Their composition, with an undraped and rounded truncation sharply emphasizing the face, is reminiscent of a format Houdon had favored since his bust of Diderot (cat. 19).

13. Réau 1964, 1:342.

14. Louvre cat. 1998, 431, ill. The marble in the Louvre, signed and dated 1782, is a version of a plaster exhibited at the Salon of 1777, the marble of which, executed in 1780, was intended for the prince of Holstein-Gottorp, the future Czar Paul I.



## + Diana the Huntress

Dated 1782

Bronze on square bronze self-base

H. 189.87 cm (base: W. 68.43 cm, D. 68.1 cm)

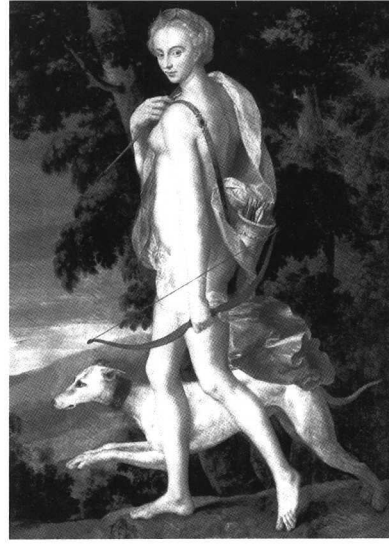
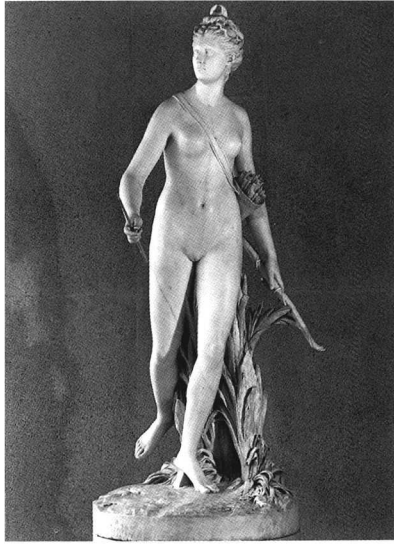
Inscribed in wax before casting, on proper left side of base: HOUDON F. 1782. / POUR Jn. GIRARDOT DE MARIGNY.

The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens (inv. 27.186)

Houdon's statue of *Diana the Huntress* is among his most famous and popular works. The figure was first conceived to fulfill a commission from Duke Ernst II of Saxe-Gotha. In a letter of 24 January 1775 Frédéric-Melchior Grimm, the duke's artistic advisor in Paris, suggested that Houdon be asked to execute a marble sculpture, perhaps of Diana, for the duke's English garden at Schloss Friedenstein in Gotha as compensation for the loss of the tomb commission for the ducal court on which Houdon had been engaged for several years.<sup>1</sup> A large plaster model seems to have been completed in 1776, the date inscribed on the plaster statue now in Gotha.<sup>2</sup> By August 1777 a life-size plaster was on view in Houdon's studio in the Bibliothèque du Roi, its exhibition timed to coincide with the opening of the Salon that year. In the Salon itself he showed a marble *Bust of Diana* derived from the larger sculpture (see cat. 36).<sup>3</sup> The life-size marble *Diana*, intended for the duke (fig. 1), differs from other versions in that Houdon had to add a group of reeds at the base to support the left leg as well as a quiver with arrows to support the right arm. Although Ernst II purchased the marble in January 1782,<sup>4</sup> it was never sent to Gotha. Instead Grimm negotiated a sale of the marble to Catherine II of Russia, who acquired it somewhat reluctantly in May 1784.<sup>5</sup>

Houdon depicts Diana, goddess of the hunt and of the moon, completely nude, running forward, with her weight balanced on her left foot. Her hair is drawn up loosely on top of her head, on which is placed a crescent moon, and she carries a bow in her left hand and an arrow in her right. The sculptor's representation of Diana the huntress as a nude was unusual and has been the subject of extensive discussion and study.<sup>6</sup> A letter recently discovered in the archives at Gotha clarifies the origin of the idea for the figure and the iconographical sources for it. Although unsigned, the document was probably written by Grimm and sent to Ernst II. It cites ancient Greek and Roman literary and iconographic precedents as well as several antique engraved gems and medals that show Diana nude, and it quotes the German antiquarian Johann Winckelmann, whose description of Diana corresponds closely with Houdon's statue: "Diana has all of the attractions of her sex, and seems unaware of it. As she is always represented walking or running, her gaze, directed straight ahead, extends into the far distance above all of the objects in the foreground. She always looks like a virgin. Sometimes her hair is gracefully tied on top of her head. . . . Her waist is lighter and thinner than that of Juno, or even that of Pallas."<sup>7</sup> Houdon must also have been aware of French

1. Houdon, Diana the Huntress, 1780, marble, Calouste Gulbenkian Museum, Lisbon.



2. School of Fontainebleau, Diana the Huntress, mid-sixteenth century, oil on canvas, Musée du Louvre, Paris.

Renaissance depictions of Diana nude (see fig. 2) or the white marble figure of Diana (ca. 1549) from a fountain at the château d'Anet, with muscular, elongated proportions similar to those of Houdon's *Diana*.<sup>8</sup>

Unquestionably Houdon relied heavily on Grimm in determining the figural type of his Diana, and he must have been guided by Grimm's criticisms as he developed the composition. The result is a daring blend of the traditional representation of Diana nude at her bath with that of Diana the huntress, who was usually depicted clothed, both in antiquity and in the Renaissance. What makes this statue one of the major masterpieces of the period is the personal way Houdon transformed these received ideas into a sculpture of cool beauty and originality and of great technical sophistication.

The Huntington's *Diana* is the first life-size bronze the sculptor ever made. In 1772 Houdon, who was deeply interested in the art of bronze casting, obtained a studio at the du Roule foundry in the Faubourg-Saint-Honoré, where Jean-Baptiste II Lemoyne, Edme Bouchardon, and Jean-Baptiste Pigalle had cast major works.<sup>9</sup> In January 1779 he proposed casting a bronze of his *Diana* there for Louis XVI;<sup>10</sup> but doubts were expressed that the sculptor was equipped to carry out the project, and the comte d'Angiviller, director of the Bâtiments du Roi, found the price too high.<sup>11</sup> Subsequently, the present bronze, dated 1782, was commissioned by the wealthy Protestant banker Jean Girardot de Marigny for the garden of his house in Paris.<sup>12</sup> The figure itself was cast in five sections, which were assembled by weld-

ing: the head and torso, the left arm, the right arm, the left leg and foot with a part of the base, and the right leg. The arrow, bow, and base were cast separately.

The French painter Henri-Pierre Danloux, while an exile in London, wrote about the commissioning of the *Diana*, as described to him by M. de Vermenoux, a relative of Girardot's: "He greatly praised the sculptor Houdon and pointed out an indication of his charlatanism. . . . One morning [Houdon] came to M. Girardot's house, feigning an unhappy expression that begged the question as to what was wrong with him. . . he was angry that his *Diana*, which he considered his masterpiece, had not been executed in bronze. M. Girardot consoled him quickly by commissioning it from him, and this is how he used methods that are beneath him."<sup>13</sup> This account may reflect the painter's bitterness and jealousy toward artists like Houdon who stayed and prospered in France, but it also confirms an entrepreneurial side to the sculptor (which was noted and criticized by others) as well as his ambition to cast a major work in bronze. The *Diana* was cast by 1 October 1782, when Houdon wrote d'Angiviller inviting him to come to see it in the garden of the Hôtel Colbert,<sup>14</sup> an invitation d'Angiviller never accepted.

In 1788 Houdon cast a life-size figure of *Apollo* (cat. 37) as a pendant to the *Diana*, and both were recorded in Girardot's garden in Paris at the time of his death in January 1796. Girardot, who is best known for his collection of contemporary paintings by Hubert Robert and Claude-Joseph Vernet,<sup>15</sup> favored Houdon in his sculpture collection. He owned a small

terracotta of Houdon's *Diana*, the marble of *Le Baiser donné* and its pendant *Le Baiser rendu*, all three of which appear in his posthumous inventory, as well as a marble portrait of Anne Audéoud,<sup>16</sup> a marble bust of Sabine Houdon, and a plaster bust of Benjamin Franklin of a "grande proportion."<sup>17</sup>

ANNE L. POULET

#### PROVENANCE

Commissioned by Jean Girardot de Marigny (1733–1796) in whose private garden in Paris, at 44 rue Vivienne, the statue was displayed by 25 Aug. 1783 when the Salon opened; American artist John Trumbull wrote in his journal 6 Aug. 1786, "Went with M. and Mme Houdon, to the *salon* on the Boulevards, to see his little Diana in marble, a very beautiful figure. . . . From the *salon* went to Mr. Girardon's [*sic*], where is a beautiful bronze of the same figure, large as life" (Sizer 1953, 99); included in Girardot's posthumous inventory, 23 Germinal an IV [12 Apr. 1796] (AN, Min. Cent., étude L, file 802, fol. 5): "Dans le jardin, une *Diane* et un *Apolon* [*sic*], en bronze, prisés. . . 1200 livres"; Collection Aguado by 1867; sold at Hôtel Drouot, Paris: "Notice d'une Belle Statue de Diane en bronze par Houdon appartenant à M. le Comte O. A[guado]," 20 May 1870, no. 1 (23,500 francs), to Richard Seymour Conway, fourth marquess of Hertford (1800–1870); bequeathed to his illegitimate son, Sir Richard Wallace (1818–1890) and installed in garden of his château de Bagatelle, outside Paris; by inheritance to his wife, Lady Wallace (1819–1897); bequeathed to Sir John Murray Scott (1847–1912); sold by Scott in 1904 through an agent in Paris to Charles T. Yerkes, New York (see Yerkes 1904, vol. 2, no. 85); sold, New York, American Art Association, Yerkes Collection, 12 Apr. 1910, no. 247; purchased by Eduardo Guinlé, Rio de Janeiro; purchased by Duveen, then sold, 6 Mar. 1916, p. 12 of bill book no. 1, to M.E.H. Huntington.

#### EXHIBITIONS

Paris, Salon cat. 1783, 49: "Une statue de Diane en bronze chez M. Girardot de Marigny, rue Vivienne"; Exposition universelle of 1867, Paris; see Alfred Darcel, "Exposition universelle. Le Bronze dans les salles de l'histoire du travail," *GBA* 23 (Oct. 1867), 318: "Nous nous arrêterons sur la *Diane* de Houdon, réplique de l'exemplaire du Louvre, possédée par M. Aguado."

#### REFERENCES

Montaignon and Duplessis 1855, 179–185, 264–265; Délerot and Legrelle 1857, 121–129, 164, 166, 227; Michel 1889, 281–287; Dilke 1900, 131–132, 185; Charles Tyson Yerkes, *Paintings and Sculpture in the Collection of Charles T. Yerkes, Esq.*, New York (Boston, 1904), vol. 2, no. 85, ill.; Vitry 1907a, 9, 13–16; Vitry 1907b, 205, 207, nos. 84, 98; Lami 1910–1911, 1:422; Bapst 1915, 13–14; Giacometti 1918–1919, 1:81; 3:94–109, 115–117; Giacometti 1929, 1:36, 169, 186; 2:229, 231, 234–235, 243–244; Cecil 1950, 172 n. 28; Theodore Sizer, ed., *The Autobiography of Colonel John Trumbull, Patriot-Artist*,

1756–1843 (New Haven, 1953), 99; Wark 1959, 78–79, pls. XLI, XLII; Réau 1960, 57–58; Réau 1964, 1:45–46, 226, 231–233; 2:13, no. 5; Cecil 1965, 456, 458, fig. 5; Hodgkinson 1970, 132; Gaborit 1975, 244–245, 247; Arnason 1975, 45, 64, 67, fig. 100, pl. 42; Girod de l'Ain 1977, 113–114; Nicolas Mathieu, "Autour des trois représentations de Diane dans les musées de Tours et du Mans," in *L'Antiquité gréco-romaine vue par le siècle des lumières. Collection Caesardunum XXII bis*, ed. R. Chevallier (Tours, 1987), 359–378; Bresc-Bautier 1994, 373; New York, 1999–2000, 128; Scherf 2000, 23, 57 nn. 58–60, figs. 17, 18; Bailey 2002, 155–162, ill. p. 161.

#### RELATED WORKS

##### Extant life-size versions

###### Plaster

Schlossmuseum Gotha (inv. P 24); H. ca. 191 cm (with base: 210 cm), W. 95 cm; round base inscribed: "HOUDON. F. 1776."

###### Marble

Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon (inv. 1390) (fig. 1); H. 210 cm (statue: 193 cm), W. 98 cm, D. 115 cm; round base inscribed: "J. A. HOUDON, 1780"; figure has a quiver over her shoulder held by a strap across her torso and a bunch of reeds at her feet.

###### Bronze

Musée du Louvre, Paris (inv. CC 204); H. 206 cm (figure: 193 cm), W. 90 cm (without arrow), D. 114 cm; round base inscribed: "HOUDON. F.1790"; bought for the Louvre in 1829, having been offered in Houdon's posthumous sale, Paris, 15–17 Dec. 1828, no. 2.

###### Posthumous bronze

Musée des Beaux-Arts, Tours (inv. 884–3-1); H. 206 cm (figure: 190 cm); square base: W. 68.3 cm, D. 69 cm; signature and date cast into proper left side of base: "HOUDON I 1776"; cold stamp signature across top proper left edge of base: "CARBONNEAUX 1839"; cast in 1839 by Carbonneaux after a plaster similar to that in Gotha.

###### Terracotta

Frick Collection, New York (inv. 39.2.79); H. 192 cm (figure: 173 cm); square base; inscription partly damaged and reworked: "HOUDON Scult"; possibly the same as one sold in Houdon's studio sale of 8 Oct. 1795, no. 2 (see terracotta below).

##### Lost life-size versions (in chronological order of sales)

Plaster from the duc de Caylus, Paris, 11 Dec. 1783, no. 33: "Diane chasser-esse. Elle est nue et semble courir. D'une main, elle tient un arc et de l'autre une flèche. Cette figure est de grandeur naturelle, en plâtre, par M. Houdon."

Plaster from [Le Bas], Paris, 26 Apr. 1793, no. 86: "Une figure de Diane. Très beau platre en couleur terre cuite par Houdon."

Bronze from Houdon's studio sale, 8 Oct. 1795, no. 63: "Diane, debout, armé d'une flèche & dans l'action de chasser. Cette Figure de grandeur naturelle, est posée sur terrasse en bronze; hauteur totale, 6 pieds" (152,000 livres).

Terracotta from Houdon's studio sale, 8 Oct. 1795, no. 86: "Diane, figure de 6 pied de haut, compris l'épaisseur du socle [non présent]."

Plaster in Houdon's posthumous sale, 15–17 Dec. 1828, no. 3; modeled after life-size bronze figure in same sale (no. 2), bought by the Louvre.

Lead included in Houdon's 1784 list of his own works (no. 83) under the year 1781; no indication of size.



Back view of cat. 35



Side view of cat. 35

#### Extant reductions

##### Plaster

Musée Lambinet, Versailles (inv. 701); painted terracotta color; H. 63 cm, W. 26 cm, D. 37 cm; *cachet de l'atelier* on back of base; gift of M. Surell, municipal counselor, in 1882. See Gendré 1997, 119, fig. 187.

##### Marble

Private Collection, New York, H. 62 cm (diam. of base: 20 cm); inscribed: "HOUDON F: 1786"; probably the work John Trumbull admired in 1786 (see Provenance); probably the one Houdon planned to exhibit at the Salon of 1791 (it appears in the withdrawn Salon cat. as no. 224, H. 18–20 pouces; see Scherf 1997, 57) and mentioned in his *mémoire* to Bachelier of 1794: "Le marbre de ma *Diane* est à la Russie; le marbre de petite proportion était à feu d'Ormesson" (Réau 1964, 199); seized at the time of the Revolution in 1794 (Scherf 1997, 58 n. 76).

#### Lost or unidentified reductions

##### Terracottas

Girardot de Marigny's posthumous inventory [12 Apr. 1796] (AN, Min. Cent., étude L, file 802, fol. 62): "Une petite figure en terre cuite représentant la Diane de Houdon, sous cage de verre, prisee 15 livres."

Houdon's studio sale, Paris, 8 Oct. 1795, no. 87: "La même Figure [*Diana*] en petit, sur socle bleu turquin; hauteur 24 pouces [61 cm]" (7000 livres).

##### Plaster

A document of 26 Oct. 1785 indicates that Houdon sent a reduced plaster of *Diana* to Robert Edge Pine in Philadelphia to be sold on consignment for 25 louis; it had not been sold when Pine died in 1788 (letter from Franklin's son, 30 Mar. 1789); Dupont de Nemours wrote Houdon, 29 Apr. 1800 [9 Floréal an VIII] that he had still not been able to sell the "Diane en plâtre" because it was "trop nue" (BMV, F 946, no. 49 bis; nos. 39, 39 bis, 39 ter; no. 34).

#### Bronzes—sales catalogues (chronological order)

Porché-Vaubal, Paris, 29 Aug. 1797, no. 109: "La Diane, connue par la réputation qu'elle a acquise à son auteur. Haut. 22 pouces [55.9 cm]" (150 livres, to Lebrun).

Verdun-Bouquet, Paris, 26 Dec. 1797, under "Bronzes. Houdon," no. 179: "La Diane, en petit, très-connue par la réputation qu'elle a fait à son auteur, aussi exécutée par lui. Haut. 22 pouces[.]"

Amman de Schwanberg, The Hague, 19 Dec. 1809, no. 138: "Une Diane en bronze sur un socle de marbre griotte avec frise dorée d'or mat" (299.95 livres, to Larenville).

[Lucien-François] Feuchère père, Paris, 29 Nov. 1824, under "Bronzes," no. 15: "La Diane, de 20 pouces [50.8 cm] de proportions, copie de celle qui est à la Bibliothèque."

Houdon's posthumous sale, 15–17 Dec. 1828, no. 4: "Diane. Bronze. Jolie copie de la statue précédente."

#### Plasters—sales catalogues (chronological order)

Cabinet de M.\*\*\* [Calonne], Paris, 21 Apr. 1788, no. 255: "Houdon. La Diane en plâtre de couleur terre-cuite" (121 livres, to Maître Goman).

Houdon's posthumous sale, 15–17 Dec. 1828, no. 5: "Diane. Plâtre peint. Empreinte prise sur la réduction qui vient d'être décrite."

#### Boilly paintings

Boilly's 1804 painting of *Houdon in His Studio* depicts a life-size *Diana* in

the center background, its greenish black color indicating that it is bronze (cat. 66, fig. 1); possibly the bronze sold from Houdon's studio after his death in 1828 (no. 2), now at the Louvre. Boilly's second canvas (cat. 66) shows a life-size *Diana* in a terracotta color, which may be the painted plaster from the same posthumous sale (no. 3).

#### Posthumous copies

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries many copies in various media and sizes were made after Houdon's *Diana*. The French bronze foundries such as Barbedienne, Susse Frères, and Thiébaud copied the figure; see Scherf 2000, 31–32, fig. 32. The Louvre's plaster cast workshops made and sold casts of the Louvre's *Diana* from 1883 until the early 1990s (see Rionnet 1996, 265, no. 1117).



Signature on cat. 35

1. Published by Thomas von Bogyay, "Nouveaux documents relatifs aux rapports de la Cour de Gotha avec les artistes français. II: Houdon et Gotha. Ses projets pour le mausolée de la duchesse Louise-Dorothee," *BSHAF* (1935), 142–144. See also Frank, Mathies, and Poulet 2002a, 213–221; and Frank, Mathies, and Poulet 2002b, 475–484.

2. Schuttwolf 1995, 146–147, no. 56.

3. Salon cat. 1777, no. 248: "Buste en marbre d'une Diane, dont le modèle, de grandeur naturelle, a été fait à la Bibliothèque du Roi. Cette Diane doit être exécutée en marbre, & placée dans les Jardins de S.A. le Duc de Saxe-Gotha."

4. Réau 1964, 1:44–45.

5. See Réau 1932, 151–165.

6. See Scherf 2000, 10–15.

7. Johann Winckelmann, *Histoire de l'art chez les anciens, ouvrage traduit de l'allemand* (Amsterdam, 1766), 1:282.

8. Paris, Louvre (inv. MR 1581) H. 211 cm, W. 217 cm. See Louvre cat. 1998, 685.

9. See Bresc-Bautier 1994, 372–377.

10. See letter of Jean-Baptiste Pierre (*premier peintre du Roi*) to d'Angiviller, 10 Jan. 1779, in Furcy-Raynaud 1905, 238.

11. Letter of d'Angiviller to Pierre, 18 Jan. 1779, in Furcy-Raynaud 1905, 241.

12. See Girod de l'Ain 1977, 113–114; and Bailey 2002, 155–162.

13. Baron Roger Portalis, *Henry Pierre Danloux. Peintre de portraits et son journal durant l'émigration* (Paris, 1910), 143.

14. Published in Réau 1964, 1:45.

15. Bailey 2002, 161.

16. Salon of 1781, no. 255.

17. Listed in the withdrawn catalogue for the Salon of 1791, nos. 227 and 228 (see Scherf 1997, 57 nn. 24, 25).





## + Bust of Diana

Dated 1778

White Carrara marble on round, dark gray marble base

H. 63 cm (with base: 81.6 cm), W. 45.1 cm

Inscribed on truncation of proper right arm: HOUDON, / FÉCIT, / 1778.

National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Syma Busiel (inv. 1957.1.1)

Among the more than thirty works Houdon submitted to the Salon of 1777 was a life-size marble *Bust of Diana*, derived from the plaster statue of Diana exhibited in his studio at the same time (see cat. 35). This was not the first instance in which the artist created a bust as an independent work of art based on one of his full-length sculptures. He had executed a bust of Saint John the Baptist from a statue done for the church of Santa Maria degli Angeli in Rome in 1766–1767 (cat. 3) and a head of an *écorché* from his famous anatomical figure study (cat. 1).<sup>1</sup>

In this bust the goddess turns her head to her right and looks over her shoulder. Her hair is piled on top of her head, with loose strands falling down the nape of her neck. The curls gathered at her crown swing out to the right, giving the impression of sudden movement, as if she has just spotted her prey. A crescent moon is held in place on top of her head with a narrow band and a lock of hair. Her smooth features, straight nose, blank eyes, and wavy hair pulled back from her face recall classical prototypes, especially the famous Roman copy of a Greek bronze original from the second half of the fourth century, sometimes thought to be the work of Leochares (fig. 1).<sup>2</sup> That statue, first recorded at Fontainebleau in 1586, was one of the most admired and imitated antique works in

France in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Houdon certainly knew the sculpture well, along with other representations of Diana the huntress (see cat. 35).

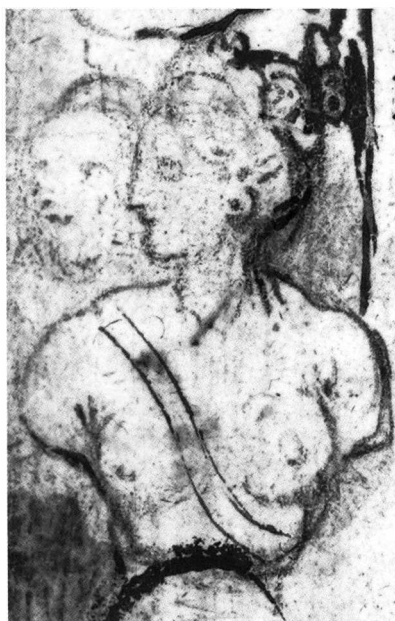
Houdon was deliberately alluding to these sources at the same time he created a new classical style of his own. The soft treatment of the hair in loosely defined locks, the subtle use of the chisel and drill to create the illusion of the texture and weight of the strands of hair is uniquely his invention. Houdon's marble *Bust of Diana* received warm praise from the critics. Bachaumont wrote that it was "better conceived than that by Allegrain. It is the type of austere beauty of this goddess which inspires respect, instead of encouraging boldness by graces that are too seductive."<sup>3</sup> The reviewer from the *Mercure de France* found that both Houdon's statue and his bust of Diana "recall in a very pleasant way the beauties of antique sculpture."<sup>4</sup>

Although there is consensus concerning the fine quality and authenticity of the National Gallery of Art's *Bust of Diana*, signed and dated 1778, there has been a great deal of discussion in the literature as to whether it is the bust that was shown at the Salon of 1777. The discrepancy in date has led some scholars to conclude "this is a second bust, and that the first—in the Salon of 1777—was lost or destroyed."<sup>5</sup> Another marble bust of

1. Roman, Diana the Huntress, copy after a Greek original of the second half of the fourth century BC, marble, Musée du Louvre, Paris.



2. Gabriel de Saint-Aubin, drawing of Bust of Diana in Salon catalogue of 1777, no. 248 (detail), BNEst.



Diana, undated, completely nude, and of doubtful quality and provenance, was proposed as that shown at the Salon of 1777 (see Related Works). One valuable piece of evidence is the drawing of the bust that Saint-Aubin sketched in the margin of his Salon catalogue (fig. 2).<sup>6</sup> He depicted the *Diana* with the same truncation and band crossing her torso diagonally between her breasts as seen in the National Gallery's bust. This strap does not appear in the full-length plaster statue of Diana exhibited in Houdon's studio during the Salon of 1777. The strap with a

quiver and arrows was introduced by Houdon in the full-length marble of Diana, signed and dated 1780, as a support for the weight of her left arm; he also added reeds at her feet to support the weight of the entire figure. Even though dated 1780, Houdon's conception of the marble Diana was complete at least by April 1778, when Bachaumont wrote: "It is unfortunate that the almost celestial pose [of the *Diana*], very well executed in plaster, cannot be adapted to the weight of marble. The sculptor will be obliged to lean her against a tuft of reeds and will thus take away from the figure her extreme lightness."<sup>7</sup>

Considering the fact that the National Gallery's *Bust of Diana* is the only known marble version on which the strap appears and that the work is of very high quality, it seems most probable that it is identical with the bust exhibited in the Salon of 1777 and drawn by Saint-Aubin. Houdon may have signed and dated the bust the year after its exhibition, for there are other instances, such as his bronze statue of *Apollo* (cat. 37), in which he postdated his sculptures.

ANNE L. POULET

#### PROVENANCE

Comte Marcellin de Fresnes by 1879 (de Ris 1879, 186; Vitry 1907a, 12; Bapst 1915, 10); bequeathed to the comtesse Greffuhle (1860–1952) before 1907 (de Cossé Brissac 1991, 131–132, cites the unpublished memoirs of the countess and quotes an undated letter sent to her by the comte de Fresnes: "Je lègue à la comtesse Greffulhe, née Caraman-Chimay, le plus bel objet de Houdon, la première pensée de la Diane. Elle seule est digne de la posséder"); in the collection of the comtesse Greffulhe at least until 1936, and possibly until her death (NGA archives, letter of 4 Jan. 1936, Princess A. de Caraman Chimay to Andrew Mellon: "I want you to know of a great masterpiece—of the French eighteenth century, a bust of Diane by Houdon—which has always been in the possession of an old French family. The owner, Countess Greffuhle, born Princess de Caraman Chimay—would part with it"; and letter of 9 Jan. 1936, Andrew Mellon declining to purchase it); Wildenstein & Co., 1955–1957; purchased by the National Gallery of Art in 1957 with funds given by Syma Busiel.

#### EXHIBITIONS

Probably Paris, Salon cat. 1777, 45, no. 248; Washington 1976, 192, 378, no. 335.

#### REFERENCES

"Exposition au Salon du Louvre des peintures, sculptures et autres ouvrages de Messieurs de l'Académie royale en 1777," *Mercure de France* [1777], 1104–1105 (Deloynes X, no. 191); Bachaumont 1780, 11:43, letter 3, 22 Sept. 1777; Montaignon and Duplessis 1855, 179, 183; Délerot and Legrelle 1857, 121,



Back view of cat. 36

125, 232; Clément de Ris, "Musée impérial de l'Ermitage à Saint-Petersbourg," *GBA* 19 (1879), 186; Jacques Darl, *Buste de la Diane de Houdon* (Paris, n.d. [1906]), 1–24; Vitry 1907a, 10–12; Vitry 1907b, 203, no. 60, under the year 1779; "La Diane de Houdon," *Journal des chercheurs et curieux* 15, no. 1149 (30 May 1907), 809–810; no. 1165 (10 Nov. 1907), 690–692; Dacier 1909–1921, 4:58; Lami 1910–1911, 2:419; Léon Roger-Milès, *Les Dianes de Houdon et les caprices de la pudeur esthétique à la fin du XVIIIe siècle* (Paris, 1913), 5–6, 24–26, 37, 40–42, ill.; Bapst 1915, 7–10; Giacometti 1918–1919, 3:11–22, 114; Giacometti 1929, 1:178, 185, 197; 2:188–190; Perry B. Cott, "A Note on Houdon's Bust of Diana," in *Studies in the History of Art Dedicated to William E. Suida* (London, 1959), 364–367, fig. 1; Réau 1960, 59, ill. p. 5; "La Chronique des arts," suppl. *GBA*, no. 1092 (Jan. 1960), 39, fig. 132; Réau 1964, 1:96, 157, 233–234; 2:12–13, no. 5.E., 24, no. 72, pl. VIII; Arnason 1975, 43, 108 n. 61, 109 n. 68, 110–111 n. 98, fig. 103, pl. 39; Anne de Cossé Brissac, *La Comtesse Greffulhe* (Paris, 1991), 131–132; NGA cat. 1994, 110, ill.; Scherf 2000, 20, 55 n. 43, fig. 16.

#### RELATED WORKS

##### Marbles

Eighteenth-century documents record one, or possibly two, marble busts of Diana by Houdon: one in the Salon of 1777, no. 248, and drawn by Gabriel de Saint-Aubin in his copy of the catalogue (see fig. 2; and Dacier 1909–1921, 4:58); and one under the year 1779 in the list Houdon compiled of his own works ca. 1784 (Vitry 1907b, 203), no. 60: "Buste en marbre de Dianne." Although these citations give two different years, they probably refer to the same bust; in the list of 1784 Houdon often made errors in dating his works.

Two marble busts of Diana, nude and without the strap across her torso, are mentioned in the literature beginning in the early twentieth century. Their present whereabouts are unknown:

One is H. 87 cm, signed: "Houdon fecit" (first published in Darl [1906], 1–24). Giacometti is quoted in *Journal des chercheurs et curieux* (1907), 809–810, as saying it was a portrait of Mlle Audéoud by Houdon and had belonged to Marie Antoinette and to the baron de Goguelat; exhibited in Paris 1908, 51, no. 130, as from the collection of the comte Mansard de Sagonne. The provenance, quality, and identification of the sitter have been questioned in Brière and Vitry 1908, 171–173, no. 130; and Roger-Milès 1913, 40–41, ill.

The second was published in Réau 1964, 2:12–13 (see pl. VI, no. 5E), as formerly in the collection of King Stanisław Augustus II Poniatowski of Poland; once having decorated the Bath Pavilion at Łazienki near Warsaw; confiscated by the Germans in 1940. A replica is in the Muzeum Narodowe, Warsaw.

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries a number of inferior and certainly not authentic marble busts after Houdon's *Diana* appeared in sales, often with a drapery added over the breasts.

##### Bronze

Houdon's studio sale, 8 Oct. 1795, under "Figures et Bustes en Bronze," no. 68: "Le buste de Diane, coiffée en cheveux tressés, ornés d'un croissant. Il est posé sur un piédoche en marbre. H. totale: 29 pouces, 6 lignes [ca. 75 cm]."



Signature on cat. 36

1. The plaster bust of Saint John the Baptist is in the Schlossmuseum Gotha, where it was sent by Houdon in 1772. See Schuttwolf 1995, 129, no. 44; and the essay "Etats des Choses" in the present catalogue.

2. See Haskell and Penny 1981, 196–198, no. 130, fig. 102.

3. Bachaumont 1780, 11:43.

4. *Mercure de France*, 1104–1105.

5. Bapst 1915, 10.

6. Dacier 1909–1921, 4:58.

7. Bachaumont 1780–1789, 11:203, 21 Apr. 1778.



## + Apollo

Cast in September 1788

Bronze on square bronze self-base

H. 213 cm, W. 89 cm, D. 93 cm

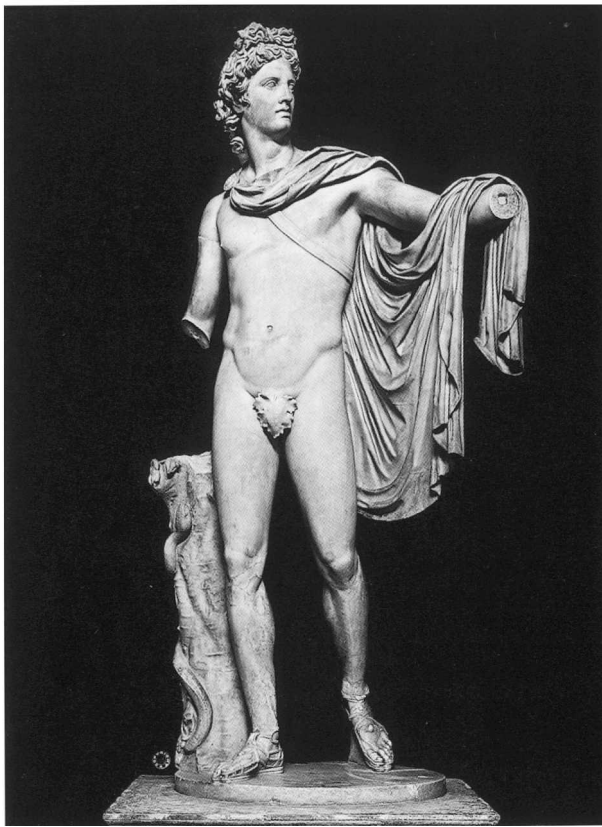
Inscribed in wax before casting on proper right side of base: HOUDON F. 1790. / POUR JN. GIRARDOT DE MARIGNY, NEGOCIANT A PARIS.

Calouste Gulbenkian Museum, Lisbon (inv. 552)

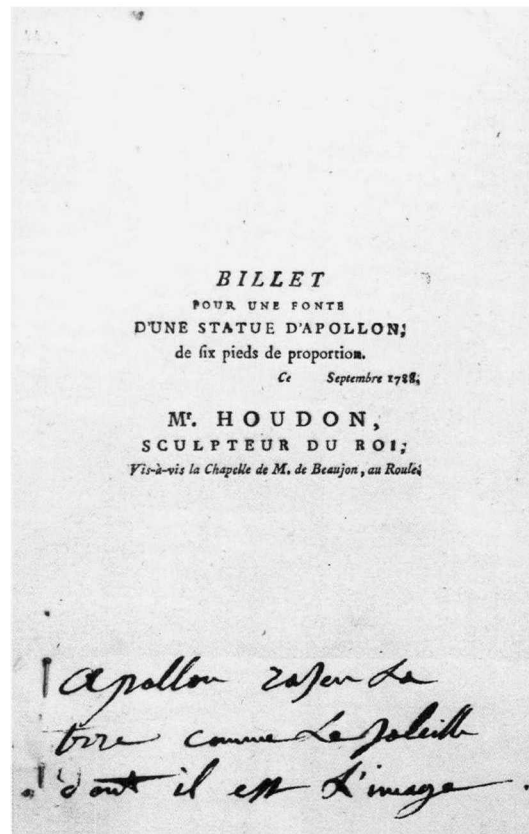
At the time Houdon exhibited his statue of *Diana the Huntress* (cat. 35) in his studio in 1778, it was compared to the Apollo Belvedere (fig. 1): “It is the perfection of beauty superior to nature... that purity of form that announces a celestial being. Light, svelte, noble, simple, and imposing one would say Diana herself, the sister of Apollo, that divine *Apollon du Vatican*, the only figure on earth who gives us the impression of a god.” In a rather disingenuous response Houdon protested that his *Diana* did not approach the quality of the antique Apollo: “What I say is not from modesty; but I have found that figure [Apollo] very close to perfection.”<sup>1</sup>

Inspired by the Apollo Belvedere, Houdon was to create the present imposing life-size bronze statue of Apollo as a pendant to his bronze figure of Diana for the Paris garden of the wealthy Protestant banker and collector Jean Girardot de Marigny. Girardot must have commissioned the second sculpture soon after the first was completed, for Houdon recorded a life-size model of the *Apollo* under the year 1783 (see Related Works), a year following the casting of the *Diana*. The actual casting of the *Apollo* did not take place, however, until September 1788, and the chasing and patination must have taken a long time, for the base of the bronze, which was cast separately, is dated 1790.

The sculptor was extremely proud of his skills as a bronze founder. In a *mémoire* sent to Bachelier on 11 October 1794, Houdon wrote that he had devoted himself primarily to two areas of study: anatomy and the casting of statues in bronze. He then explained that he was forced to leave the city’s foundry in 1787 and that “in three weeks I bought a house across the street, I built new furnaces and there I cast my *Apollo*.”<sup>2</sup> Several important unpublished documents written by Houdon’s wife provide new insight into Houdon’s general working method and vivid technical details concerning the casting of the *Apollo*: “19 September 1788. Friday. Day when the material for the Apollo was melted down. The fire was lit to heat the furnace at two o’clock in the morning to the temperature necessary for melting the metal. They began to add the metal at six-thirty in the morning. They struck the spot to unplug the hole through which the metal flows to the mold at twelve-thirty. It took thirty-five seconds to pour the metal and fill the mold.”<sup>3</sup> In another document Mme Houdon lists the materials used for the model and cast of the *Apollo* and the lyre, the labor involved, and the itemized costs. The metal melted for the statue included 62 livres worth of iron and 1,100 livres worth of copper. It is apparent that it was a lost wax cast, for the cost of wax for the figure



1. Apollo Belvedere, early Hadrianic period copy of Greek bronze original by Leochares, marble, Musei Vaticani, Belvedere Courtyard, Rome.



2. Ticket to view new bronze casting of Houdon's statue of Apollo, September 1788, Bibliothèque municipale de Versailles.

is listed as “106 livres, 2 sols, 6 d.”<sup>4</sup> Houdon used forty sacks of plaster, half fine and half coarse, for the mold and for the core material, and he employed M. Getty as an assistant for making the mold, the wax, the core, and the bronze casts of both the statue and the lyre.<sup>5</sup> The documents make clear that the statue and the lyre were cast separately. They also indicate that the figure was cast in one piece, an important technical advance for Houdon, considering that the *Diana*, his first life-size bronze, was cast in several separate pieces.<sup>6</sup>

Another indication that the *Apollo* was cast in one piece is the fact that Houdon invited the public to come to his studio to see the work as it had come out of the mold. The *Journal de Paris* of 24 September announced, “the 19th of this month, M. Houdon... cast in bronze a statue of *Apollo*, six feet high. The casting was very successful, and the figure has now been removed from the mold. Those who wish to see it in this state can send for a ticket, giving their name, at M. Houdon's home, au Roule, across from the Chapelle de M. Beaujon. One will gain entrance with this ticket beginning Monday, the 29th

through Saturday [4 October], from 4 to 6 in the afternoon. Those who have obtained tickets to see the cast, who have kept them, can use them for themselves and their friends.”<sup>7</sup> On a surviving copy of the ticket (fig. 2) Houdon wrote rather poetically, “*Apollo* grazes the earth like the sun of which he is the image.”<sup>8</sup> Houdon clearly was pleased with this first bronze cast in his own foundry and did not hesitate to advertise it. He would repeat this kind of ticketed theatrical event for the unveiling of other works of art, such as his bronze *Ecorché* (cat. 2) in 1790.

The choice of *Apollo* as the subject for the pendant to *Diana* was a natural one. They were brother and sister, one representing the sun, the other the moon. Like Houdon's earlier statue of *Diana*, his figure of *Apollo* is depicted completely nude, moving forward, with his weight resting on the toes of one foot and the other foot extended behind him. Both the *Diana* and the *Apollo* turn their heads to their right, while she is balanced on her left leg, he on his right. Both have idealized, sexually explicit, smoothly modeled bodies that seem to float forward rather than run. The sense of movement in each statue is

enhanced by the strands of hair that flow out behind the heads as though blown by the wind. These figures form a marked contrast to Houdon's earlier *Priest of the Lupercalia* (cat. 5), also a running figure, in which the artist followed the dynamic style found in baroque models by Bernini and Coustou.

Although Diana was rarely depicted nude in antiquity, there were numerous antique precedents for the nude Apollo. Houdon turned to an obvious classical prototype: the Apollo Belvedere (fig. 1) was one of the most admired of all antique sculptures. Houdon knew it well, not only from his years of study in Rome but also through the many copies and prints available to artists in eighteenth-century France. As early as the seventeenth century the Apollo Belvedere and the Louvre's

antique *Diana the Huntress* were thought to be by the same artist and were seen as a pair.<sup>9</sup> Under the influence of Frédéric-Melchior Grimm, Houdon was more innovative with the iconography of his *Diana*, and it became one of his best known and most frequently reproduced sculptures. While the *Apollo*, known only in this single bronze version, follows its antique prototype more closely, it is also distinctly Houdon's invention. Like the *Diana*, the *Apollo* has a minimum of attributes—only his lyre—eliminating the drapery and sandals of his classical model. Both sculptures focus entirely on an idealized anatomy and a lighter, running pose.

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Alternate view of cat. 37

#### PROVENANCE

Cast 19 Sept. 1788 (BMV, F 946, D 37533, nos. 242, 243); commissioned as a pendant to the *Diana* (cat. 35) by Jean Girardot de Marigny for his private garden in Paris; listed in his posthumous inventory, 23 Germinal an IV [12 Apr. 1796] (AN, Min. Cent., étude L, file 802, fol. 5): "Dans le jardin, une Diane et un Apollon [sic], en bronze, prisés... 1200 livres"; [Lucien-François] Feuchère père sale (at closing of bronze foundry), Paris, 29 Nov. 1824, under bronzes: "no. 13—M. Houdon—Grande statue en bronze de six pieds et demi de proportion, avec un socle; Cette statue a été faite pour M. Girardot de Marigny, pour pendant à la Diane du même artiste" (unsold); Feuchère père, 3rd sale, Paris, 19 Jan. 1829, under bronzes: "no. 40—Apollon. Grande statue de Houdon, six pieds et demi de proportion, faite en pendant à la Diane du même artiste, qui est dans la cour de la Bibliothèque royale et qui vient d'être acheté par le Gouvernement à la vente Houdon.—Nota: Cette figure est exposée rue Notre-Dame-de-Nazareth, no. 25, dans la cour de la fabrique de Bronzes (de la Maison Feuchère)"; E. du Sommerard collection (1883); Léopold Goldschmidt collection (from 1883); by inheritance to the comte Jean de Pastré and comtesse de Pastré; purchased from them by Calouste Gulbenkian, 30 Jan. 1927.

#### EXHIBITIONS

Paris, Salon cat. 1791 (withdrawn), 47, no. 221: "Statue d'Apollon de grandeur naturelle. Appartenant à M. Girardot" (see Scherf 1997, 51–52, 57); Paris 1889 (see Michel 1889, 287); *Exposition des arts au début du siècle* [exh. cat., Société philanthropique] (Paris, 1891), 58, no. 444; *Catalogue général officiel. Beaux-Arts, Exposition centennale de l'art français (1799–1899)* [exh. cat., Exposition universelle internationale] (Paris, 1899), 43, no. 100; New York 1999–2000, 128–129, no. 61, ill.



## REFERENCES

Michel 1889, 287; Vitry 1907a, 14–16, ill. p. 15; Paul Vitry, “Jean Antoine Houdon,” *L’Art et les artistes* 5, no. 10 (Paris, 1909), 67–68, ill.; Lami 1910–1911, 1:430; Giacometti 1918–1919, 3:84–86; Giacometti 1929, 1:47, 197, ill. opp. p. 136; Réau 1960, 59–60, ill. p. 8; Réau 1964, 1:99, 102, 223–224, 234–235; 2: 12, no. 4, pl. I; Gaborit 1975, 243, 246; Arnason 1975, 68, 92–93, 110 n. 94, 111 n. 101, 117 n. 215, 118 n. 226, 121 n. 225a, fig. 185, pls. 122, 123; Guilhem Scherf, “Jean-Antoine Houdon: Apollon im Wind,” in Duisburg 1989, 122–123, no. 39; W. McAllister Johnson, “Visits to the Salon and Sculptors’ Ateliers during the *Ancien Régime*,” *GBA* 120 (July-Aug. 1994), 23, 34 n. 35; Bresc-Bautier 1994, 373–374; Scherf 1997, 51–52, 57; Bailey 2002, 155–162, ill. p. 161.

## RELATED WORKS

In the list of his own works that Houdon compiled ca. 1784, he included a life-size model of the *Apollo* under the year 1783 without indicating the medium (Vitry 1907b, 207–208), no. 109: “Modelle d’une statue d’Apollon, de grandeur naturel.” The present location of this model, if it has survived, is unknown.

## Marble medallions

In the Salon of 1777 Houdon exhibited as a pendant to a marble medallion of *Minerva* (no. 251) a marble medallion of the *Head of Apollo* (*Apollon repoussé par le vent*) in profile (no. 250): “Plusieurs Portraits, en médaillons de grandeur naturelle,” which was sketched by Gabriel de Saint-Aubin (Dacier 1909–1921, 4:59). In the 1784 list of his works Houdon includes under the year 1780, no. 79: “Deux médaillons en marbre représentant Minerve et l’autre Apollon [*sic*] repoussé par le vent pour le prince de Holstein-Gottorp [later Czar Paul I (reigned 1796–1801)]” (see Vitry 1907b, 205). The present location of these medallions is unknown.

In Houdon’s studio sale, Paris, 8 Oct. 1795, 14, under “Figures et Bustes en marbre,” no. 75: “Le Buste d’Apollon, demi-relief en Médaille de 15 pouces 6 lignes [ca. 39.4 cm] de diamètre” (335 livres). This relief (see cat. 34, fig. 2), thought to be a replica of the Holstein-Gottorp medallion, may be identical with a marble medallion of Apollo from the collection of François-Pierre Gouvy (1758–1815) acquired by the Musée du Louvre from the Gouvy family in 1979 (inv. RF 3410; see Louvre cat. 1998, 2:431, ill.).



Signature on cat. 37

1. “Letter of Laus de Boissy” and Houdon’s reply in *Journal de Paris* (14 and 16 Apr. 1778); published in Réau 1964, 1:43–44.

2. See Réau 1964, 1:99.

3. BMV, F 946, no. 242: “Le 19 Septembre 1788 vendredi Jour ou l’on a fondue la matière pour Lapollon, l’on a commencé à mettre le feu pour chauffer le fourneau au degré qu’il le faut pour mestre la matière a deux heures du matin. l’on a commencé a mestre la matière a six heures trente minute du matin. l’on a donné le coup pour déboucher le trou par lequel la matière va au moule à midi trente minute, Et la matière à ‘été trente cinq seconde a coullé pour remplir le moule.”

4. The statue was mistakenly identified as a sand-cast bronze in New York 1999–2000, 128–129, no. 61, ill.

5. BMV, F 946, nos. 242 bis, 243. Getty was a highly skilled assistant to Houdon in the founding of bronzes. It is to him that Houdon referred in his *mémoire* to Bachelier in 1794: “it was in my studio that one was obliged to look for a founder: one took from there a man of considerable talent, but who had only worked for me and owed everything to me, to my perseverance, my money, my advice, and my expertise in this art. He was only a mold maker when he arrived at my place” (see Réau 1964, 1:99). Getty is mentioned again as having cast in one piece the sixteen-foot bronze statue of Napoléon, after the model by Houdon for the monument in Boulogne; see *Journal de l’Empire* (21 Dec. 1812), 2.

6. A full technical study has not yet been made of the *Apollo*, thus it cannot be confirmed whether or not the figure was cast in one piece.

7. *Journal de Paris*, no. 268 (24 Sept. 1788), 1150.

8. BMV, F 946, no. 243 bis: “Apollon rasant La tere comme Le Soleil dont il est l’image.”

9. Haskell and Penny 1981, 150–151, 198.

## + Winter, also called *La Frileuse*

38-40

Dated 1783

White marble with gray veins

H. 145 cm, W. 50 cm, D. 62 cm

Inscribed on front of plinth: HOUDON F. 1783 DONNE AU MUSEE-FABRE PAR

M: CREUZE DE LESSER, PREFET DE L'HERAULT. 1828

Musée Fabre, Montpellier, Gift of Creuzé de Lesser, Préfet de l'Hérault, 1828 (inv. 828-5-1)

Dated 1787

Bronze

H. 144.8 cm

Inscribed on plinth: HOUDON. F. 1787

Lent by The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Bequest of Kate Trubee Davison, 1962 (inv. 62.55)

## + Summer

Dated 1785

White marble, with a few brown veins (fragment of marble added for drapery behind left foot)

H. 155 cm, W. 52 cm, D. 48 cm

Inscribed on front of plinth: HOUDON F. 1785 DONNE AU MUSEE-FABRE PAR

M: CREUZE DE LESSER, PREFET DE L'HERAULT. 1828

Musée Fabre, Montpellier, Gift of Creuzé de Lesser, Préfet de l'Hérault, 1828 (inv. 828-5-2)

The person who commissioned the two Montpellier marbles, *Summer* and *Winter* (also called *La Frileuse*), is less famous than the two statues. Anne-Charles Modenx de Saint-Wast, son of an artillery commissioner, purchased a position as *conseiller secrétaire du Roi* in 1762, with funds he acquired as receiver general in Paris and director general of domains in Poitiers.<sup>1</sup> Saint-Wast and his opulent home on rue Saint-Honoré were described by a great-nephew: “M. de Saint-Waast... was an excellent man, unaffected, cheerful, witty, generous, with a love for magnificence, but with taste and discernment. I have never encountered in any palace a richer and more elegant luxury than that in the salon of the house he had built overlooking the Tuileries. In his library he had the famous *Frileuse*, which Houdon had done for him.”<sup>2</sup> Although *Summer* is not mentioned, it must have been there, for the comte d'Angiviller, director of the Bâtiments du Roi, assured Houdon in June 1785: “I will do whatever possible, the first time I go to Paris, to drop by your studio and see the two marble figures there that you are to deliver to the owner before you leave [for America].”<sup>3</sup>

*Summer* and *Winter* were conceived in 1781, according to Houdon's list of 1784.<sup>4</sup> A terracotta sketch in Montpellier already displayed, in its exquisitely small dimensions, the essential features of the composition for *Winter* (fig. 1): a shivering girl, nude, wrapped in a large shawl that covers her head. She leans against a tree (the future statue's support) and stands beside a container of water that appears to have been split by freezing temperatures (fine incisions mark the cracks that will be carved in the marble). Houdon planned to exhibit his marble of *Winter* at the Salon of 1783 (it is dated the same year); but the catalogue mentions it as being on view in his studio. He wanted to present marble reductions of the two statues at the Salon of 1785 (*Summer*, dated 1785, was completed, and the two large marbles presumably already delivered to Saint-Wast). Yet because he was not yet an officer in the Académie royale,<sup>5</sup> Houdon was subject to the decisions of the jury; and as Jean-Baptiste Pierre, director of the academy, informed d'Angiviller: “Two small, half-size figures by M. Houdon were brought in: one, which is draped, is not wonderful, the other might not pass







CAT. 40



1. Houdon,  
La Frileuse, 1781,  
terracotta, Musée  
Fabre, Montpellier.

because of the kind of nudity it displays. A completely nude figure is less indecent than those draped with false modesty. I made a drawing of it . . . so that you can decide. Let me observe, however, that this figure is the better of the two and that it could be hidden away in a corner." D'Angiviller replied: "Regarding the two half-size figures of M. Houdon, I yield entirely to what the academy will decide about them. Perhaps, indeed, placing the one that is a bit nude in a corner will fend off the objection you raise."<sup>6</sup> In the end, the works were not shown and did not even appear in the catalogue. A well-informed critic remarked: "It's a pity that, in taking several of his other works away from us, the academy's committee has kept us from knowing those he rendered so well."<sup>7</sup>

It was not until the Salon of 1791, open to all artists, that Houdon was able to show the bronze of his *Frileuse* (cat. 39). That work, dated 1787, had been purchased by the duc d'Orléans. Houdon was proud of it and listed it alongside his *Diana* as among the masterpieces produced by his foundry.<sup>8</sup> The critics at the Salon indulged in some irony: "*La Frileuse* by M. Houdon does not seem to achieve its effect. When someone is really cold, he tries to pull all his limbs close to him and covers his body more than his head. Nevertheless, it is pleasant to the eye and the proportions are correct"; "It appears that M. Houdon wanted to exercise all his talent only on a beautiful backside. Why, therefore, is this figure turned in such a way that we cannot see anything? Moreover, one must concur that winter would be a very desirable season if pretty shivering girls did not cover themselves in any other way."<sup>9</sup>

At the Salon of 1793 the sculptor displayed a terracotta of his *Frileuse* (presumably the one acquired by the Louvre in 1946; see fig. 2). Significantly larger than the Montpellier version, she is depicted entirely nude, a key variant that links her to other female figurines of the same period (by Clodion, Jacques-Edme Dumont, Joseph-Charles Marin, Augustin Pajou, and so on), despite its deliberately sketchy character. A modern critic describes: "the little head leaning to one side, with a gesture more winning than shivery, with her somewhat rascally features, her revolutionary hairstyle with little curls and cascading locks."<sup>10</sup> Tool marks were intentionally left visible on the clay, a modeling technique that involved eliminating material, and could evoke the process of carving a marble block.<sup>11</sup> This technique is also seen to some extent on the terracotta model for the Golitsyn tomb at the Louvre (cat. 57).

The *Frileuse* quickly became famous, and Houdon did many variations of it in different materials and sizes (see Related Works). But his friend Mme Bordier wrote a letter in 1794 that



2. Houdon, La Frileuse, 1793 (?), terracotta, Musée du Louvre, Paris.



3. Houdon, *Summer*, after 1782, marble, Musée Nissim de Camondo, Paris.



4. Etienne-Maurice Falconet, *Winter*, 1763–1771, marble, The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg.

brought up the problem of counterfeits, which was then the sculptor's central preoccupation: "I am very interested in that little *Frileuse*. . . . No one owns the piece. Houdon did not put it up for sale until after getting funds to cover in part the damage done him by forgeries. . . . Be wary of the servants: for a few louis, they allow things to be recast in the absence of the masters. This misfortune has already befallen him."<sup>12</sup>

Although Houdon did not do a bust of his *Frileuse*, he did produce one of *Summer* (this is understandable, as the face is not lowered). A beautiful bust in plaster is dated 1782—three years before the date inscribed on the marble statue. Both models for *Winter* and *Summer* were conceived in 1781, as noted on Houdon's autograph list of 1784. For unknown reasons, perhaps the pressure of other commitments, Houdon seems to have been content to execute a bust after his model of *Summer* while waiting to complete his full-size marbles in 1783 and 1785. The marble in the Musée Nissim de Camondo (fig. 3) seems to be an autograph replica after the statue, as it has some variations (in particular, parted lips).

The great fame of Houdon's allegorical figures of *Summer* and *Winter* derives in large part from the originality of their treatment. *Winter* departs strikingly from the images of maturity or old age in the iconography manuals of Cesare Ripa (translated into French in the mid-1600s), Honoré Lacombe de Prezel (1756), and Jean-Baptiste Boudard (1759). In fact, the only point of agreement is the head covering. The idea of using the figure of a young girl was first explored by Etienne-Maurice Falconet, whose statue of *Winter* (fig. 4) was conceived for Mme de Pompadour in 1763 but, after her death, was executed in marble for Catherine II (it is dated 1771). Houdon did not see Falconet's statue, but several Russians living in Paris (the Golitsyns and Stroganovs) or travelers (such as Diderot) may have described the work, which was displayed in Catherine's home. The motif of the vessel broken by freezing water is seen in both Houdon's and Falconet's statues. But whereas Falconet amply draped his figure in the classical style, Houdon mischievously undressed her, transforming her into a shivering callipygian girl. This audacious interpretation of the subject—bestowing a naturalness on a goddess, who thus becomes humanly desirable—shocked Pierre and the Académie royale<sup>13</sup> but delighted art lovers.

Houdon's depiction of *Summer* was also inventive. To be sure, the young girl, like any Ceres, holds a sickle and sheaves of wheat. But she also boasts a watering can, a practical and modern addition.<sup>14</sup> With a kerchief on her head, and flowers and wheat in her hair, she is more of a smart-looking gardener



5. Houdon, *Ceres or Winter*, 1781, plaster, *château de Maisons*.

than the sister of Jupiter. At her feet are flowers and fruits (grape, apple, pomegranate) as well as a tambourine, a symbol of celebration. Her watering can, alluding to the source of life, counterposes the frozen urn of *Winter*. This image of *Summer* is the opposite of the majestic *Ceres* that Houdon conceived at the same time for the comte d'Artois' dining room at Maisons (fig. 5). That *Ceres* does not represent Summer but Winter, lifting a veil (which evokes her mourning for her daughter, Proserpine) to reveal a wreath of wheat sheaves on her head, a promise of earth's awakening after the long winter's sleep.

The ravishing statue of *Summer* is done in a bold style, especially in back, where sheaves of wheat are covered by drapery that is carved in sharp pleats. The bearing of the head is elegant, with the scarf caressing her neck and brushing against her bare left breast. Her youthful face is one of Houdon's signatures —

round and fully rendered—and the eyes, treated in his usual manner, give the allegorical figure a very real presence. The attitude of *Winter* is different: whereas *Summer* looks proudly in front of her, the famous *Frileuse*, her shoulders hunched, stares at the ground. One has to crouch to perceive her pretty face, set within billowing waves of fabric. The eyes are lowered, the lips closed, but with her round cheeks and broad forehead, this is truly the twin sister of the gardener. The tree trunk and urn were indispensable for supporting the weight of the marble figure, but the bronze at the Metropolitan is free of these accessories and thus possesses a far lighter effect, while the quality of the casting and chasing is superb, exemplifying Houdon's mastery of the art of bronze.

GUILHEM SCHERF

#### PROVENANCE

##### + *Winter*—Musée Fabre +

Model included on Houdon's autograph list (ca. 1784) under the year 1781: "modèle d'une frileuse représentant l'hiver pour être exécuté en marbre sur quatre pieds de haut" (Vitry 1907b, 206, no. 93); marble displayed in Houdon's studio at fringes of the Salon of 1783: "Une jeune fille en marbre de grandeur naturelle exprimant le froid, surnommée la Frileuse. Elle est chez l'auteur à la Bibliothèque du Roi" (after no. 251). Commissioned by Anne-Charles Modenx de Saint-Wast, Paris (1709–1790); inherited by his widow, Catherine-Claire Creuzé; then her nephew and godson, Augustin-François Creuzé (1771–1839), prefect of Hérault in 1817, named hereditary baron of Lesser in 1818, who donated the statue, along with its companion piece, *Summer* (cat. 40), to the Musée Fabre at its opening in 1828: "il a eu l'extrême bonté de les faire venir de Paris pour les offrir au Musée, dont elles sont un des principaux ornemens" (*Notice*, 1828, 69).

##### + *Winter*—The Metropolitan Museum of Art +

Created in Houdon's foundry in 1787. Collection of the duc d'Orléans: "Bronze. Jeune Fille exprimant le froid, ou la frileuse. Appartenant à M. d'Orléans" (withdrawn catalogue for Salon of 1791, no. 222; see Scherf 1997, 57); and in Houdon's *mémoire* to Bachelier, 11 Oct. 1794: "Le bronze de la Frileuse était à feu d'Orléans"; confiscated during the Revolution (Houdon took it to the warehouse the same day as the small marble *Diana* belonging to Lefèvre d'Ormesson de Noyseau): "Orléans condamné. Une frileuse en bronze, par Houdon 4 pieds ½ de haut environ (nota: elle a été apportée au dépôt par le citoyen Houdon) [in margin:] Le 17 Prairial [an II] [5 June 1794] M[inistère] de l'Intérieur" (AN, F17\* 372, fol. 69 ["Registre Naugeon"]). Perhaps Forbin-Janson collection sale, Paris, 2 May 1842, no. 82: "statue en bronze grandeur nature. La Frileuse, coulée d'un seul jet et d'une belle exécution" (1,300 francs); Collot sale, Paris, 16 Jan. 1844, no. 52 (650 francs).





Back view of cat. 38

Collection of Richard Seymour Conway, fourth marquess of Hertford (1800–1870), and installed on garden terrace at the château de Bagatelle (photograph by Marville, ca. 1860, unpaginated album at BNEst; see Goldsmith Phillips 1963, fig. 7; and Cecil 1965, fig. 14); bequeathed to his illegitimate son, Sir Richard Wallace (1818–1890), who placed the statue in his entrance hall (posthumous inventory, 13–14 Aug. 1890; Archives de Paris, D 48 E 3/76); by inheritance to his wife, Lady Wallace; bequeathed to Sir John Murray Scott (1834–1912; her husband’s secretary and her advisor), at the “Grande Galerie,” 2 rue Laffite, Paris (see his posthumous inventory, 16 Feb. 1912, in WCA; the author wishes to thank Robert Wenley for this reference); acquired after his death by Galerie Jacques Seligmann, Paris; sold to New York banker Henry P. Davison in 1917; bequeathed by Mrs. Kate Trubee Davison to the Metropolitan in 1962 (inv. 62.55).

✦ **Summer—Musée Fabre** ✦

Model included on Houdon’s autograph list (ca. 1784) under the year 1781: “Modèle d’une autre figure pour faire pendant [to the *Frileuse*] représentant l’été” (Vitry 1907b, 206, no. 94); marble completed in 1785; Houdon’s *mémoire* to Bachelier, 11 Oct. 1794: “Une Frileuse et l’Eté, grandeur naturelle, en marbre, à un particulier.” Subsequent provenance the same as for *Winter*.

EXHIBITIONS

✦ **Winter—Musée Fabre** ✦

Paris 1937, no. 1041, pl. 131.

✦ **Winter—The Metropolitan Museum of Art** ✦ ✦

Paris, second edition of Salon cat. 1791, no. 788: “Figure de bronze, représen-



Signature on cat. 38

tant une Frileuse”; *French Painting and Sculpture of the Eighteenth Century* [exh. cat., The Metropolitan Museum of Art] (New York, 1935–1936), no. 111, ill.; Worcester 1964, 96–101, ill.; Frankfurt 1999–2000, no. 85.

✦ **Summer—Musée Fabre** ✦

Paris 1937, no. 1041, pl. 131; *Les Chefs d’œuvre du musée de Montpellier* [exh. cat., Musée de l’Orangerie] (Paris, 1939), no. 178.

REFERENCES

✦ **Winter and Summer—Musée Fabre** ✦

*Notice des tableaux et autres objets exposés au Musée Fabre de Montpellier* (Montpellier, 1828), 68–69, nos. 337–338; Quatremère de Quincy 1834, 397; *Notice des tableaux et autres objets exposés au Musée Fabre de la ville de Montpellier* (Montpellier, 1839), 120, nos. 520–521; Délerot and Legrelle 1857, 119, 179–180; Montaiglon and Duplessis 1855, 265, 443; Gonse 1904, 266–267, ill.; *Souvenirs du baron de Frénilly, pair de France (1768–1828)*, intro.



Back view of cat. 39

and notes by Arthur Chuquet (Paris, 1909), 5; Joubin 1926, nos. 936–937; Giacometti 1929, 1:58, ill.; 2:249–250, 253–254, ill.; Vitry 1937a, nos. 30–31, pl. 29; Réau 1964, 1:238–245, 2:14, nos. 9–10, pls. 12 (9A), 14 (10C); Arnason 1975, 67–68, figs. 142–143, pl. 81a; Bajou 1989, 29, figs. 8–9.

#### ✦ Winter—The Metropolitan Museum of Art ✦

Délerot and Legrelle 1857, 179; *The Connoisseur* (Aug. 1910), 231, ill.; Réau 1922, 383–384; Giacometti 1929, 2:253 and 256; Cecil 1950, 172; John Goldsmith Phillips, “Monsieur Houdon’s *Frileuse*,” *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 22 (1963); Cecil 1965, 458, fig. 6; Réau 1964, 1:241–242, 2:14, no. 10, pl. 16; Arnason 1975, 68, pl. 80b, 82–84; Thomine 1997, 126, 130; Scherf 1997, 57.

#### RELATED WORKS

##### Winter—same size

###### Terracotta

Houdon’s studio sale, 8 Oct. 1795, no. 91: “Une jeune fille, la tête et les épaules couvertes d’une draperie, le reste du corps nu. Ce joli morceau connu sous le nom de la *Frileuse*, porte 53 pouces de haut [143.1 cm].”

###### Plasters

Musée du château de Lazienki, Orangerie, Warsaw; H. 148 cm, W. 42 cm, D. 41 cm; inscribed: “HOUDON F. 1783”; reportedly purchased by Stanisław Augustus II Poniatowski directly from the artist’s studio (letter from Marcello Bacciarelli to the king, dated 9 Nov. 1784, Bibliothèque nationale de Varsovie, inv. 3291/1, no. 38; written communications from Grazyna Bastek in 1993 and Krystyna Stasiak in 2002). See Dariusz Kaczmarzyk, *Rzeźba europejska od XV do XX wieku. Katalog zbiorów*, Muzeum Narodowe (Warsaw, 1978), no. 108, ill.

Tinted plaster; with *cachet de l’atelier*; offered in Oct. 1794 by Mme Bordier (friend of Houdon) to M. Commandeur, superintendent (*commissaire*) of sales, rue Vieille du Temple; collection of the architect Huvé; his descendants until early 1960s (Réau 1922, 385–386; and Réau 1964, 1:242–243).

Given by Houdon to Gabriel Le Gouvé, member of the Institut; posthumous inventory (AN, Min. Cent., XXXII, 196, 17 Sept. 1812, fol. 24): “dans une pièce servant de salle à manger. . . la statue en plâtre représentant la *frileuse* par houdon”; kept by the Le Gouvé Desvallières family, authenticated in inventories of their estates; H. (with base) 149 cm; with tree trunk; sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 10 Dec. 1951, no. 47; Galerie Souffrice, Paris (Réau 1964, 2:14 pl. 14, 10B; Arnason 1975, 114 n. 172); sale, Galerie Robiony, Paris, 20–21 Dec. 1978, no. 66, ill.

Sale of the architect Peyre, 14 Apr. 1823, no. 97 (no dimensions).

From so-called Clodion house, Nancy, found in studio with Clodioneseque

sculptures at the home of ironmonger Léopold Fabert; H. 140 cm; with tree trunk; Demenge-Cremel collection (Giacometti 1929, 2:255); Daniel Brunet collection (Versailles 1928, no. 73); Palais d’Orsay sale, Paris, 15 Feb. 1978, no. 57, ill. See Gaston Varenne, “Clodion à Nancy. Ses années d’enfance. Sa maison et son atelier de 1793 à 1798,” *Revue lorraine illustrée* (1913), 48–49, 64, fig. 23; and Paris 1992, 64.

Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection, Lugano, since at least 1941; formerly painted a terracotta color; H. 139.2 cm (with base: 149.3 cm); *cachet de l’atelier*; with tree trunk. See Anthony Radcliffe, Malcolm Baker, and Michael Maek-Gérard, *The Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection: Renaissance and Later Sculpture with Works of Art in Bronze* (London, 1992), 292–295, no. 56, ill.

Musées royaux des Beaux-Arts, Brussels (inv. 2722); copy by Godecharle; H. 146.5 cm, W. 48.5 cm; inscribed on urn: *Godecharle<sup>fit</sup> / 1803*. Jacques Van Lennep, *Catalogue de la sculpture. Artistes nés entre 1750 et 1882* (Brussels, 1992), 218, ill.

###### Papier-mâché

Copies made beginning in 1790 at factory of Ludwigslust (south of Schwerin); at Staatliches Museum, Schwerin (terracotta color; H. 143 cm, W. 36.5 cm, D. 51 cm; see Schwerin 2000, 200, ill.); at Schlossmuseum Gotha (bronze patina; H. 144 cm, W. 42 cm, D. 50 cm; see Schuttwolf 1995, 155, no. 63, ill.); at Weimar: Goethe-Nationalmuseum (white), Schlossmuseum (rose color; H. 135 cm), and Schloss Tiefurt (white) (see Bogay 1935, 369); and at Meermanno-Westreenianum Museum, The Hague (terracotta color; H. 133 cm; see Marie-Jeanne Cok-Escher, “La *Frileuse* de Houdon. Un exemple de moulage en papier mâché,” in *Le Moulage*, actes du colloque international, 10–12 Apr. 1987 [Paris, 1988]). Formerly Edmond Courty collection, Châtillon-sous-Bagneux (Réau 1964, 2:65).

The factory of Ludwigslust was created by Duke Frederick of Mecklenburg (1717–1785) and expanded under Johann Georg Bachmann (1738–1815); catalogues were printed (Hamburg, 1788; Leipzig, 1789; Lübeck, 1790; Berlin, 1791), yet production ended in the early nineteenth century and the molds were broken. Houdon’s *Frileuse* was one of the rare modern creations, the majority of sculptures copied being classical sculpture and portrait busts. See Max Kunze, “Répliques d’antiquités provenant de la cartonnerie de Ludwigslust au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle,” in *Le Moulage* (Paris, 1988).

###### Boilly paintings

Depicted at the back of the sculptor’s studio in both paintings by Boilly (cat. 66), between *Diana* and the *Seated Voltaire*.

#### Winter—reductions

##### Terracottas

Houdon’s studio sale, 8 Oct. 1795, no. 92: “La même figure, de petite proportion. Haut. 19 pouces [51.3 cm].” Probably half-draped; see above-mentioned full-size terracotta.

Musée Fabre, Montpellier (inv. 95.6.1) (fig. 1); sketchy, draped figure; H. 19 cm (with base: 35 cm), W. 6 cm, D. 5 cm; sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 11–12 Mar. 1912, no. 168, ill.; collection of marquis de Biron (before his sale in 1914); Marius Paulme collection (Réau 1922, 381; Versailles 1928, no. 72, and Paris 1928, no. 81; and Giacometti 1929, 2:206, ill.); his sale, Paris, 15 May 1929, no. 328, ill.; Schoeller collection, Paris, 1929; sale, George Haviland collection, Galerie Georges Petit, Paris, 2–3 June 1932, no. 239, ill.; Marcel Haentjens collection, Galerie Cailleux, Paris, 1934, no. 141; sale, Palais Galliéra, Paris, 10 June 1970, no. 209, ill.; sale, Hôtel George V, Paris, 27 Mar. 1995, no. 428, ill.



Signature on cat. 39



Alternate view of cat. 40



Signature on cat. 40

Musée du Louvre, Paris, acquired in 1946 (inv. RF 2581) (fig. 2) (see below, note 10; and Louvre cat. 1998, 429, ill.); sketchy, nude figure with tree trunk; H. 27.4 cm, W. 8.5 cm, D. 8.5 cm; label under base with ink inscription: "Sculpture exposée en 1793: sous le no. 124"; Mme Alfred Hachette collection (Versailles 1928, no. 70).

Musée du château Lazienki, Palais Myslevici, Warsaw, acquired in 1951; inscribed: "HOUDON"; H. 48 cm, W. 15 cm, D. 17 cm; half-draped figure with small tree trunk (Kaczmarzyk 1978, 63, no. 107, ill.; Arnason 1975, 114 n. 172). This work is not at all a sketch.

*Plasters (same work may appear several times)*

D. Marquereau collection, 1929; examined by Giacometti in 1919: "Of the same size as the lost-wax bronze in the Louvre, it in fact informs us about the sculptor's first research for *La Frileuse*; anticipating as well the important document in the Louvre, this plaster notes Houdon's very first idea before the slightest work was pursued" (Giacometti 1929, 2:254).

Provenance of Houdon family; Rochette family; bequest of Raoul Perrin (great-grandson of the sculptor) to his granddaughter Mme Balagny (Giacometti 1929, 2:255); H. 80 cm.

Formerly Marius Paulme collection; his sale, 15 May 1929, no. 329, ill.; H. 53 cm; without tree trunk; remnants of *cachet de l'atelier* on back.

*Marbles (same work may appear in several sales)*

Proposed for exhibition and rejected by jury for the Salon of 1785, along with reduction of *Summer*.

Paris, Salon cat. 1796, no. 617: "La frileuse. Statue en marbre: hauteur 20 pouces [54 cm]. Cette figure appartient à l'Auteur"; posthumous sale of contents of Houdon's studio, 15–17 Dec. 1828, no. 62: "Marbre blanc. Copie réduite de la Frileuse, par M. Houdon."

Peyre sale, 14 Apr. 1823, no. 92: "Une figure en marbre, dite la Frileuse, par M. Houdon" [reduction?].

Dubois sale, 7 Dec. 1840, no. 91: "Marbre. La Frileuse. Statue deminature d'après Houdon, sur socle en marbre blanc."

Proposed by Lemer for acquisition by the Louvre in autumn 1887, but rejected (see AMN, S 30 Houdon; and Réau 1964, 1:243); H. 55 cm; inscribed: "Houdon f."; may have come from Claudine Houdon, the Sand family, Michel Ephrussi, and the princesse de Faucigny-Lucinge (Versailles 1928, no. 74; Paris 1928, no. 82; Réau 1928a, 341, calls it "very beautiful"). Sales: Gouvert collection, Galerie Charpentier, Paris, 23 May 1950, no. 63, ill.; Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 13 Dec. 1980, no. 12, ill.; Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 15 Dec. 1982, no. 23, ill. (inscribed on front of plinth: LA FRILEUSE).

*Bronzes*

Bequeathed by Mme Houdon to her brother in her will, dated 9 Mar. 1815: "petite Frileuse en bronze" (BMV, F 945[1], no. 10; Frick 1947, 212).

Sarrazin sale, 8–9 Jan. 1816, no. 122: "Une charmante figure en pied, de dix-neuf à vingt pouces de haut [51.3 to 54 cm], connue sous le nom de la petite frileuse: nous sommes autorisés à affirmer que le sujet n'a jamais été exécuté par l'auteur, que dans deux proportions, celle de grandeur naturelle et celle-ci, toutes les autres ont été désavouées par l'artiste, et ne sont que des copies infidèles: ce qui ne laisse pas à hésiter de croire que ce bronze soit bien le seul original."

Houdon's posthumous sale, 15–17 Dec. 1828; not in catalogue but mentioned in proceedings of sale (Gandouin 1893–1907, 29): "Frileuse, petit modèle, bronze"; sold for 230 francs, the highest bid after the mask of Rousseau (655 francs) and a marble bust of Voltaire (251 francs).

Musée du Louvre, Paris, bequeathed in 1881 (inv. RF 383); Jacques-Edouard Gatteaux (after a terracotta sketch in his collection?). Nude figure: see Paris 1928, no. 80; *Masterpieces from the Louvre: French Bronzes and Paintings from the Renaissance to Rodin*, Houdon entries by Jean-René Gaborit [exh. cat., Queensland Art Gallery] (Brisbane, 1988), no. 40; and Louvre cat. 1998, 433, ill. Cast by the Réunion des musées nationaux in 1969.

Arnauld sale, 13 Feb. 1925, no. 27: "cire perdue, édition A. Hébrard. H. 26 cm"; the nude and sketchy bronzes by Hébrard are very close to the one in the Louvre (RF 383). Plaster copies by Medardo Rosso (Rosso Museum, Barzio; see *Burlington Magazine* [Dec. 2000], 775, ill.) and Aristide Maillol (sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 6 June 1932, ill.).

Casts of the figure with an urn from the Barbedienne foundry, marketed beginning 1873 in three heights (1880 cat., 38, lists: 75 cm, 56 cm, and 44 cm) (Réau 1964, 2:14, pl. 16), then in a fourth (1884 cat., 40, offers one at 28 cm, as do cats. of 1894 and 1900).

Casts of figure with a tree trunk also marketed: Christie's, New York, 13 June 1989, no. 239, ill. (H. 78.74 cm with base); and without support, like the one at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. See Berman 1974–1977, 2:459, no. 1809, ill.

**Winter—late interpretation**

A bronze statue (H. 129 cm); apocryphal inscription “HOUDON”; acquired ca. 1956 by Berlin museums as autograph variant of Houdon’s *Frileuse*; fictive provenance from Frederick William II of Prussia (see Heinrich Zimmermann, “Eine unbekannte Bronze statue Jean Antoine Houdons,” *Berliner Museen. Berichte aus den ehem. Preussischen Kunstsammlungen*, n.s. [Aug. 1956], ill.; and Réau 1964, 1:241–242, 2:14, no. 10, pl. 15). There are countless copies of this statue, and busts of it were also produced. One of these, H. 58.4 cm, housed at Windsor Castle (inv. RCiN 70145), was cast by Louis-Stanislas Lenoir-Ravrio (1784–1846) (see Jonathan Marsden, “A Checklist of French Bronzes in the Royal Collection,” *Apollo* [Aug. 2002], 49, no. 82). This bust may be indentified in an inventory of 1812 (written communication from J. Marsden). These objects, sometimes given other attributions (Clodion, Marin, so on), were widely reproduced and circulated (see Berman 1974–1977, 2:451, no. 1782, ill.); they have nothing to do with Houdon’s work.

**Summer—reductions**

Marble proposed for exhibition and rejected by jury for the Salon of 1785, along with marble reduction of the *Frileuse*.

Barbedienne bronzes, marketed beginning in 1873 (Réau 1964, 2:14, pl. 12, 9b; Berman 1974–1977, 3:582, no. 2129, ill.). The 1894 catalogue offered four heights (78 cm, 62 cm, 46 cm, and 30 cm).

**Summer—busts**

Houdon’s studio sale, 8 Oct. 1795, no. 94: “Terre cuite . . . L’Eté, figurée par une jeune fille coiffée en cheveux couverts d’un mouchoir, la gorge en partie couverte d’une draperie. Ce buste est posé sur piédouche en marbre bleu turquin. Haut. totale 20 pouces [50.8 cm].”

Musée Nissim de Camondo, Paris (fig. 3); marble; H. 40 cm (H. with base and small pedestal: 47 cm); signed; from collection of the comte de Vibraye, château of Freschines (Loir-et-Cher); and collection of the comte Moïse de Camondo. See Giacometti 1929, 1:46 ill., 2:193–194; Réau 1964, 2:14, pl. 13; Bertrand Rondot, et al., *Musée Nissim de Camondo. Catalogue des collections* (Paris, 1998), 36, no. 165, ill.

**Plasters**

Musée Nissim de Camondo, Paris; painted a terracotta color; H. 40 cm (with base and small pedestal: 50 cm); *cachet de l’atelier* buried in plaster on back; from collection of the comte Moïse de Camondo (Versailles 1928, no. 69; Paris 1928, no. 22); correctly reattributed “after Houdon” in Rondot 1998, 96, no. 616, ill. p. 93.

Sale, Hôtel George V, Paris, 9 Dec. 1931, no. 139, ill.; Palais Galliera, Paris, 1 Apr. 1974, no. 40, ill.; H. 61 cm. Date uncertain.

London, art market; H. 50 cm (with base: 65.5 cm); base of pink marble; inscribed along truncation in back: “houdon f. 1782.”

1. Favre-Lejeune 1986, 2:974.

2. Saint-Wast’s niece married Frédéric-Auguste Fauveau de Frénilly, and their son offered this description (see Frénilly 1909, 5). See also Adrien Delahante, *Une famille de finance au XVIIIe siècle . . .* (Paris, 1881); 1:384–385, 398–399, 424, 470, 494.

3. AN, O1 1918<sup>1</sup>, 196: “Je ferai mon possible, la première fois que j’irai à Paris, pour passer à votre atelier et y voir les deux figures en marbre que vous devez livrer au propriétaire avant que de partir.”

4. Vitry 1907b, nos. 93 and 94.

5. Houdon became an officer (assistant professor) only in 1792.

6. Letters of 9 Aug. and 12 June 1785, in Furcy-Raynaud 1906, 126.

7. “Observations sur le Sallon de 1785,” in *Journal général de France* (Deloynes XIV, no. 339; MacWilliam 1991, 390).

8. *Mémoire* to Bachelier, 11 Oct. 1794 (cited in Réau 1964, 1:99).

9. *Affiches, annonces et avis divers, ou journal général de France*; and *La Béquille de Voltaire au Salon* (Deloynes XVII, nos. 449 and 439; MacWilliam 1991, 472 and 474).

10. Pierre Pradel, “Une *Petite Frileuse* par Houdon,” *Bulletin des Musées de France* (1946), 12–13, ill.;

Duisburg 1989, 13 [Houdon entries by Guilhem Scherf]. Réau 1964, 1:242, adds: “The style of little curls and cascading locks represents the fashion of the Revolution.”

11. Giacometti 1929, 1:129.

12. Letter dated 15 Oct. 1794, in Réau 1922, 385–386.

13. See also the essay “Houdon, ‘Above All Modern Artists,’” at the beginning of the present catalogue.

14. The watering can elicited Stendhal’s jibes in *Mémoires d’un touriste, voyage dans le midi*, rev. ed. (Paris, 1981), 3:139.



## + Le Baiser donné

Dated 1778

White marble with small gray inclusions on separate white marble base

H. 37 cm (with base: 47 cm), W. 38.4 cm

Inscribed on truncation of woman's proper right arm: HOUDON F. 1778.

Collection of Stewart and Lynda Resnick

*Le Baiser donné*, or *The Kiss Given*, is arguably Houdon's most erotic work. A youthful man with idealized features affectionately bends over his lover, who receives his kiss with abandon, her pearl-laced hair in disarray and one of her breasts exposed. The pair is visually bound together by a wreath of roses, the traditional flower of love, and an encompassing drapery, under which the man seems to hold the woman in tender embrace. Because of its delicate rendering, graceful arrangement, and romantic expression, this sculpture became extremely popular among private collectors, leading to a multitude of copies both by Houdon's studio and later imitators.<sup>1</sup> The present marble is distinguished by the outstanding quality of its carving, the brilliance of its surface, and the beautiful striated finishing of the back.

Although Houdon listed *Le Baiser* in the inventory of his own works under the years 1779 and 1780, its origin now can be traced to before the summer of 1772, when the sculptor sent a finished version in plaster to the duke of Saxe-Gotha in Germany; in the accompanying letter he proudly explained: "The *Couple of Lovers*, or *Reciprocal Kiss*, is a group with two heads, half life-size. These heads are united in such a way that they rest on one single base."<sup>2</sup> The invention of placing two

busts on one shared stand seems to have been without precedent and was admired by Houdon's contemporaries.<sup>3</sup> The conception of *Le Baiser donné* in the early 1770s coincides with an experimental period in Houdon's career, when, under the influence of his experience in Rome, he explored a variety of subjects and styles, from the anatomical realism of the *Ecorché* and monumental austerity of the *Saint Bruno* (cats. 1 and 4) to the baroque expressionism of the *Priest of the Lupercalia* (cat. 5) and "têtes d'expressions" such as *La Petite Lise* (The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg). With *Le Baiser donné* Houdon created a showpiece in yet another genre, proving again his technical skills and combining the observation of nature with the idealization found in classical art, as was his credo. Although there was a general fashion for kiss-related themes in the poetry, drama, and fine arts in mid-eighteenth-century France, *Le Baiser donné* is not related to any specific story or model<sup>4</sup> but rather was the sculptor's conscious reinterpretation of an established rococo subject.

A comparison with François Boucher's painting of *Hercules and Omphale* (fig. 1)<sup>5</sup> reveals how Houdon transformed a powerfully erotic scene into a subtle neoclassical composition by using restraint and drawing directly from his knowledge of



1. François Boucher, *Hercules and Omphale*, ca. 1731–1734, oil on canvas, Pushkin Museum, Moscow.

antique prototypes. The head of the male lover, with his short, curly hair, here tied with a ribbon, and his classical features, recalls that of the *Morpheus* (cat. 7), the model of which Houdon exhibited in the Salon of 1771. In its overall form as well as in its sentiment and charm *Le Baiser donné* is closest to the famous sculpture of *Cupid and Psyche*, a Roman copy of a late Hellenistic work (fig. 2).<sup>6</sup> Described as the “graceful group of a man and woman tenderly embracing,” the latter was accessible in the Capitoline Museum in Rome when Houdon was a student there and was widely admired and reproduced during the eighteenth century.<sup>7</sup> Houdon, who copied the Capitoline *Pandora* for his statue of the *Vestal* and possibly a *Centaur* in the same collection, was doubtless familiar with—and probably inspired by—the *Cupid and Psyche*.

In the late 1770s Houdon returned to *Le Baiser donné*, then also known as *Le Baiser de Marc Antoine et Cléopâtre* or *L'Amour et l'amitié*, and started a veritable mass production in different sizes and materials. Especially popular were the reduced versions in bronze that, mounted on a choice of colored and elaborately decorated pedestals, increasingly appeared in the sales. Houdon created a companion piece called *Le Baiser rendu*, or *The Kiss Returned*, which is recorded in the inventory of his own works under the year 1780, in addition to a model of the group *Kiss of a Bacchante* a year earlier. Although probably reflected in a sculpture of a female bacchante kissing a horned faun, no authentic version of this group is known. Since already the eighteenth-century sales catalogues and inventories distinguish—in attribution as well as in price—between “*Le Baiser* by



2. Roman, Cupid and Psyche, copy of a late Hellenistic work of the second or first century BC, marble, Capitoline Museum, Rome.

Houdon” and “a similar subject as pendant,”<sup>8</sup> the identification of *Le Baiser rendu* remains elusive.

Houdon’s *Baiser donné* was owned by some of the most distinguished collectors in Paris of that time, including the notorious Louis-Philippe-Joseph d’Orléans, known as Philippe Egalité, who as duc de Chartres commissioned a marble from Houdon in 1779 (see Related Works). He kept it in his rooms in the Palais Royal, where it was seized by the revolutionary Commission conservatrice des monuments on 12 November 1793, only six days after the duke’s execution.<sup>9</sup> The wealthy banker and arts patron Jean Girardot de Marigny (see cats. 35 and 37) possessed both variants of the group, which are listed in the inventory after his death as “a group in white marble known under the title *Baiser* by Loudon [*sic*] and a similar subject as a pendant, also in white marble, with a bleu turquin marble socle, valued at 400 livres.”<sup>10</sup> In 1785 Houdon even put a marble version of *Le Baiser*, along with other busts, on the market in the young United States, where it was considered “too voluptuous” and did not sell for fifteen years.<sup>11</sup>

ULRIKE D. MATHIES

#### PROVENANCE

Acquired in 1983 from Black-Nadeau Ltd., London.

#### REFERENCES

Lami 1910–1911, 421; Giacometti 1918–1919, 35–9; Giacometti 1929, 2: 185–187; Réau 1964, 1:247–248; 2:22, no. 54, pl. 36; Arnason 1975, 37, fig. 86, pl. 33; Black and Nadeau 1979, no. 28, ill.

#### RELATED WORKS

##### *Marbles—documented versions*

Houdon’s 1784 inventory of his own works: “En 1779, No. 51 bis. Un groupe en marbre représentant un baisé pour Mr le duc de Chartre [Louis-Philippe-Joseph, later duc d’Orléans (1747–1793)],... No. 68. Un groupe de baisé d’une bacante. Modèle pour être exécuté en marbre.... 1780 [78.] Deux groupe de marbre représentant le baisé donné et l’autre rendu, exécuté plusieurs fois en marbre” (Vitry 1907b, 202, 204).

Other marbles were owned by Jean Girardot de Marigny (1733–1796) (see text above) as well as by the émigré Belizard, listed in the unpublished inventory of objects seized by the revolutionary Commission temporaire des arts, 19 Ventôse an III [9 Mar. 1795], 180, no. 41: “le buste en un groupe de Marc-Antoine et Cléopâtre en marbre blanc sur un pied idem à panneaux de vert antique à socle bleu turquin le tout de 30 pouces [76.2 cm] (Oudon)” (“Registre des réceptions des objets d’art et antiquités trouvés chez les émigrés et condamnés...”; AN, F17\*–23.A).

##### *Marbles—sales*

[De Boynes], 15 Mar. 1785, 61, no. 118; [Dennoor], 14 Mar. 1797, no. 107; H[albou], 10 Apr. 1809, no. 86; [Lucien-François] Feuchère père, 29 Nov. 1824, no. 246; Marquis d’Aligre, 20 Nov. 1848; 16 Jan. 1882, no. 1; 9 Feb. 1884, no. 51; Strauss, 7 Feb. 1890, nos. 1–2; 15 Dec. 1890, no. 110; 20 Feb. 1891, no. 96; Mühlbacher, 15–17 May 1899, no. 405–406.



Back view of cat. 41



*Marbles—extant*

Private collection, New York [Wildenstein]; H. 47 cm; inscribed on truncation of woman's proper right arm: "HOUDON F. 1778"; acquired with the companion piece, *Le Baiser rendu*, dated 1780 and signed "Houdon," although not executed by him; both pieces possibly identical with the marbles sold at Strauss sale, 7 Feb. 1890, nos. 1–2, supposedly ordered from Houdon by the duc de Luynes and bequeathed to the duc de Narbonne; Mühlbacher sale, 15–17 May 1899, no. 405–406; J. Pierpont Morgan collection, New York.

Present location unknown; dated 1774; offered by M. Bergerat, Paris, to the Musée du Louvre in 1843 (Vitry 1908b, 33); later Pierre David-Weill collection (Réau 1964, 2:22).

*Bronzes—sales up to Houdon's death*

[Blondel d'Azincourt], 10 Feb. 1783, 85, no. 319; [Calonne], 21 Apr. 1788, 100, no. 285; [Calonne], 11 May 1789, 51–52, nos. 182 and 185; Dubois de Courval, 11 May 1789, 25, no. 114; [Tricot], 22 May 1793, no. 194; [Munier], 6 May 1795, 18–19, no. 57; Saint-Martin, 7 May 1806, 85; Amman de Schwanberg,

19 Dec. 1809, no. 139; Lange, 2 Aug. 1814, no. 25; [Paillet], 13 Nov. 1816, no. 45; Daval, 18 Mar. 1822, no. 185; Laforgue, 5 May 1824, no. 90.

*Plasters*

Present location unknown; in the collection of the comte de Saint-Léon, Paris, 1918–1919 (Giacometti 1918–1919, 3:8–9).

Sale, 25 Nov. 1850, no. 30: "Un plâtre représentant le Baiser d'Houdon avec son cachet."

*Terracottas—sales*

Houdon's studio sale, 8 Oct. 1795, 16–17, no. 95: "Le Baiser, groupe de deux figures vues à mi-corps, posée sur piédouche en marbre blanc; hauteur totale 17 pouces [43.2 cm]."

Duchesne ainé, 25 May 1855, no. 164; 15 Jan. 1873, no. 84; Prince Paul Golitsyn, 10 Mar. 1875, no. 102; 4 Apr. 1881, no. 62; 15 Oct. 1883, no. 151; 8 May 1886, no. 98.

1. An upsurge in the number of *Baiser* sculptures sold at auction in the second half of the nineteenth century indicates the ongoing production after Houdon's death.

2. See Appendix in the present catalogue, lines 304–307.

3. [De Boynes] sale, 15 Mar. 1785, 61, no. 118: "[Le buste] est remarquable par sa belle exécution & l'idée ingénieuse d'avoir vaincu la difficulté de former un groupe de deux têtes posées sur le pied d'ouche du buste ordinaire."

4. Réau 1964, 1:247, and Arnason 1975, 37, saw a connection to Jean de La Fontaine's tale of "Le baiser rendu," which, however, shares only the similarity of title.

5. See *Les Amours des dieux. La Peinture mythologique de Watteau à David* [exh. cat., Grand Palais] (Paris, 1992), 276–283, no. 42, ill.

6. Haskell and Penny 1981, 189–191, no. 26, fig. 98.

7. Among others by the Manufacture de Sèvres in 1769; see Bourgeois and Lechevallier-Chevignard 1914, no. 48, pl. 12.

8. [Calonne] sale, 11 May 1789, 51, no. 182: "Le baiser, par M. Houdon, bien ciselé & doré au mat, sur socle de marbre" (126 livres); 52, no. 185: "Un groupe de deux figures, couleur antique, faisant pendant au baiser de M. Houdon" (48 livres). See also Girardot de Marigny, posthumous inventory, 23 Germinal an IV [12 Apr. 1796] (AN, Min. Cent., étude L, file 802, fol. 62); and sale, 19–20 Jan. 1844, no. 12: "Deux groupes en bronze—Le Baiser d'Houdon, et nymphe embrassant

un sartyre, sur fûts de colonne en marbre"; sale, 4 Dec. 1876, no. 131: "Baiser de Houdon"; no. 132: "Autre Baiser—pendant du précédent."

9. See "Procès verbaux de la commission des monuments," *NAAF*, 3rd ser., 18, (Paris, 1903), 231–232, no. 44.

10. AN, Min. Cent., étude L, file 802, fol. 62: "item un groupe en marbre blanc connu sous le titre du baiser par Loudon [sic] et un pareil sujet pour pendant, aussi en marbre blanc avec piedouche bleu turquin prisé quatre cents livres...400 [livres]."

11. In 1785 estimated to be 50 louis; the price had been reduced to 35 louis, or 840 francs, by Nov. 1801, when the eventual buyer, Major Charles Pinckney, had to be admonished to pay Houdon (BMV, F 946, nos. 33–35, 37–38, 43, 49, and 74).

## + Head of a Negress

Probably 1781

Plaster painted black to resemble patinated bronze, on modern painted wood base

H. (with base) 32 cm, W. 21 cm

Musée municipale Ancienne Abbaye, Saint-Léger, Soissons (inv. 93.7.2766)

This striking *Head of a Negress* is an unusual work in Houdon's oeuvre. Originally a full bust with a truncation under the breasts and through the top of the arms (fig. 1), it was damaged in an air raid in 1918, and only the head survived. Probably identical with a "Bust of a Negress in plaster, imitating antique bronze,"<sup>1</sup> shown at the Salon of 1781, it is associated with a fountain figure of a Negress, one of the sculptor's most original compositions.

Houdon enjoyed growing critical success in the course of the 1770s, working for the courts of Germany and Russia and becoming a full member of the Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture in 1777, yet he had not received a single French royal commission. In January 1779 he proposed to Jean-Baptiste Pierre, director of the Académie royale and *premier peintre du Roi*, that he execute for the crown a marble "figure of a *Bather*, life-size, and another figure in lead, of the same size. The latter would represent an *Attendant*."<sup>2</sup> The cost was to be 18,000 livres, unless the king supplied the marble, in which case the cost of the marble would be deducted. At the same time, the sculptor offered to cast his *Diana* in bronze for the monarch for an additional 10,000 livres. D'Angiviller, who seemed to resent Houdon's entrepreneurial spirit and independence of the academy, told Pierre, "The prices asked by M. Houdon for

these three figures seem to me to be substantial."<sup>3</sup> The commission was never pursued by the Bâtiments du Roi.

All three figures were to be acquired instead by prominent Paris collectors. Jean Girardot de Marigny commissioned the bronze figure of *Diana* (cat. 35) for his garden, and the king's cousin, the duc de Chartres (later duc d'Orléans), acquired the marble bather and her black attendant as fountain figures for his exotic English garden created by Louis Carrogis, called Carmontelle, at Monceau, near Paris.<sup>4</sup> The sculptures were installed there by 28 March 1779 when they are recorded in the caption of an engraving of the garden: "there is a basin encircled by three steps, where one sees a figure of a woman in white marble, who is bathing, and a Negress in bronze [*sic*], who is pouring water over her body. These two figures are by M. Houdon."<sup>5</sup> The group was listed in the catalogue for the Salon of 1783 but was not shown at the Salon itself.<sup>6</sup> In 1787 a guidebook gave a more detailed description of the fountain, specifying that there was "a superb figure in white marble, taking a bath; behind her, another woman, executed in lead and painted black, the figure of a Negress holding in one hand a white marble drapery, and in the other a gold pitcher, from which she pours water on the body of her mistress."<sup>7</sup>



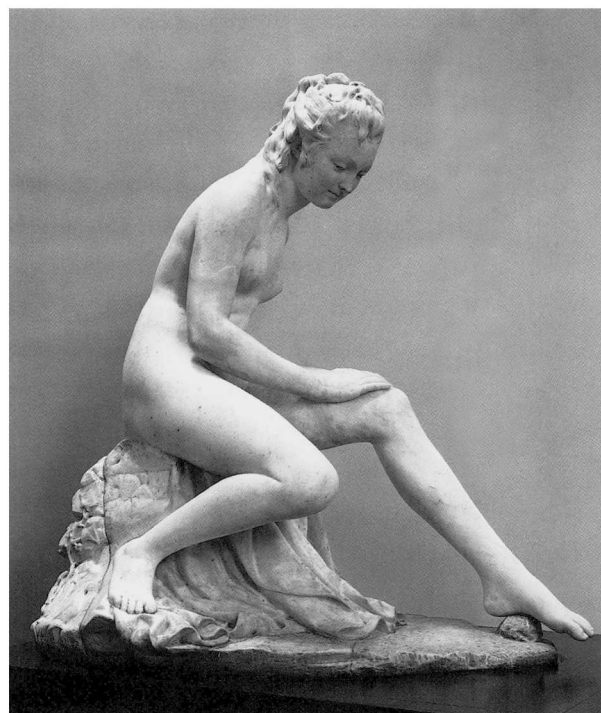
After voting for the death of the king, the duc d'Orléans was guillotined himself in November 1793, and his property fell into neglect and was vandalized. Houdon wrote in his *mémoire* to Bachelier in October 1794, "A group: a *Bather* in marble on whom a *Negress* in lead pours water, for the garden of Monceau. The *Negress* is in bad shape and needs to be restored."<sup>8</sup> When a year later the fountain figures were confiscated by the Commission temporaire des arts, the head of the *Negress* was recorded as missing.<sup>9</sup> The life-size *Bather*, dated 1782, although it has suffered from weathering and some losses, has survived and can now be seen at The Metropolitan Museum of Art (fig. 2). The lead *Negress*, however, has disappeared. The only record of it is the present head from Soissons.

As was often Houdon's practice, he must have derived his *Bust of a Negress* directly from the full statue; during the same period, he also carved a *Bust of Diana* based on the statue (see cats. 35 and 36). It is evident from the sensitivity with which the present head is portrayed that Houdon was working from a live model. The gentle, wistful expression, the large, deeply cut eyes with the lids half closed, the broad nose and full lips between which the teeth are visible, all have been carefully observed and recorded. The tight curls of the hair have been modeled in an abstract way, without too much attention paid to individual strands, and the ears are pierced and originally must have had earrings. An idea of the nude torso can be found in the surviving photographs of the plaster before it was damaged (fig. 1), in which the figure is shown almost to the waist with high full breasts.

It is probable that Houdon was influenced by garden groups done for Versailles, particularly that of *Apollo and the Nymphs of Thetis* by François Girardon and Thomas Regnaudin,<sup>10</sup> which provided a prototype for a neoclassical bathing scene with attendants holding ewers from which water is poured (fig. 3). In 1778, at the same time Houdon was working on his fountain composition, the group by Girardon and Regnaudin was relocated to a grotto designed by Hubert Robert because of the replanting of trees in the park at Versailles, a project of which Houdon was surely aware. The life-size standing nymph *Choéphore* who pours water from a ewer was moved from the left to the right of the composition, and Houdon may well have had the opportunity to study it closely. Houdon's invention of a fountain with one black and one white figure, using the materials themselves to establish the contrast, is, however, to this author's knowledge, without precedent. Stimulated by the slave trade and the issues of liberty and equality raised by the American war



1. Houdon, *Bust of a Negress*, photograph taken before 1918, reproduced in Réau 1964, vol. 2, pl. xviii, 11 B 75.



2. Houdon, *Bather*, 1782, marble, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



3. François Girardon and Thomas Regnaudin, Apollo and the Nymphs of Thetis, 1666–1673, white marble figures, gardens of the château de Versailles.

for independence, some portraits of black sitters were painted and occasionally sculpted in the last quarter of the eighteenth century in France, but this combination is highly original.<sup>11</sup>

The *Bust of a Negress* probably remained in Houdon's studio following its exhibition in 1781. During the Revolution, when the artist was criticized for not sufficiently manifesting his support for the Republican cause, he apparently reused the bust in an entirely new and patriotic context by adding a round base on which was inscribed: "Rendue à la liberté et à l'égalité par la Convention nationale le 16 pluviôse, deuxième de la République française une et indivisible."<sup>12</sup> This was the date of the National Convention's unanimous vote to abolish slavery in all of the French colonies. Responding to the same complaint, Houdon had transformed a statue of Saint Scholastica into a statue of *Philosophy Upholding the Rights of Man and the Constitution*, which was acquired by the Committee of Public Safety in May of 1794 and installed in the Palais National in 1795.<sup>13</sup>



Back view of cat. 42

## PROVENANCE

Gift of Auguste Sugot (1818–1888), an engineer and politician in Soissons who was decorated with the medal of the Legion of Honor, by bequest in 1888; destroyed except for the head and neck in an air raid in 1918.

## EXHIBITIONS

Probably in Salon cat. 1781, 46, no. 264: "Le Buste d'une Nègresse en plâtre, imitant le bronze antique"; Paris 1928, 60, no. 55; Versailles 1928, 44, no. 76; *La Sculpture ethnographique. De la "Vénus hottentote" à la "Téhura" de Gauguin* [exh. cat., Musée d'Orsay] (Paris, 1994), 33–35, 70, no. 2, ill. p. 33; *Déclaration des droits de l'homme et Abolition de l'esclavage* [exh. cat., Archives départementales de la Martinique] (Fort de France, 1998–1999), 55, no. 54, ill. p. 57.

## REFERENCES

Paul Vitry, "Un buste de nègresse par Houdon au Musée de Soissons," *RAAM* (1897), 351–354, ill. of bust before destruction; Vitry 1931a, 7–9, ill.; Vitry 1931b, 307–311; Lami 1910–1911, 1:423; Giacometti 1918–1919, 1:81; 3:30; Giacometti 1929, 2:196; Réau 1964, 1:47, 99, 177, 236–238; 2:14–15, no. 11, pl. XIX, 11 B 75; Arnason 1975, 59, 113 n. 153, pl. 65; Paris 1989, 674–675; Hugh Honour, "From the American Revolution to World War I," in *The*

*Image of the Black in Western Art*, ed. Ladislav Bugner (Cambridge, MA, and London, 1976–), 4:34–36, fig. 5; Robert Attal, *Le Soissonnais dans tous ses états, la décennie révolutionnaire (1789–1799)* (Soissons, 1992), 102, ill.

## RELATED WORKS

## Nineteenth- and twentieth-century bronzes

Musée Nissim de Camondo, Paris (inv. CAM 259); H. with base: 80 cm, W. 48 cm, D. 30 cm; engraved in bronze on left edge of back: "fondu Ciselé par thomire"; inscribed on the base: RENDUE A LA LIBERTE ET A L'EGALITE PAR LA CONVENTION NATIONALE LE 16 PLUVIOSE, DEUXIEME DE LA REPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE UNE ET INDIVISIBLE"; cast by Rubéron, rue Matignan for André Camoin; purchased from Camoin, 20 July 1932, by Nissim de Camondo for 675,000 francs (museum archives). See Vitry 1931b, 307–311.

Musée des arts décoratifs, Paris (inv. D 37621); H. 20.5 cm; reduced cast, possibly by Barbedienne, 1880/1884; given to the museum by Carle Dreyfus in 1952. See Paris 1989, 3:674–675, no. 888, ill.

## Boilly paintings

The *Bust of a Negress* appears in both of Boilly's paintings of Houdon's studio (see cat. 66) on the left side of the upper back shelf.

1. Salon cat. 1781, no. 264.

2. Furcy-Raynaud 1905, 238, letter of 10 Jan. 1779; and Réau 1964, 1:47.

3. Furcy-Raynaud 1905, 241, letter of 18 Jan. 1779; and Réau 1964, 1:47.

4. For a discussion of the layout of the garden and its plantings and decorations see *Jardins en France, 1760–1820. Pays d'illusion, terre d'expériences* [exh. cat., Caisse nationale des monuments historiques et des sites, Hôtel de Sully] (Paris, 1977), 84–88; and *De Bagatelle à Monceau, 1778–1978. Les Folies du XVIIIe siècle à Paris* [exh. cat., Délégation de l'action artistique de la ville de Paris, Château de Bagatelle and Musée Carnavalet] (Paris, 1978–1979), 25–35.

5. Album of engravings drawn by Carmontelle, engraved by Michault, *Jardin de Monceau, près de Paris, appartenant à son altesse sérénissime monseigneur le duc de Chartres* (Paris, 1779), pl. IX. This engraving does not illustrate the fountain. For the acquisition and

development of the property at Monceau by the duc de Chartres, see Michel Fleury, ed., "Lecture d'une note de Mlle Marie-Laure Deschamps relative aux aménagements du parc Monceau (8e), à la fin du 18e siècle et au début du 19e," *Ville de Paris. Commission municipale du vieux Paris, Procès-verbaux année 1979* (Paris, 1997), 21–35.

6. Salon cat. 1783, 52, no number: "Une fontaine composée de deux figures de grandeur naturelle, l'une en marbre blanc, & l'autre imitant une Nègresse, exécutées & placées dans le Jardin de Monseigneur le Duc de Chartres, à Mouceaux [sic], près de Paris." A plaster model of the group appeared in a sale of 30 July 1786, château de Plessis-Piquet: "A vendre au château du Plessis-Piquet près Sceaux, le modèle en plâtre, fait et réparé par M. Houdon, du groupe qui est aux jardins de Monceaux, représentant une Nègresse et sa maîtresse, les figures plus grandes que nature, sur un socle de pierre et sous une tente octogone, faite en tôle de Suède."

7. Thiéry 1787, 1:69.

8. Réau 1964, 1:99.

9. "Registre des réceptions des objets d'art et antiquités trouvés chez les émigrés et condamnés..." (AN, F17\*–23), 22 Vendémiaire an IV [14 Oct. 1795], 223, no. 5: "Une nymphe au bain. Une figure de nègresse en plomb versant de l'eau sans tête."

10. See Pierre Francastel, *Girardon* (Paris, 1928), 69–70, no. 19, figs. 13–16.

11. For a discussion of the portrayal of blacks in Western art see Bugner ed. 1976 —, esp. vol. 4, pt. 1.

12. "Given liberty and equality by the National Convention 4 Feb. 1794, second [year] of the French Republic, one and indivisible." See Vitry 1897, 351–354; and Vitry 1931a, 8.

13. Louis Réau, "La Statue de la 'Philosophie' de Houdon," *AAF*, n.s. 1 (1907), 210–216.



## + Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790)

Dated 1779

White marble

H. 41.9 cm (with base: 53.3 cm), W. 34.3 cm, D. 25.4 cm

Inscribed along center back truncation: F.P. HOU DON EN 1779.

Philadelphia Museum of Art, Purchased with a generous grant from The Barra Foundation, Inc., matched by contributions from the Henry P. McIlhenny Fund in memory of Frances P. McIlhenny, the Walter E. Stait Fund, the Fiske Kimball Fund, and with funds contributed by Mr. and Mrs. Jack M. Friedland, Hannah L. and J. Welles Henderson, Mr. and Mrs. E. Newbold Smith, Mr. and Mrs. Mark E. Rubenstein, Mr. and Mrs. John J. F. Sherrerd, the Women's Committee of the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Marguerite and Gerry Lenfest, Leslie A. Miller and Richard B. Worley, Mr. and Mrs. John A. Nyheim, Mr. and Mrs. Robert A. Fox, Stephanie S. Eglin, Maude de Schauensee, Mr. and Mrs. William T. Vogt, and with funds contributed by individual donors to the Fund for Franklin (inv. 1996–162–1)

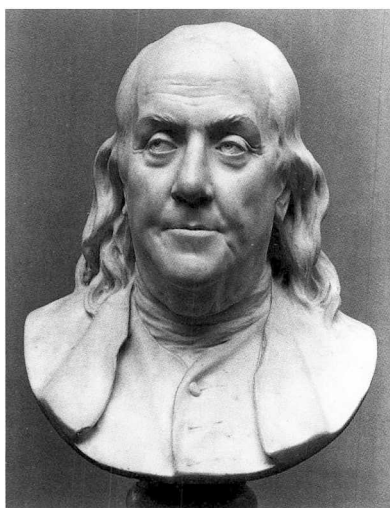
Benjamin Franklin served as minister of the emergent United States of America to France from 1776 to 1785. Already famous as philosopher, scientist, and statesman, he was a celebrity immediately upon his arrival in Paris. A number of French artists portrayed him, including Jean-Jacques Caffieri, Jean-Baptiste Greuze, Joseph Siffred Duplessis, and Jean-Honoré Fragonard. A participant in Parisian intellectual life, Franklin frequented the salon of Mme Helvétius and joined the Académie royale des sciences and the Loge des Neuf Soeurs. He returned to Philadelphia on the same ship that brought Houdon to America to make a life mask of George Washington.

The marble bust at the Philadelphia Museum of Art is the most fully realized version of Houdon's earliest portrait of Franklin. The subject is posed frontally with his head inclined slightly forward. His hair falls onto his shoulders, his eyes look to his right, and his lips are parted as if speaking. He is shown

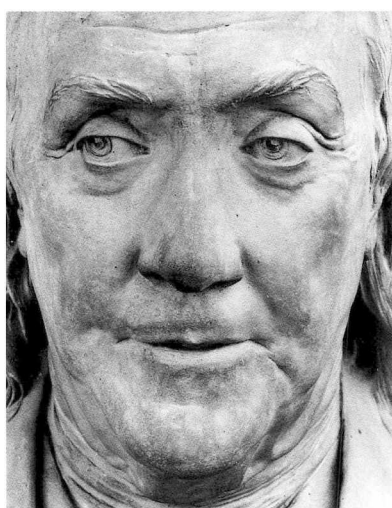
wearing a plain neckcloth and simple suit, often described as Quaker dress. Franklin was not a member of the Society of Friends, but he normally wore austere clothing in France, avoiding the formal attire customary for ambassadors. He also habitually wore glasses.

This bust differs from the earlier marble at The Metropolitan Museum of Art (fig. 1) in being more consistently detailed and carved with greater care. The central features of the two busts are similar, although the mouth of the Philadelphia bust is slightly more open, and the passages around the eyes, cheeks, and neck are more complex. Likewise, the hair receives more attention, and the stitching around the buttonholes is minutely rendered. In its expressiveness and exquisite finish the Philadelphia marble resembles Houdon's busts of Antoine-Louis-François Le Fèvre de Caumartin (Musée Jacquemart-André, Paris) and Aymard Jean de Nicolay (see cat. 30, fig. 1), both also dated 1779.

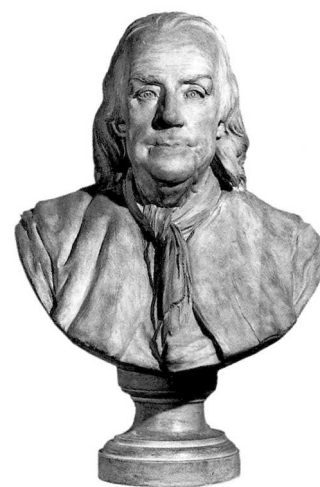




1. Houdon, Benjamin Franklin, 1778, marble, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



2. Houdon, Benjamin Franklin, 1778, terracotta, Musée du Louvre, Paris (detail).



3. Jean-Jacques Caffieri, Benjamin Franklin, 1777, terracotta, Bibliothèque Mazarine, Paris.

By 14 November 1778 busts of Franklin and Jean-Jacques Rousseau were attracting visitors to Houdon's studio.<sup>1</sup> A bust of Franklin was shown at the Salon of 1779, along with portraits of Molière, Voltaire, and Rousseau (see cats. 11, 23, 26). Bachaumont praised the busts for their vivid and convincing characterizations.<sup>2</sup> Frédéric-Melchior Grimm was struck by the elevation of thought seen in the *Franklin*.<sup>3</sup> Du Pont de Nemours preferred Houdon's bust to Caffieri's, but he was enthusiastic about the painted portrait by Duplessis.<sup>4</sup>

The terracotta at the Louvre (fig. 2), dated 1778, has often been proposed as the version shown at the Salon in 1779. Given that the Metropolitan's bust is also dated 1778, however, it is odd that Houdon would send a terracotta for public exhibition, if he had already finished a marble. Moreover, Houdon's manner of rendering the eyes was praised in 1778 as "beyond painting,"<sup>5</sup> but the irises in the Louvre bust are simpler than the more evolved form seen in the two marble busts. A bust of Franklin was also shown at the Loge des Neuf Soeurs in August 1779. The client who presumably commissioned the Philadelphia bust could have been inspired by a visit to Houdon's studio in late 1778 or by seeing either exhibition the following year. The superior execution of the Philadelphia bust points to an important patron, but there is currently no evidence for the person's identity.<sup>6</sup>

Correspondence between Caffieri and William Temple Franklin (Franklin's grandson and his assistant in Paris) records that Houdon created the bust gratuitously.<sup>7</sup> No documents,

however, indicate that Franklin posed for Houdon. Indeed a letter from Houdon on 8 November 1783 thanking an unnamed host for presenting him to Franklin suggests that the two had not met previously.<sup>8</sup> Many writers have noted that the painting by Duplessis (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York) and the bust by Caffieri (fig. 3) are more accurate renderings (they were the images Franklin preferred), and both artists are known to have had sittings with Franklin.<sup>9</sup> But Houdon must have known Caffieri's bust from the Salon of 1777, and his selection of Franklin as a subject—the first time he depicted a person treated recently by Caffieri—probably contained an element of challenge to his older, increasingly bitter rival.

Houdon's characterization of Franklin was ambitious and original. It was unusual for him to combine contemporary dress and frontal pose with an abbreviated bust format that enhances the intensity of the portrait.<sup>10</sup> The speaking likeness, at which Houdon excelled, was also a daring form to choose for Franklin, who generally remained silent in public. Nevertheless, the animated facial expression supports the idea that Houdon had seen Franklin in public, perhaps at the Loge des Neuf Soeurs ceremony involving Voltaire on 9 April 1778 or at the Académie royale des sciences on 29 April 1778 when Franklin and Voltaire embraced.

Depending on the version of the bust, the lighting, and the angle of view, Franklin's expression can be perceived as restless, apprehensive, good humored, or slightly smiling. The bust is all the more intriguing for being subtle and perhaps

ambiguous. No matter how one interprets Houdon's *Franklin*, it possesses a striking immediacy, beside which Caffieri's more accurate bust appears inert. Houdon's concentrated description of Franklin recalls the Enlightenment tendency to scrutinize the faces of great men as the outward manifestation of their character.<sup>11</sup> For this writer, the steady eyes and splendidly rendered mouth combine to form an image of deliberation, as if Franklin were speaking with care and observing the effect of his words.<sup>12</sup>

## DEAN WALKER



Back view of cat. 43

## PROVENANCE

A noble family, château du Mont-Jarry, Avranches (Manche), France, by 1828 (according to the marquise Franco d'Almodovar [née Marcelle de Loterie de Presle], in Sotheby's sale cat., 1996, which reproduces a handwritten certificate from the marquise) [unconfirmed]; by descent to the marquise d'Almodovar, until Dec. 1931; art market, Paris; Clapp and Graham, New York, by 1939; purchased by Geraldine Rockefeller Dodge, New York; sold as "property from the collection of the late Geraldine Rockefeller Dodge," Sotheby Parke Bernet, New York, 29 Nov. 1975, no. 124; purchased by the British Rail Pension Fund, U.K.; Sotheby's, New York, 5 Dec. 1996, no. 78.

## EXHIBITIONS

Tom Armstrong, *200 Years of American Sculpture* [exh. cat., Whitney Museum of American Art] (New York, 1976), 33, 341, no. 102; Dean Walker, *Portraits of Franklin* [exh., Philadelphia Museum of Art] (Philadelphia, 1997); Alice

Beamesderfer, *Gifts in Honor of the 125th Anniversary of the Philadelphia Museum of Art* [exh. cat., Philadelphia Museum of Art] (Philadelphia, 2002), 33.

## REFERENCES

Sotheby Parke Bernet, *European Works of Art* (New York, 1975), 26–27, lot 124 (incorrect provenance); [Margaret Schwartz and Wendell Garrett], "Jean-Antoine Houdon: A Marble Bust of Benjamin Franklin," in Sotheby's, *American Paintings, Drawings and Sculpture 3* (New York, 1996), no. 78 (with French provenance); Dean Walker, "Acquisition of the Year, Benjamin Franklin by Houdon for the Philadelphia Museum of Art," *Apollo* 146 (Dec. 1997), 4–5; Claude-Anne Lopez, *My Life with Benjamin Franklin* (New Haven and London, 2000), 156; Dean Walker in Philadelphia 2002, 33.

## RELATED WORKS

*Terracottas*

Musée du Louvre, Paris (inv. RF 349); H. 40.5 cm (with base: 52.2 cm), W. 34.2 cm, D. 27.4 cm; inscribed on proper right shoulder: "Houdon f. 1778"; on back: "franKlin" and fragments of *cachet de l'atelier*; possibly the bust in the Salon of 1779, no. 221; posthumous sale of contents of Houdon's studio, Paris, 15–17 Dec. 1828, no. 27; purchased by François-Hippolyte Walferdin (1795–1880); given by his heirs to the Louvre in 1880 (Louvre cat. 1998, 2:423). According to Giacometti 1918–1919, 2:172, Gustave Deloye made a mold from this terracotta when it belonged to Walferdin and produced casts—of unspecified material—which even forty years later could be easily confused for old versions, except that Deloye's casts were slightly smaller than the terracotta original.

Another terracotta in Houdon's studio sale, Paris, 8 Oct. 1795, no. 98, is untraced.

*Marble*

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (inv. 72.6), H. 44.5 cm (with base: 57.2 cm); inscribed on back: "houdon f. / 1778." See Charles Coleman Sellers, *Benjamin Franklin in Portraiture* (New Haven and London, 1962), 309–310; and H. Harvard Arnason in Washington 1976, 109. This bust was sent by Houdon to the U.S. in 1785 and given to the Metropolitan by John Bard in 1872.

*Plasters*

Plasters presented by Houdon to Franklin, of which at least one had been given by 1783. Four plaster busts by Houdon mentioned by William Temple Franklin in a letter of 3 Apr. 1785 are untraced (Sellers 1962, 306).

Musée Fabre, Montpellier (inv. D45.2.1); H. 44 cm (with base: 57.5 cm), W. 25 cm, D. 25 cm; inscribed on proper right side: "houdon f. 1778"; section in back of shoulders broken off. Earliest version with precise documentation: exhibited at the Société des beaux-arts, Montpellier, 28 Dec. 1779, as no. 183 (Bajou 1989, 25–26; written communication from Michel Hilaire, 14 May 1998); at the Musée Fabre since 1945.

Schlossmuseum Gotha (inv. P 51); H. (with base) 61.3 cm, W. 36.4 cm, D. 28.3 cm; inscribed on proper right side: "houdon f. 1778." Duke Ernst II of Saxe-Gotha, an important early patron of Houdon, favored the cause of American independence and was interested in the science of electricity and the lightning rod, factors that point to a likely early acquisition date for this bust during Franklin's years in Paris. Schuttwolf 1995, 153, no. 61, describes the plaster as colored to resemble bronze.

American Academy of Arts and Sciences, Boston, on loan to the Boston Athenaeum; H. 44 cm (with base: 59.5 cm), W. 33.8 cm, D. ca. 30.3 cm;

inscribed on proper right side: "houdon f. 177[8?]" ; damaged and repaired, with remounting on the socle that apparently increased the forward tilt of the head; surface painted white twice. See Sellers 1962, 307–308, and Arnason in Washington 1976, 109. Some scholars, including this author, think this bust was kept at Monticello by Thomas Jefferson, who acquired busts by Houdon in France; record exists of his payment of 1,000 francs to Houdon 3 July 1789 (Sellers, 1962, 313 n. 7). In June 2002 Tony Sigel, at the Straus Center for Conservation, Harvard University Art Museums, shared results of his examination, which revealed traces of the original terracotta-colored coating.

#### Boilly paintings

Another bust of Franklin, untraced, appears in Boilly's paintings of Houdon's studio (cat. 66). This portrait is possibly recorded in the engraving by Pierre-Michel Alix after a drawing by Jean-Jacques-François Berbier l'ainé (Sellers 1962, pl. 19).

#### Drawing

A drawing, closely related to Houdon's 1778 model of Franklin, has been attributed to the sculptor (Sotheby's, London, 23 Mar. 1978, no. 179, and reproduced in Sotheby's New York sale cat. of 1996), but this attribution must be considered speculative.

#### Expanded format

Houdon did a later, almost half-length sculpted portrait of Franklin dressed in a voluminous robe, which exists at the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Angers, and the Boston Athenaeum (inv. UH 151 [1908]). See Sellers 1962, 312–313.

#### Early exhibitions

Studio of the artist, Paris, Nov. 1778; Loge des Neuf Soeurs, Paris, 18 Aug. 1779; Paris, Salon cat. 1779, no. 221, under the heading: "buste en terre cuite"; Société des beaux-arts, Montpellier, 28 Dec. 1779, no. 183; Salon de la correspondance, Paris, Feb. 1783, lent by William Temple Franklin, along with a plaster of Caffieri's bust of Houdon; Musée de Paris, Paris, 6 Mar. 1783, unspecified form and material; Salon of 1791, Paris, no. 484 (including eleven sculptures by Houdon), unspecified form and material.



Signature on cat. 43

1. Métra 1787–1790, 8:117.

2. Bachaumont 1780–1789, 13:229–230, letter 3, 22 Sept. 1779.

3. Hart and Biddle 1911, 101.

4. Sellers 1962, 126–127.

5. Métra 1787–1790, 8:117: "never has anyone pushed sculpture farther along in this way."

6. Lopez 2000, 156. Lopez comments in passing that Philadelphia's bust may have been the one shown at the Musée de Paris in 1783. This would not explain

why the bust was carved in 1779 when Houdon had already executed one marble that remained in his possession.

7. Hart and Biddle 1911, 88–89.

8. American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia, *Franklin Papers* 30, no. 77. Hart and Biddle 1911, 103, translates the complete letter.

9. Arnason proposed that it would have been easy for Houdon to arrange for a sitting or two; see H. Harvard Arnason and Arthur Beale, in *Metamorphoses in Nineteenth-Century Sculpture*, ed. Jeanne L. Wasserman [exh. cat., Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University] (Cambridge, MA, 1975), 70 n. 2.

10. These characteristics are to be found, however, in Houdon's bust of Jean Le Rond d'Alembert, dated 1778 (see cat. 27, fig. 1).

11. Two images of Franklin are discussed in Jean Gaspard Lavater, *Essai sur la Physiognomie*, vol. 2 (Zurich, 1783).

12. Auguste Rodin saw Franklin's expression in similar terms; quoted in Réau 1964, 402.

## + John Paul Jones (1747–1792)

Dated 1781

White marble with gray veining on a separate, round, white marble base

H. 57 cm (with base: 70 cm), W. 53 cm, D. 30.5 cm.

Inscribed on back edge of truncation: *J.A.H. 1781*

United States Naval Academy Museum, Annapolis

John Paul Jones, the most celebrated naval hero of the American Revolution, was born “John Paul” in Arbigland, Scotland.<sup>1</sup> At thirteen he joined the merchant marine as an apprentice seaman, traveling between the British Isles and America and the West Indies. Rising to the rank of captain by age twenty-one, he earned a reputation as a man of great competence and integrity, but also of fiery temperament. Self-educated and ambitious, he gained social status by polishing his manners and becoming a freemason, joining the Saint Bernard Lodge of Kirkcudbright in November 1770.<sup>2</sup> After the killing of an insubordinate sailor in Tobago in 1773, he took refuge in America and assumed the name John Paul Jones.

Through freemasons in Virginia and Pennsylvania, Jones met members of the Continental Congress, and when the Continental navy was formed in 1775, he was given the commission of lieutenant. Following several successful encounters at sea, he was promoted to captain and sent to France in command of the *Ranger*, which he sailed into enemy waters, making two daring landings in Britain and defeating HMS *Drake*. In September 1779 he made a second foray into British waters during which his flagship, the *Bonhomme Richard*, prevailed over HMS *Serapis* in a furious battle.

These exploits made him famous throughout Europe. In Paris in 1789 it was said: “One is waiting for the famous Paul Jones with great impatience. The Queen said in the last few days that she wanted to attach a feather to his hat herself. This idea was found to be charming, & suddenly hats à la Paul Jones were being ordered from . . . the court’s purveyor of fashion.”<sup>3</sup> Jones made a triumphal entrance into Paris the following spring and was received warmly at court and among Enlightenment intellectuals and aristocrats, enjoying great success with the ladies. Louis XVI awarded him a special sword and the cross of Military Merit (making him the first American to be decorated by a foreign government). According to Elisabeth Vigée-Lebrun, “His reputation had preceded him . . . one knew in how many battles he and his small squadron had triumphed over English forces that were ten times as strong. Nevertheless, I have never met such a modest man; it was impossible ever to make him speak of his achievements; but on all other subjects he spoke willingly with infinite wit and naturalness.”<sup>4</sup>

Jones was a friend of Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson. Franklin, who had been minister to France for the new American republic since 1776, had joined the Loge des Neuf Soeurs in 1778 and was appointed its *venerable*, or leader,





Back view of cat. 44

in May 1779.<sup>5</sup> A year later Jones was invited to join this prestigious masonic lodge, and a celebration was held in his honor on 1 May 1780.<sup>6</sup> Houdon, also a member, had already executed busts of members Voltaire and Franklin (cats. 23–25 and 43), and he was, in this instance, commissioned by the lodge itself to do a portrait of Jones. According to Frédéric-Melchior Grimm: “The intrepid Paul Jones has been here several weeks. The Loge des Neuf Soeurs, of which he is a member, engaged M. Houdon to make his bust. This portrait is another masterpiece worthy of the chisel, which seems destined to consecrate to immortality illustrious men in every walk of life.”<sup>7</sup>

Houdon portrayed Jones, who was thirty-two, in his American captain’s uniform, with braided epaulettes and a jacket with buttons that are decorated with anchors in relief. Prominently hanging from a ribbon on his chest is the cross of Military Merit. Jones looks out and slightly to his left with an expression of determination and authority, but also of sensitivity and refinement. This conforms to the description of him given by Abigail Adams: “He is small of stature, well proportioned, soft in his speech, easy in his address, polite in his manners, vastly civil, understands all the etiquette of a lady’s toilette as perfectly as he does the masts, sails, and rigging of his ship. Under all this appearance of softness he is bold, enterprising, ambitious, and active.”<sup>8</sup> The bone structure of his face and his expressive eyes are set off by his natural hair, pulled back and tied at the nape of his neck. The bust was admired immediately for the accuracy of the likeness and for its expression of the sitter’s character.

Contemporary documents do not indicate the material of the bust commissioned by the Loge des Neuf Soeurs. The present marble portrait bears the date 1781, whereas the known plaster busts (see Related Works) all bear the date 1780, the year of the commission. The provenance of the Annapolis bust, which is the only known version in marble, has strong masonic associations. Said to come from the collection of Philippe, duc d’Orléans, who served as Grand Maître of the Grand Orient de France from 1773 until 1793, it may have been acquired shortly after the original commission.

Jones was enormously pleased with Houdon’s portrait and ordered at least sixteen plaster casts to offer to friends and associates, including Franklin, Washington, and Jefferson (see Related Works). On 2 July 1825 Jefferson wrote to John H. Sherburne, a friend who had sent him a commemorative portrait of Jones: “Houdon’s bust of him is an excellent likeness. . . . Such a one would be perfect, and there must be several of those busts in the hands of his friends and others. If there be none nearer, I have one.”<sup>9</sup>

After peace was reached with England in 1783, Jones saw his fortunes turn. With Grimm’s intervention, he entered the Russian navy as a rear admiral and served for a year in a campaign against the Ottoman Turks on the Black Sea, but court intrigues caused it to end badly for him. In 1790 he returned to Paris where he died, largely forgotten, two years later. Today, celebrated as the leader who gave the American navy its earliest traditions of heroism and victory, he lies buried in the crypt of the United States Naval Academy Chapel with Houdon’s magnificent marble bust beside his tomb.

ANNE L. POULET



Signature on cat. 44

#### PROVENANCE

Collection of the duc d'Orléans, Philippe Egalité (1747–1793); by inheritance to his son Louis-Philippe (1773–1850), king of France; by inheritance to his second son, Louis-Charles-Philippe-Raphael d'Orléans (1814–1896); by inheritance to the duc de Nemours, Paris, until 1939 (information provided by James W. Cheevers, associate director and senior curator, United States Naval Academy Museum); “Le marbre qui appartenait à l'ébeniste-antiquaire parisien Jean Schmidt, a émigré en 1939 en Amérique” (Réau 1964, 2:34); acquired by Marie Sterner, for her New York gallery, summer 1939 (Watson 1940, 183); purchased by Marshall Field, Chicago, 1940; given to the naval academy by his widow, Ruth Pruyn Field, 17 Dec. 1959.

#### EXHIBITIONS

Worcester 1964, 70–73, ill.; Washington 1976, III, 366, no. 175, ill.

#### REFERENCES

*Corr. littéraire*, 12:394; Hart and Biddle 1911, 125–137; Mrs. Reginald de Koven, *The Life and Letters of John Paul Jones* (New York, 1913), 1:70; 2:73–75, 481; Giacometti 1918–1919, 2: 240–249; Giacometti 1929, 2:98–102; Georg Pudelko, “A Marble Bust of John Paul Jones by Jean Antoine Houdon,” *Art in America* 27, no. 4 (Oct. 1939), 151–155, ill.; Jane Watson, “News and Comment,” *Magazine of Art* 33, no. 3 (Mar. 1940), 183, ill. p. 182; anonymous, *Parnassus* 12, no. 3 (Mar. 1940), 21, ill.; Réau 1964, 1:84–85, 97, 150–151, 159–160, 178, 282, 403–405; 2:34, no. 140; Arnason 1975, 57–58, 113 nn. 147–149, fig. 126; Louis Amiable, *Une Loge Maçonnique d'avant 1789. La Loge des Neuf Soeurs*, ed. Charles Porset (Paris, 1989), 150–151, 333.

#### RELATED WORKS

Among the most frequently reproduced of Houdon's works during and after his lifetime. An excellent unpublished compilation of known versions, their locations, and histories is “The Bust of John Paul Jones” by James W. Cheevers, 1975, updated in 1984 and 1988.

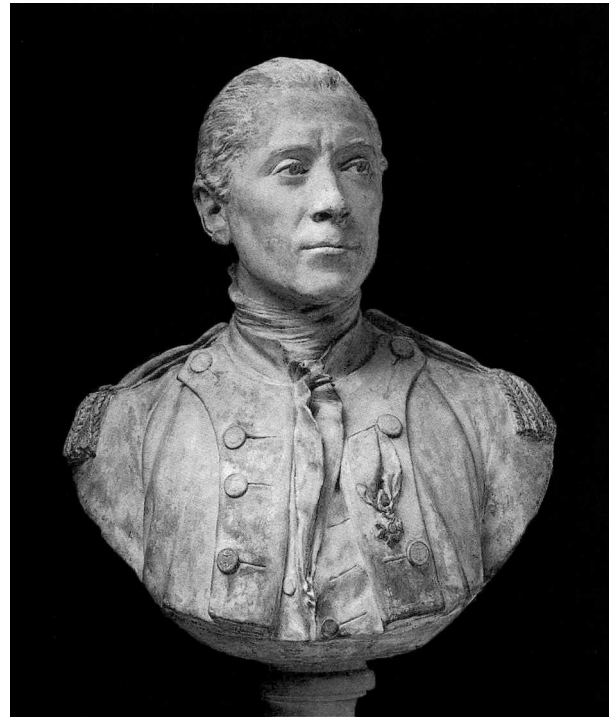
#### Plaster casts as gifts from the sitter

In 1786 a bust given to Thomas Jefferson (letter from Jones to Jefferson, 28 Feb. 1786); see John Henry Sherburne, *The Life and Character of John Paul Jones, a Captain in the United States Navy during the Revolutionary War* (New York, 1851), 257–258. This is probably the bust now in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (see below).

In 1787 busts given to Robert Morris, who sold it at auction in Philadelphia, 18 May 1797, no. 115 (see Hart and Biddle 1911, 130); and to George Washington (letters from Jones to Washington, 25 July 1787; from Washington to Jones, 2 Sept.; and from Jones to Washington, 9 Sept.; George Washington Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, DC, 1741–1799, ser. 4; and ser. 2 letterbooks; and Hart and Biddle 1911, 129–130).

In 1788 busts sent to “General St. Clair and Mr. Ross of Philadelphia; Mr. John Jay, General Irvine, Mr. Secretary Thomson and Colonel Wadsworth of New York; Mr. Maddison and Colonel Carryton of Virginia” (letter from Jones to Jefferson, Sept. 1788, asking that Jefferson's secretary, William Short, arrange for the shipment); see Sherburne 1851, 290–292. Of these eight busts, only the gift to General Irvine has been identified; it is now at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts (see below).

In 1789 busts given to Benjamin Franklin, the comte d'Estaing, and Lafayette (journal entry, 29 July 1789, St. Petersburg), as well as to Grimm (Hart and Biddle 1911, 134).



1. Houdon, John Paul Jones, 1780, white plaster with traces of terracotta-colored paint, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

On 29 Mar. 1791 Jones wrote to Jefferson from Paris that Mr. Burton of the U.S. Congress had requested a bust for the state of North Carolina and that Jones was having Houdon ship one; see Sherburne 1851, 318. There is no record, however, of this bust ever having been delivered.

#### Sales and exhibition catalogues during Houdon's lifetime

Paris, Salon cat. 1781, 46, under “Bustes en plâtre, couleur de terre cuite,” no. 261: “Paul Jones.”

Houdon's studio sale, Paris, 8 Oct. 1795, 17, under “Terre cuite,” no. 97: “Le Buste de Paul-Jones, il est vêtu en uniforme, & posé sur piédouche en marbre bleu-turquin; hauteur totale 24 pouces [60.96 cm]” (306 livres).

Posthumous sale of contents of Houdon's studio, Paris, 15–17 Dec. 1828, 16, no. 20: “Plâtre. Buste de Paul John [sic], général américain.”

#### Extant plasters

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (inv. 31.874) (fig. 1); white with traces of terracotta-colored paint; inscribed on truncation of proper right arm: “houdon f. 1780”; H. 69.85 cm, W. 48.26 cm; probably the bust given by Jones to Thomas Jefferson in 1786. Deposited at the Boston Athenaeum on 17 Jan. 1828 by Joseph Coolidge Jr. (who had married Jefferson's granddaughter Ellen Randolph); disappeared from Athenaeum records after 1867; sold at auction in May 1903 by Joseph Kimball, proprietor of the Boston Museum theater; purchased by Charles H. Taylor, who gave it to the Museum of Fine Arts in 1931. See Swan 1940, 165–167; Harding 1984, 83; and Arnason 1975, 58.

National Academy of Design, New York (inv. 53–S); originally painted terracotta color, now overpainted white; H. 57.6 cm (with base: 70.5 cm), W.

50.1 cm, D. 29.21 cm; open at back; inscribed on truncation of proper right shoulder: "houdon f. 1780"; thought to have belonged to Robert R. Livingston (1746–1843), who acquired it while serving as American ambassador to France; purchased from the American Academy of Fine Arts in 1842. The author wishes to thank David B. Darringer, curator of sculpture and paintings at the National Academy of Design, for this information.

Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, Philadelphia (inv. 1864.3); painted terracotta color during restoration in 1989; H. 70.5 cm, W. 48.6 cm, D. 30.5 cm; inscribed on truncation of proper right shoulder: "houdon f. 1780"; fragments of *cachet de l'atelier* at center back; once inscribed in gold paint across front edge of truncation: "Presented by PAUL JONES to Maj: GenL WM IRVINE" [now effaced]. Gift from Jones ca. 1789; given by Irvine to the museum ca. 1832, as a bust of Paul Jones by an unknown artist. See Susan James-Gadzinski and Mary Mullen Cunningham, *American Sculpture in the Museum of American Art of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts* (London, 1997), 4–5, ill.

#### Later copies and casts

In 1905 Jones' body was exhumed from his grave in Paris and identified by comparing the skull with measurements from Houdon's portrait bust before it was shipped to the U.S. At this time many reproductions of the bust were made.

Plaster casts were made by the National Academy of Design in 1904; Florentine Art Plaster Co., Philadelphia, ca. 1910–1914; and Caproni Brothers, Boston (listed as no. 5497 in catalogues for 1922 and 1928). They are currently reproduced and sold by the Naval Academy Museum.

Bronze casts were made in the 1920s and 1930s by the Gorham Co., New York, and Roman Bronze Works, New York, after the plaster at the National Academy of Design; Kennedy Galleries, New York, had bronze casts made in 1970 after the plaster at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. The author would like to thank James W. Cheevers for this information.

#### Medal

The U.S. Congress voted in 1787 to have a medal struck in honor of Jones, and in Jan. 1789 Thomas Jefferson commissioned one on behalf of the Congress, to be done by Augustin Dupré (1730–1819) after Houdon's bust (fig. 2a–b). See William S. Appleton, *Augustin Dupré, and His Work for America* (Cambridge, 1890), 4; and Charles Saunier, *Augustin Dupré, orfèvre, médailleur et graveur général des monnaies* (Paris, 1894), 24–28, pl. IV.

Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston; silver; diam. 4.5 cm. Obverse has profile portrait of Jones, signed on truncation of shoulder: DUPRÉ F.; inscribed: JOANNI PAULO JONES CLASSIS PRAEFECTO; on exergue: COMITIA AMERICANA. Reverse depicts battle of *Bonhomme Richard* and HMS *Serapis*; exergue signed: DUPRÉ F.; inscribed: HOSTIUM NAVIBUS CAPTISUAT FUGATIS; exergue: AD ORAM SCOTIAE XXIII. SEPT. M.DCCLXXVIII.



2a–b. Augustin Dupré, Medal of John Paul Jones, 1789, silver, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

1. For the biography of Jones see Sherburne 1851; and Samuel Eliot Morison, *John Paul Jones, a Sailor's Biography* (New York, 1959), and references therein.

2. Morison 1959, 18.

3. Métra 1787–1790, 8:288, 5 Sept. 1789.

4. Vigée-Lebrun 1984, 2:268.

5. Amiabile 1989, 136.

6. Bachaumont 1780–1789, 15:250–251, letter of 18 July 1780.

7. *Corr. littéraire*, 12:394.

8. See Kimball 1950, 262, 339 n. 57.

9. See Chinard 1930, 51.





## + Marie-Joseph-Paul-Yves-Roche-Gilbert du Motier, Marquis de Lafayette (1757–1834)

Before 1789

White plaster, painted white, on separate white plaster base

H. 62.5 cm (with base: 76.1 cm), W. 53.2 cm

The Boston Athenaeum, Boston, Athenaeum Purchase, 1828 (inv. UH 149.1828)

## + Life Mask of the Marquis de Lafayette

Before July 1785

White plaster

H. 34.3 cm, max. W. 18 cm

Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, Gift of Arthur

H. and Mary Marden Dean, Class of 1963 (inv. 74.010.001)

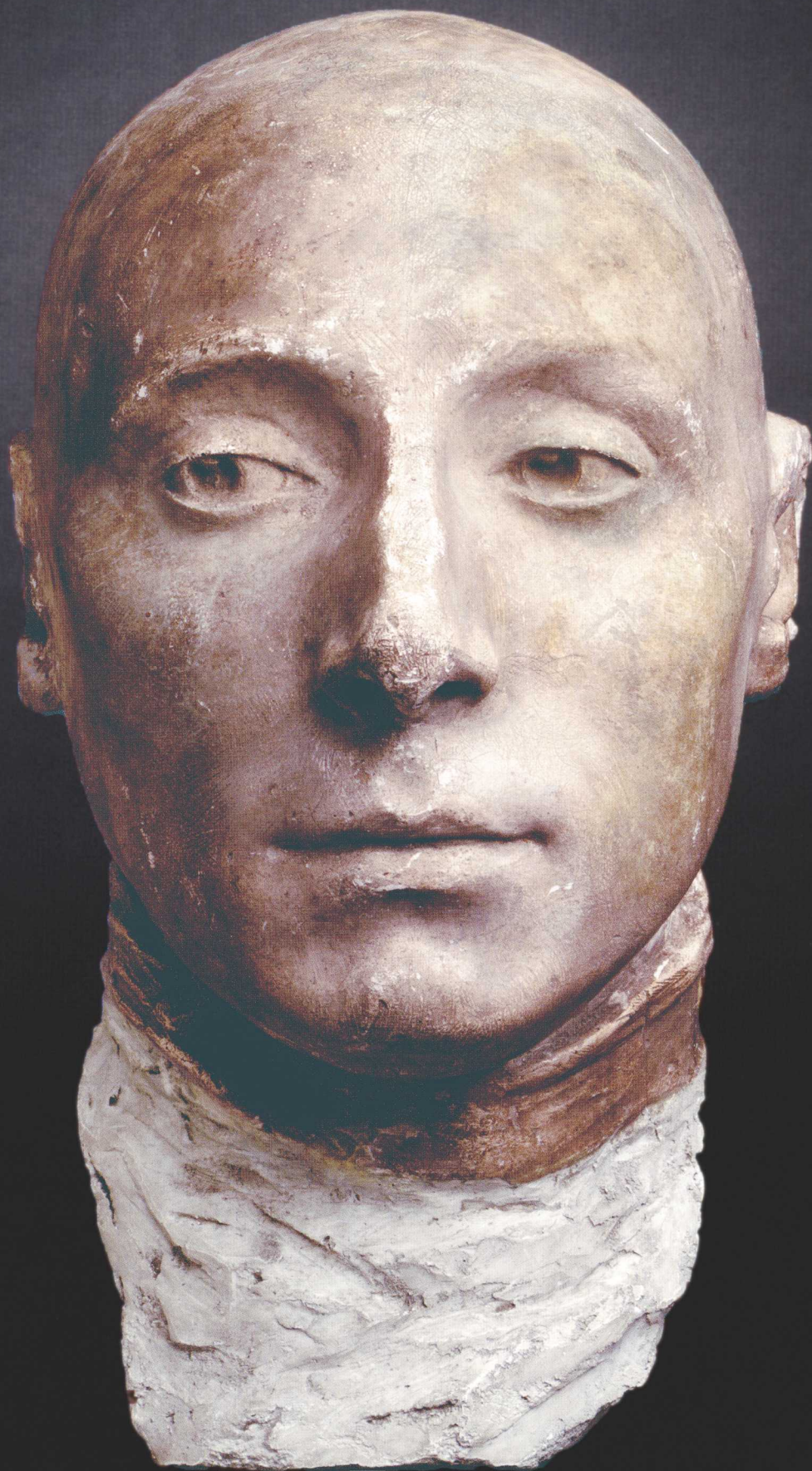
Lafayette was a hero of both the American and the French Revolutions and a champion of freedom, equality, and the rights of man throughout his long life.<sup>1</sup> Born into an ancient noble French family from the Auvergne region of central France, Lafayette lost his father when he was two, inheriting the title of marquis and a tradition of military bravery. In 1768 he was enrolled at the Collège du Plessis in Paris, studying a classical curriculum. At age thirteen he was orphaned and inherited a large fortune. Three years later he married Adrienne de Noailles, whose powerful family assured him a prominent place at Versailles as courtier to the king. In his words, “when my wife’s family obtained a place for me at court, I did not hesitate to be disagreeable to preserve my independence. It was while I was in that frame of mind that I first heard of the troubles in America. . . . When I first learned of that quarrel, my heart was enlisted, and I thought only of joining the colors.”<sup>2</sup>

Like a number of French aristocrats, Lafayette tried to join the American insurgents in December 1776. He was refused permission to do so, however, because he was underage (nineteen) and because Louis XVI did not want to support such an overtly hostile act against the English. Taking matters into his own hands, Lafayette signed up directly with the American

representative in Paris, Silas Deane, who gave him the rank of major general in the American army.<sup>3</sup> Because of a shortage of official funds, Lafayette paid for a ship to transport himself and other officers, leaving for America from Spain in April 1777. He wrote to his wife from the ship, “The welfare of America is intimately connected with the happiness of all mankind; she will become the respectable and safe asylum of virtue, integrity, tolerance, equality, and a peaceful liberty.”<sup>4</sup> He never wavered from this conviction.

Lafayette, who volunteered to serve without pay, was appointed to George Washington’s staff and found in the general a mentor and lifelong friend. Washington trusted him with a series of commands in which he fought well. Returning to France after an alliance was formed in 1778, he helped persuade the king to send reinforcements to America under Rochambeau in 1780. Accompanying them to America, Lafayette led a number of successful battles, culminating in the defeat of Cornwallis at Yorktown in October 1781. When he went home to Paris, he was hailed as the hero of two worlds, and great things were expected of him.

On 17 December 1781, in gratitude for Lafayette’s victory over Cornwallis, the Virginia legislature “resolved unanimously



that a bust of the Marquis de Lafayette be . . . made, in Paris, of the best marble employed for such purpose, and presented to the Marquis” and that an agent “employ a proper person in Paris to make the above bust.”<sup>5</sup> The project was forgotten until Lafayette mentioned it to Washington in a letter of September 1783.<sup>6</sup> Governor Harrison of Virginia then acted immediately, and in April 1784 the Virginia Assembly made a new resolution for the prompt execution of the bust.<sup>7</sup> In December 1784, for unknown reasons, the Virginia delegates voted to present the bust to the city of Paris instead of to Lafayette himself, “with a request that the same may be accepted and preserved in some public place of the said city”; and “to cause another bust of him . . . to be procured . . . and . . . be fixed in such public place, at the seat of government [in America], as may hereafter be appointed for the erection of the statue voted by the General Assembly to General Washington.”<sup>8</sup>

Thomas Jefferson, with Thomas Barclay, the American consul at Nantes, strongly influenced the selection of Houdon for this prestigious commission. Jefferson reported that the life mask of Lafayette was taken by Houdon in July 1785, before the marquis left on a trip to Germany.<sup>9</sup> On 25 August 1785, after the sculptor had departed for America, Barclay wrote: “it will be better that the same person compleat both the Busts; the more so as he is at the top of his profession. The cost of each will be 3000 Livres, and I have paid 50 Louis d’ors for the purchase of the marble for the first.”<sup>10</sup>

Lafayette was twenty-eight when the life mask was made. The sculptor carefully recorded the bone structure of the face with the high sloping forehead, arched eyebrows, prominent cheekbones, and straight, fine nose. The skin is smooth and unlined, the lips softly modeled. The seams of the mold are clearly visible on the mask, while the artist added plaster to fill in the bald form at the back of the head and to indicate the pleats of a cravat at the neck. The eyes were modeled with the lids partly closed, the sitter looking down and slightly to his right. This mask captures the dreamy, idealistic character of Lafayette as well as his aristocratic refinement.

Using the mask as a model, Houdon had begun work on the large marble bust before leaving for America in July 1785 and completed it soon after his return. On 24 January 1786 Jefferson wrote to the governor of Virginia: “The first of the Marquis’s busts will be finished next month. I shall present that one to the city of Paris, because the delay has been noticed by some. I hope to be able to send another to Virginia in the course of the summer.”<sup>11</sup> With permission from Louis XVI, he arranged for



1. Houdon, Le Marquis de Lafayette, 1786, white marble, Library of Virginia, Capitol Building, Richmond.

the marble to be presented to the city of Paris on behalf of the Commonwealth of Virginia in an elaborate formal ceremony at the Hôtel de Ville on 28 September 1786.<sup>12</sup> Although reportedly destroyed under the Commune in August 1792, the bust was salvaged and repaired by Houdon and appeared in his posthumous sale.

The second marble bust (fig. 1) destined for the capitol building in Richmond, Virginia, is of the same format as the first: Lafayette wears the uniform of a major general in the American revolutionary army, with a drapery wrapped around the truncation of his arms and encircling the marble base in a style similar to that used for the portrait of Louis XVI (cat. 50), both exhibited at the Salon of 1787. Although derived from the life mask, Lafayette is here given a fuller, more mature face, and the drapery lends the composition a baroque grandeur. Hanging prominently from the lapel are the cross of the Order



2. Houdon, Le Marquis de Lafayette, 1790, white marble, Musée de Versailles.

of Saint Louis, awarded by Louis XVI in 1783,<sup>13</sup> and the badge of the Society of the Cincinnati. The marquis, delighted to learn of the commissions, wrote to Washington on 26 October 1786: “The State of Virginia has just given me a new indication of their kindness in placing my bust in the Hôtel de Ville in Paris. The destination of the other bust is all the more agreeable to me in that, placed in the capitol of the State, next to the statue of my beloved general, I will render him eternal homage.”<sup>14</sup>

The Athenaeum bust resembles the two marbles but has a shorter truncation and lacks the drapery. It was acquired by Jefferson in Paris directly from Houdon, along with several other busts, in November 1789.<sup>15</sup> That that bust was plaster painted a terracotta color is confirmed by a document that accompanied the shipment, mentioning “One vial of paint for the busts.”<sup>16</sup> Like Washington, Jefferson had formed a real friendship with Lafayette and recognized his devotion to the cause of liberty and his untiring efforts to promote support for America in the French government: “When I was stationed in his country. . . he made our cause his own. . . In truth, I only held the nail; he drove it.”<sup>17</sup> Jefferson included the bust of Lafayette among the portraits of great men by Houdon that he displayed on brackets in the Tea Room of his home, Monticello. The other sitters were Washington, Benjamin Franklin, and John Paul Jones.

In 1787 Lafayette was named to the Assembly of Notables called by Louis XVI. Although loyal to the king, he endorsed

reforms that limited the powers of the monarch and guaranteed basic human rights. Elected to the Estates General in 1789, he fell out of favor with the crown. Undeterred, he drafted a Declaration of the Rights of Man and presented it to the National Assembly. Inspired by the American Declaration of Independence and Constitution, copies of which he owned, he became a primary architect of the French Revolution. Following the storming of the Bastille on 14 July 1789, he was chosen by popular demand to form the National Guard, a citizens’ militia, and to be its commanding general.

On 14 July 1790 Lafayette organized an enormous Fête de la Fédération in the Champs-de-Mars. He was at the zenith of his popularity and power. It was in this context that Houdon was commissioned by the National Guard in Paris to execute a marble portrait of Lafayette in his National Guard uniform (fig. 2) (see Related Works). The fiery idealist of the earlier portraits is here depicted as a middle-aged man, his features somewhat thickened, and wearing a formal wig.

Lafayette’s dreams of a constitutional monarchy in France faded as more radical factions took over in Paris. He fled to Amsterdam, was imprisoned by the Germans and declared an émigré by the French, who confiscated all of his property and sentenced him to death. Released from prison in Austria in 1797, he went to Denmark. Under Napoleon, Lafayette was able to return to France in 1799, although he despised the emperor and his despotic government. In 1824 he made a triumphant extended return trip to the United States, seeing Jefferson for a last time in December at Monticello, where his bust was on display in the “gallery of worthies.”

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#### PROVENANCE

##### ✦ Bust ✦

Acquired by Jefferson from Houdon 3 July 1789 and shipped to the U.S. on his return from France that fall; installed in the Tea Room at Monticello (Jefferson’s “Catalogue of Paintings &c. at Monticello,” ca. 1809–1817, in Monticello 1993, 436, app. II); probably included in posthumous auction of his possessions, Jan. 1827; acquired, along with busts of Washington, Franklin, and Jones, by Joseph Coolidge Jr., husband of Jefferson’s granddaughter Ellen Randolph; deposited by him at Boston Athenaeum in 1828 (deposit of other three busts accepted, 11 Mar.); purchase by Athenaeum approved 13 Oct. 1828 for \$100 (title for other busts given to Athenaeum by Coolidge’s descendants in 1912, not realizing the Franklin bust had been purchased in Sept. 1828 for \$200; see documents in Athenaeum archives).

## + Life mask +

Taken by Houdon in July 1785; passed by inheritance through Lafayette's descendants, château de Chavaniac (Auvergne); purchased, along with many other objects and documents that had belonged to Lafayette, by Elie Fabius (1864–1942), Paris, between 1912 and 1934; acquired from Fabius heirs in Dec. 1962 by Arthur H. and Mary Marden Dean (Fabius family archives; the author would like to thank M. François Fabius for this information); given by the Deans to the Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art at Cornell in 1964.

## EXHIBITIONS

## + Bust +

Worcester 1964, 81–84, ill.; Agnes Mongan, et al., *Harvard Honors Lafayette* [exh. cat., Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University] (Cambridge, 1975–1976), 66–68, no. 18, ill.; Washington 1976, 110, 366, no. 174, ill.; *A Climate for Art* [exh. cat., Boston Athenaeum] (Boston, 1980), 37, no. 44; Monticello 1993, 33, 68–69, 88, 215, 219, no. 92, ill.

## + Life mask +

André Girodie, *Exposition du centenaire de La Fayette 1757–1834* [exh. cat., Musée de l'Orangerie] (Paris, 1934), 8384, no. 118, pl. VII, lent by Pierre Fabius; *La Révolution française dans l'histoire, dans la littérature, dans l'art* [exh. cat., Musée Carnavalet] (Paris, 1939), 104, no. 733; *La Fayette* [exh. cat., Archives nationales, Hôtel de Rohan] (Paris, 1957), 92–93, no. 279, lent by MM. Fabius; *Lafayette, Hero of Two Worlds: The Art and Pageantry of His Farewell Tour of America, 1824–1825* [exh. cat., The Queens Museum, Flushing, NY] (Hanover and London, 1989), 100–104, ill p. 101, fig. 90.

## REFERENCES

## + Bust +

Chinard 1930, xvii–xxii; Swan 1940, 165–166; Kimball 1943, 165–167, fig. 6; Walter Muir Whitehill, "Portrait Busts in the Library of the Boston Athenaeum," *Antiques* 103 (June 1973), 1141, 1145, ill.; Arnason 1975, 54, 80–81, 116 n.198, fig. 161, pl. 104; Harding 1984, 83, 123, fig. 22; Marc H. Miller, "Lafayette's Farewell Tour and American Art," in Flushing 1989, 104.

## + Life mask +

Chinard 1930, xvii–xviii; Ch. S., "Salle de l'Orangerie. Exposition du centenaire de La Fayette," *Bulletin des Musées de France*, no. 7 (July, 1934), 122; Réau 1964, 2:34–35, no. 142, pl. LXXI. 142A; Arnason 1975, 116 n. 198; David Beaurain, "Découverte. Le Médaille en marbre de Louis XV pour l'Hôtel de Ville de Paris par Louis-Claude Vassé," *Bulletin de l'histoire de Paris et de l'Île-de-France*, nos. 122–124 (Paris, 1999), 216–218.

## RELATED WORKS

**Lafayette in American revolutionary army uniform***Marbles with drapery*

Formerly Paris, Hôtel de Ville, whereabouts unknown; commissioned by Commonwealth of Virginia, 1784; completed in early 1786 and presented to city of Paris (for commission and installation, see Lacroix 1894–1898, 5:364, 375; Lacroix 1900–1914, 3:454 n. 1, 7:167–168; Bachaumont 1780–1789, 33:90–92, letter of 6 Oct. 1786); damaged 10 Aug. 1792 on orders of Communal Assembly along with portraits of Necker, Louis XVI, and Bailly (see *Procès-verbaux de la Commune de Paris*, 1894, 6; cf. Réau 1964, 1:88); in posthumous sale of contents of Houdon's studio, Paris, 15–17 Dec. 1828, 18–19, no. 51: "Marbre blanc.—Buste de M. le général Lafayette... ce buste, voté en 1791 par la commune de Paris, a éprouvé en

1793, une mutilation qui a été réparée," sold for 50 francs (Réau 1964, 1:119); anonymous sale, Paris, 21 Apr. 1834, no. 116, for 68.5 francs (Réau 1964, 1:120).

Capitol, Richmond, Virginia (fig. 1); 1785–1786; white marble; H. 88.9 cm, W. 63.5 cm, D. 43.2 cm; separate square marble base inscribed: "Buste voté par l'Assemblée générale de l'Etat de Virginie le 17 décembre 1781 en l'honneur du Marquis de La Fayette, major général au service des Etats-Unis d'Amérique et ancien commandant en chef de l'armée des Etats-Unis en Virginie, comme un monument durable de sa mémoire et de leur gratitude"; Salon of 1787, 51, no. 256: "M. le Marquis de Lafayette, pour les Etats de la Virginie" (see Chinard 1930, 21–22, 30–31, 32–34; Réau 1964, 1:85–86, 88; 2:34–35, no. 142).

*Plasters with drapery*

Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz (inv. K18); painted brownish terracotta color; H. (with self-base) 93.5 cm, W. 70.3 cm; from collection of Prince Henry of Prussia (Erich Biehahn, *Kunstwerke der deutschen Staatsbibliothek* [Berlin, 1961], 43, no. 170; Rheinsberg 2002, 261–262, no. VI.45, ill.).

Location unknown. On 8 Sept. 1789 Houdon offered a version of his bust of Lafayette (presumably in plaster) to the committee of the district of Saint-Philippe du Roule, and on 23 Jan. 1790 the committee thanked him for it (Lacroix 1894–1898, 1:514).

*Plaster without drapery*

Girard College, Philadelphia (inv. G-P–44); restored after severe damage in 1991 and painted pale orange; H. 61.5 cm (with base: 76.5 cm), W. 53 cm; probably from the collection of Stephen Girard (1750–1831).

*Modern copies of the Athenaeum plaster*

One made by the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, in 1895; another by Caproni Brothers, Boston, before 1897.



Back view of cat. 45

### Lafayette in National Guard uniform

#### Marble

Musée du château de Versailles (MV 1573; LP 630) (fig. 2); H. 68 cm (with base: 83 cm), W. 58 cm, D. 30 cm; inscribed (twice) on truncation of proper right arm: “houdon / fecit”; and superimposed: “houdon / an 1790”; probably shown in Salon of 1791 (withdrawn cat., 47, no. 225); “M. de la Fayette demandé par une Société, pour en faire présent à Orléans” [Deloynes XVII, no. 432] (published cat., 37, no. 484; see Scherf 1997, 57 n. 22); must be the bust recorded in *Procès-verbaux de la Commune de Paris*, indicating that the National Guard of Paris, “en reconnaissance, . . . avaient offert . . . à la Garde Nationale d’Orléans, le buste de M. de La Fayette” (Lacroix 1894–1898, 5:364); bought from the Citizen King Louis-Philippe by M. Letac for historical galleries at Versailles, 25 Dec. 1834 (1,000 francs); entered collection 4 July 1835 (Versailles cat. 1993, 211, no. 942, ill.).



Alternate view of cat. 46

#### Modern Plasters

Made after Versailles marble by the Atelier des musées nationaux; appear in catalogues from 1893 until 1991 (see Rionnet 1996, 266–267, no. 1124). Examples in the Musée de Versailles (inv. 6594), Musée de Tessé, Le Mans (inv. L620), and Musée Carnavalet, Paris (inv. S.1514, E.8376).

#### Sèvres replica in biscuit porcelain (1903 and later)

Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University (Cambridge 1975–1976, 151–153, no. 59, ill.)

Samuel Barlow collection, New York (Arnason 1975, 116 n. 199).

#### Medal

Medal of Lafayette engraved by Benjamin Duvivier, 1789, bronze. Obverse represents Lafayette in left-facing profile wearing National Guard uniform; reverse inscribed: VENGEUR DE LA LIBERTE DAN LES DEUX MONDES (see Nocq 1911, 222, no. 238, pl. XVI). On 29 Oct. 1789 Duvivier offered to do medals of Lafayette, Necker, and Bailly without charge; he offered that of Lafayette “à la Garde nationale” (see Lacroix 1894–1898, 2:457, 467).

#### Boilly paintings

The bust of Lafayette in his National Guard uniform appears on the far right side of the upper shelf at the back of both of Boilly’s paintings of *Houdon in His Studio* (cat. 66).



Alternate view of cat. 45

1. For the biography of Lafayette see A. Chateaufeuf, *Le Général Lafayette. Mémoires authentiques* (Paris, 1831); *Mémoires, correspondance et manuscrits du Général Lafayette, publiés par sa famille*, 6 vols. (Paris, 1838); Bayard Tuckerman, *Life of General Lafayette*, 2 vols. (London, 1889); and Etienne Taillemite, *La Fayette* (Paris, 1989).

2. Stanley J. Idzerda, ed., *Lafayette in the Age of the American Revolution: Selected Letters and Papers, 1776–1790* (Ithaca, NY, 1977–), 1:7.

3. Idzerda 1977, 1:17.

4. Idzerda 1977, 1:58–59.

5. Hart and Biddle 1911, 226–227; also see Kimball 1950, 63–66.

6. Hart and Biddle 1911, 227.

7. Hart and Biddle 1911, 228–229.

8. Hart and Biddle 1911, 229–230.

9. Letter from Jefferson to Governor Patrick Henry, 24 Aug. 1785 (see Hart and Biddle 1911, 232).

10. Letter from Barclay to Governor Patrick Henry (see Hart and Biddle 1911, 231–232).

11. Hart and Biddle 1911, 232.

12. For a description of the event see Thiéry 1787, 2:684–686.

13. Stanley J. Idzerda, “Lafayette, Apostle of Liberty,” in Flushing 1989, 19.

14. Louis Réau, *L’Art français aux Etats-Unis* (Paris, 1926), 27.

15. Chinard 1930, xxi.

16. See Monticello 1993, 215, 451 n. 2; Jefferson Papers (ed. 1993), 25:873. The bust has been painted white several times, but tests by Tony Sigel at the Straus Center for Conservation, Harvard University Art Museums, have revealed the original terracotta color.

17. Guilbert Chinard, ed., *The Letters of Lafayette and Jefferson* (Baltimore and Paris, 1929), 56.

## + George Washington (1732–1799)

Late 1780s

White marble on white marble base

H. 48.58 cm (with base: 59.69 cm), W. 33.66 cm, D. 19.05 cm

Inscribed on truncation of proper right shoulder: *houdon. f.*

Los Angeles County Museum of Art, purchased with funds provided by Anna Bing Arnold (inv. M.76.106)

Houdon considered his portrait of George Washington the most important commission of his career. It followed the American war of independence and the signing of the peace treaty by America, France, and England in 1783, and it was born of the desire on the part of Congress and the Virginia legislature to recognize Washington's extraordinary contribution: "Uniting to the Endowments of the Hero the Virtues of the Patriot And exerting both in establishing the liberties of his country."<sup>1</sup> Initially, Houdon thought he would be able to realize his dream of creating a life-size bronze equestrian statue, as Congress had voted in 1783 to erect such a monument to Washington,<sup>2</sup> and Thomas Jefferson recommended Houdon for the work. Because of the war debt, however, the equestrian project was postponed and eventually abandoned.

On 22 June 1784 the Virginia legislature voted for another monument: "a statue of General Washington, to be of the finest marble and the best workmanship."<sup>3</sup> Benjamin Franklin joined Jefferson in recommending that Houdon be given the commission. Jefferson wrote to Washington from Paris on 10 December 1784, "I find that a Monsieur Houdon of this place, possesses the reputation of being the first statuary in the world."<sup>4</sup> Unlike Houdon's other American sitters, Washington had never been

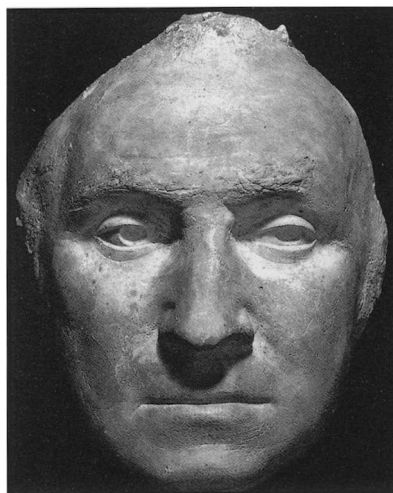
to Europe and had no desire to travel there after the war. Thus Governor Harrison of Virginia asked the American artist Charles Willson Peale to paint a full-length portrait of Washington to serve as a model for the sculptor. Peale finished the painting by the end of October 1784, and Jefferson wrote on 15 April 1785 that it had arrived safely in Paris.<sup>5</sup> But Houdon told Jefferson he would not undertake the work without studying Washington from life, and he offered to travel to America to do so. Jefferson reported to Washington, "He thinks that being there three weeks with you would suffice to make his model of plaister [*sic*], with which he will return here, and the work will employ him three years."<sup>6</sup> Jefferson, aware of Houdon's strong desire to do an equestrian monument as well as the statue, wrote, "Nothing but the expectations of this [equestrian monument] could have engaged him to have undertaken this voyage, as the pedestrian statue for Virginia will not make it worth the business he loses by absenting himself. I was therefore obliged to assure him of my recommendations for this greater work. Having acted in this for the State, you will, I hope, think yourselves in some measure bound to patronize and urge his being employed by Congress."<sup>7</sup>

Houdon and Franklin sailed together from Le Havre on 28 July 1785, arriving in Philadelphia on 14 September.<sup>8</sup> Houdon

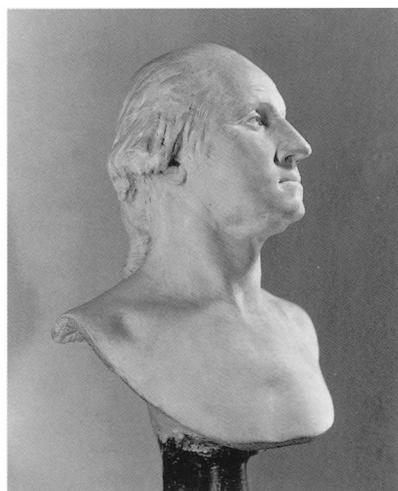




1. Houdon,  
Life Mask of  
George Washington,  
1785, plaster painted  
terracotta color,  
Pierpont Morgan  
Library, New York.



2. Houdon, Bust of  
George Washington,  
1785, low-fired clay,  
Mount Vernon,  
Virginia, gift of the  
Mount Vernon Ladies'  
Association.



traveled to Mount Vernon with three assistants and stayed there from 2 to 19 October, making a life mask of Washington (fig. 1), modeling a clay bust (fig. 2), and taking careful measurements for the full figure. He returned to Paris with the life mask on Christmas day, and his workmen brought the plaster bust and molds for the bust a little later.<sup>9</sup> Houdon's statue and busts of Washington all derive from these two works. By 16 December 1786 he had started to display the bust of Washington in his studio, and by 27 January 1787 it was reportedly finished and announced for the Salon.<sup>10</sup> It is not reported which model the sculptor exhibited, but none of the known busts by Houdon shows Washington in military uniform: they are "à l'antique," like that at Mount Vernon; in a tunic and toga, as seen here; or, more rarely, in a simple shirt and scarf.

Houdon prepared models of the full statue in both antique and contemporary dress,<sup>11</sup> and Washington, who expressed a slight preference for the latter, was finally depicted in his military uniform as commander in chief of the revolutionary army (fig. 3).<sup>12</sup> Houdon combined the contemporary costume with symbolic accoutrements, similar to those in his statue of the *maréchal de Tourville* (see cats. 52–53), exhibited at the Salon of 1781. Although the statue of Washington is a less baroque composition, the *Tourville* was in many ways a prototype. The military hero is shown standing; having hung up his sword and cloak on the fasces, a Roman symbol for authority, which here consists of thirteen rods representing the thirteen states, he takes up his walking stick, on which he rests his gloved right hand. The decision of the victorious military hero to trade his sword for a plowshare was seen in both France and America as recalling the life of the fifth-century BC Roman soldier Lucius Quintus Cincinnatus, who was revered for having relinquished military power to retire to his farm. The plow that appears behind Washington alludes to this parallel. The statue was not completed until 1792; Houdon exhibited a small plaster model of it at the Salon of 1793; and the marble statue was installed in the capitol building in Richmond in 1796.

The present marble bust is from the same model as the terracotta at the Louvre and the plaster at the National Gallery of Art. None is dated,<sup>13</sup> but all three were probably executed in the late 1780s when Houdon was completing the statue of Washington. Compared with the statue, this bust is more introspective and less haughty, with the head leaning forward and slightly to the right. The hair is short and carved in loose irregular strands, in contrast to that seen in the statue, which is long and tied at the nape of the neck in the eighteenth-century style. The antique Roman costume—a simple pleated tunic, a toga draped over the left shoulder, a band diagonally across the chest, presumably meant to carry a sword—gives Washington a look of timeless wisdom and personal sacrifice. His brow is furrowed, his eyes deeply carved with the pupil receding slightly under the lid, and his mouth softly modeled. Houdon used this costume again in the marble bust of Washington made for the Gallery of Consuls at the Tuileries in 1801, but in it the subject's features are hardened, his face colder and more distant, while the sculptor expended his skill on the decorative detail of the band across the chest and the chiseled striations on the sides and back of the sculpture.

Houdon's portraits established the primary iconography for Washington in Europe and America and were copied and

imitated by many sculptors in the nineteenth century, particularly in the United States (see Related Works). Houdon himself was asked to produce between one and two hundred plaster busts of Washington by Rodolphe-Ferdinand Grand in 1804, a contract that was apparently never fulfilled.

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#### PROVENANCE

Reportedly from the comte Henri de Bayle de Malmont at château de La Tour du Vert, cousin and aide-de-camp of the marquis de Lafayette [unverified]; by descent to the comtesse de Fontgalland by 1931 (letter from her sister Louise Marguerite de Lagrevol, Montelimar, 25 Aug. 1931; copy in LACMA archives); acquired by Mrs. Thomas S. Kelly, née Sarah Hunter, New York, before 1964; purchased from her by the museum (through Richard Feigen, New York) in 1976 with funds provided by Anna Bing Arnold.

#### EXHIBITIONS

Worcester 1964, 86–90, ill.; Washington 1976, 108, 366, no. 172, ill.

#### REFERENCES

Fritz Neugass, "Houdon und seine amerikanischen Auftraggeber," *Weltkunst* 34, no. 5 (Mar. 1964), 133–134, ill.; Arnason 1975, 77, fig. 156, pl. 95; Eleanor H. Gustafson, "Museum Accessions," *The Magazine Antiques* 3, no. 2 (Feb. 1977), 298, ill.; "Principales Acquisitions des musées en 1975," *La Chronique des arts*, no. 1298 (Mar. 1977), 55, fig. 225; *Los Angeles County Museum of Art Handbook* (Los Angeles, 1977), no. 100; *Los Angeles County Museum of Art Report [1975–1977]* (Los Angeles, 1978), 27–29, ill.; Scott Schaefer, "Three Centuries of European Sculpture: Bandini to Bartholdi," *Apollo* (Nov. 1986), 416–417, fig. 4; Scott Schaefer and Peter Fusco, *European Painting and Sculpture in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art* (Los Angeles, 1987), 141, ill.

#### RELATED WORKS

The bibliography for Houdon's portraits of Washington is vast. Primary sources are Elizabeth Bryant Johnston, *Original Portraits of Washington, including Statues, Monuments, and Medals* (Boston, 1882), 153–169; Chinard 1930; John Hill Morgan and Mantle Fielding, *Life Portraits of Washington and Their Replicas* (Philadelphia, 1931), 89–113; Gustavus A. Eisen, *Portraits of Washington* (New York, 1932), 3:757–818 (Houdon), 818–836 (copies after Houdon); and Réau 1964, 1:46, no. 204, 2:85–86, 405–406 (busts); 1:19–20, no. 36, pl. XXXII, 2:57–64, 281–289 (statue). A partial list of known or documented works follows.

#### Mask

Pierpont Morgan Library, New York (inv. AZ129) (fig. 1); H. 23.4 cm, W. 18.8 cm; plaster painted terracotta color. Supposedly in Houdon's posthumous sale, Paris, 15–17 Dec. 1828 (perhaps under no. 73: "Un grand nombre de masques de personnages célèbres, la plupart moulés de leur vivant"); acquired by Robert Walsh; passed on to Philadelphia sculptors John Struthers



3. Houdon, Statue of George Washington, 1792, white marble, Capitol Building, Richmond, Virginia, Collection of the Library of Virginia.

and Ferdinand Pettrich (1798–1872); Pettrich took it to Rome (see memorandum of 1839 in Pierpont Morgan Library archives), where it was acquired from Pettrich's widow by William Wetmore Story in 1872 (see W. W. Story, "The Mask of Washington," *Harper's Weekly* [26 Feb. 1887], 144–146, ill.); sold by his son Waldo Story to J. Pierpont Morgan by 1930 (see Johnston 1882, 168–169; and Eisen 1932, 3:767–777, pls. 199, 219–221).

A mask of Washington was seen in Houdon's studio by Rembrandt Peale in 1808 (see Hart and Biddle 1911, 201; Morgan and Fielding 1931, 92).

#### Copies

Several "masks" in plaster, probably cast after a marble bust (possibly by a French artist in London named Deville). Most renowned is the Leutze-Stellwagen mask, private collection, Virginia; see Gustavus Eisen and Wilford S. Cronow, "The Leutze-Stellwagen Mask of Washington in the Corcoran Gallery of Art and Its Connections," *Art and Archeology* 29 (1930), 65–75; cf. Johnston 1882, 164; Morgan and Fielding 1931, 97–98; Eisen 1932, 3:783–786, pls. 198, 200–201, 204, 222–223.

#### Original low-fired clay model

Mount Vernon, Virginia (fig. 2); H. 70.48 (with base: 81.28 cm), W. 31.75 cm, D. 20.16 cm; on plaster base; inscribed on truncation of proper right

shoulder: "HOUDON F. 1785"; in Washington's study by 1787 and listed there in inventory of 1810 as "plaster from the life (\$100)" (Eugene E. Prussing, *The Estate of George Washington, Deceased* [Boston, 1927], 107, 417); presented to the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association by Colonel John A. Washington, 1860 (Charles Seymour, "Houdon's Washington at Mount Vernon Re-Examined," *GBA* 35, no. 973 [Mar. 1948], 137–158, and references therein).

#### Plasters

Houdon immediately made at least one plaster cast of the Mount Vernon bust, which he presented to Franklin in Philadelphia and showed to Congress in New York before departing for Paris. It was returned to Franklin by 30 Nov. 1785 and has since disappeared. The molds for the bust were sent to Paris with Houdon's assistants, arriving in May 1786 (contemporary documents and eyewitness descriptions published in Hart and Biddle 1911, 203–206).

Mid-nineteenth-century reproduction by Clarke Mills; presented by Mills to Colonel John A. Washington before 1859 and installed in the library at Mount Vernon (Seymour 1948, 147–150, fig. 11; see also Morgan and Fielding 1931, 112).

Houdon's Mount Vernon bust was used as a model by American sculptor Henry Kirke Brown for his 1835–1856 bronze equestrian statue of Washington (John S. Hallam, "Houdon's *Washington* in Richmond: Some New Observations," *The American Art Journal* 10, no. 2 [Nov. 1978], 75).

#### Extant busts "à l'antique," without drapery

##### Plaster

Boston Athenaeum (inv. UH 150); H. 51 cm (with truncated base: 54.5 cm), W. 36.4 cm, D. 28.7 cm; plaster originally painted terracotta color, now painted white; remains of *cachet de l'atelier* on central back support; acquired by Jefferson from Houdon in 1789 and shipped to the U.S. on his return from France that fall; installed in Tea Room at Monticello, along with Houdon's busts of Lafayette, Franklin, and John Paul Jones; all four busts probably acquired at his posthumous sale, Jan. 1827, by Joseph Coolidge Jr., husband of Jefferson's granddaughter Ellen Randolph; deposited by him at Boston Athenaeum in 1828 (accepted along with busts of Franklin and Jones, 11 Mar.); full ownership assigned to Athenaeum by Coolidge descendants in 1912. See Monticello 1993, 68–69, 88, 220 n. 3, 436, 451 n. 14.

##### Marble

Nationalmuseum, Stockholm (inv. NM SK 1115); H. 49.9 cm (with base: 64.2 cm), W. 37.6 cm; acquired by German art dealer Julius Böhler in Berlin, ca. 1918; sold from his Munich gallery to Axel Beskow, art dealer in Stockholm (250,000 marks or 100,000 Swedish crowns); exhibited at the Nationalmuseum; bought by Baron Hjalmar Linder and donated to the museum in 1918 (162,000 crowns) (Eisen 1932, 3:803–808, pls. 192, 207, 227; Cleveland 1975, no. 192, ill.).

##### Boilly paintings

In Boilly's Cherbourg and Paris paintings of Houdon's studio (see cat. 66) a terracotta-colored bust of Washington is on the lower right-hand shelf behind the *Seated Voltaire*.

#### Extant busts "à l'antique," with drapery

##### Terracotta

Musée du Louvre, Paris (inv. RF 350); H. 43.7 cm (with base: 56 cm), W. 32 cm, D. 26.9 cm; collection of François-Hippolyte Walferdin (1795–1880);

donated to the museum by his heirs, 23 Mar. 1880 (Louvre cat. 1998, 2:423, ill.). Plaster reproductions made by Louvre workshop (see Rionnet 1996, 268, no. 1132).

##### Plaster

National Gallery of Art, Washington (inv. 1991.199.1); H. (with base) 53 cm; painted grayish green; *cachet de l'atelier* on center back; cast from a piece mold, base cast separately and attached; J. M. Bouvier Collection, Paris; French and Co.; Newhouse Galleries, New York; Middendorf Collection, Washington, DC (see Arnason 1975, 77, fig. 155); donated by Robert L. McNeil Jr. in 1991.

##### Marble on herm-shaped base

Musée national du château de Versailles (inv. MV 630; MR 2190); H. (with rectangular self-base) 63 cm, W. 41 cm, D. 32 cm; inscribed on proper right side: "houdon an 9" [1800–1801]; on front of plinth: "WASHINGTON"; ordered by minister of the interior Lucien Bonaparte for the Galerie des Consuls, Tuileries palace, Apr. 1800 (François-Alphonse Aulard, *Paris sous le Consulat* [Paris, 1909], 1:267); placed at Fontainebleau in 1805; entered museum collection in 1834 (Versailles cat. 1993, 374, no. 1751, ill.).

##### Bronze

Barbedienne made casts of this model in the nineteenth century; example in the New-York Historical Society (inv. 1959.29); H. (with base) 53.02 cm, W. 31.43 cm; inscribed before casting: on right edge "Houdon," on upper back: "F. BARBEDIENNE. FONDEUR."

#### Bust in shirt and scarf

Formerly Schloss Rheinsberg, collection of Prince Henry of Prussia; plaster or terracotta; documented in photograph of tower room (second floor of palace) ca. 1930; whereabouts unknown (see Rheinsberg 2002, ill. p. 443).

Fondation Josée et René de Chambrun, château de La Grange; terracotta on white and gray marble base; H. 49 cm (with base: 62.5 cm), W. 37 cm, D. 29 cm; inscribed on base: "Washigton [sic]"; reportedly given to Lafayette by U.S. Congress; at château de La Grange at Lafayette's death in 1834; by inheritance to his daughter Virginie, wife of Jules de Lasteyrie; by inheritance to her daughter Pauline (1807–1882), wife of the comte Charles de Rémusat; bequeathed to the Fondation Josée and René de Chambrun by Mme Rémusat in 1963. The author would like to thank Guilhem Scherf for providing this information. See also Rheinsberg 2002, ill. p. 445.

#### Documented busts (undesignated type)

Houdon intended to execute 100–200 plaster casts of his bust of Washington for 2 louis each (letter from Houdon to Grand, 9 Apr. 1804 [20 Germinal an XII]). The following day Grand wrote to Houdon postponing the commission for financial reasons (BMV, F 946, nos. 80 and 81).

Anonymous sale, Paris, 13 Dec. 1824, plaster (with Voltaire and Franklin); posthumous sale of contents of Houdon's studio, Paris, 15–17 Dec. 1828, 17, no. 35, plaster.

#### Misattribution

New-York Historical Society (inv. 1832.4); plaster; H. 59.69 cm; bust with drapery in toga style; in Philadelphia in 1814, as entirely or partly (drapery) made by "modeller" G. M. Miller of Philadelphia (Fourth Annual Exhibition of the Columbian Society of Artists and the Pennsylvania Academy, no. 4; see Morgan and Fielding 1931, 100); donated by David Hosack in 1832 as coming from Houdon's posthumous sale of 1828 (Eisen 1932, 3:757; *Catalogue*

of *American Portraits in the New-York Historical Society* [New Haven and London, 1974], 2:859–860, no. 2179, ill.; cf. Seymour 1948, 156–157 n. 36, fig. 15).

#### Medal and engravings

Medal engraved by Benjamin Duvivier, commissioned by U.S. Congress to commemorate the evacuation of Boston by British forces in 1776. Obverse shows Washington in right-facing profile, after Houdon's bust. See Joseph F. Loubat, *The Medalllic History of the United States of America, 1776–1876* (New York, 1878), 1–7, no. 1, pl. 1; Nocq 1911, 99, 200–201, no. 188, pl. XVI; and Frances Davis Whittemore, *George Washington in Sculpture* (Boston, 1933), 14–19, pl. IV.

Engraving by Alexandre Tardieu, ca. 1790, in profile similar to that on medal.

Engraving by Antoine Louis François Sérgent, after miniature by the marchioness de Bréhan; in profile with laurel wreath. See Wendy C. Wick, *George Washington. An American Icon. The Eighteenth-Century Graphic Portraits* [exh. cat., National Portrait Gallery] (Washington, DC, 1982), 48–49, ill.

#### Statue

Capitol Building, Richmond, Virginia (fig. 3); H. 187.96 cm; white marble; inscribed on base: on front "WASHINGTON," and along proper right edge "fait par. houdon. Citoyen. français, 1788." Finished by Nov. 1792, as Houdon held a public viewing in his studio, 1–15 Dec. 1792 (*Journal de Paris nationale* 335 [30 Nov. 1792], 224); installed in rotunda of Capitol Building, 14 May 1796 (Johnston 1882, 153–164; Hart and Biddle 1911, 208–225; Morgan and Fielding 1931, 109, no. 1, ill.; Eisen 1932, 813–815S).

The Commune of Paris resolved on 20 Feb. 1792 to give Lafayette a marble statue of Washington by Houdon, executed "after the model of that he made for the United States of America," for 12,000 livres plus 4,000 livres for the marble (BMV, F 946, p. 83–89). Because of the rapid radicalization of the Revolution, it is doubtful that this commission was ever carried out.

#### Model

Salon cat. 1793, 72, no. 122: "Le Général Washington, Statue esquisse en plâtre, d'environ 1 pied."

#### Boilly paintings

A terracotta-colored model for the statue of Washington, in which he wears contemporary civilian clothes, can be seen on the lower back shelf of both paintings, just above the head of the *Seated Voltaire* (cat. 66).

#### Reproductions

See Ronald E. Heaton, *The Image of Washington: The History of the Houdon Statue* (Norristown, PA, 1971): Boston Athenaeum (inv. UH 7.1847), plaster cast by Francesco Cecchi, 1847 (see Harding 1984, 84); six bronze casts, 1856–1860, by William J. Hubbard, Richmond (placed in Lexington, VA; Raleigh, NC; Columbia, SC; New York City; St. Louis, MO; originally Richmond, now Oxford, OH); plaster cast by Hubbard (Statuary Hall, The Capitol, Washington, DC); sixteen bronze casts, 1909–1969, by Gorham Co., New York.



Signature on cat. 47

1. Part of the inscription, written by James Madison, to be carved on the pedestal; see Hart and Biddle 1911, 182.

2. For documents relating to this commission see Réau 1964, 1:63–64.

3. Hart and Biddle 1911, 182.

4. Hart and Biddle 1911, 186; Réau 1964, 1:57.

5. Morgan and Fielding 1931, 36, no. 30, ill.; the portrait has since disappeared.

6. Morgan and Fielding 1931, 90.

7. Heaton 1971, 8–9.

8. For documents relating to the commission and the trip see Hart and Biddle 1911, 182–225; Réau 1964, 1:57–62.

9. Hart and Biddle 1911, 206.

10. Salon of 1787, 51, no. 259: "Le Général Washington, fait par l'Auteur dans la Terre de ce Général en Virginie"; see Bachaumont 1780–1786, 33:274, letter of 16 Dec. 1786; and 34:82–83, letter of 27 Jan. 1787.

11. See Von Halem (ed. 1990), 188–189, describing a 1790 visit to Houdon's studio, where he saw the finished model of the statue and a reduced model of the rejected version in antique dress; see also Friedrich Johann Lorenz Meyer, *Fragmente aus Paris im IVten Jahr der französischen Republik* (Hamburg, 1797), 2:236–238.

12 Réau 1964, 1:60.

13 Réau 1964, 2:46, no. 204E, pl. XCII, mistakenly published the Louvre bust as being dated 1786. It is neither signed nor dated (Louvre cat. 1998, 2:423, ill.).

## + Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826)

1789

White marble on white marble base

H. 56.5 cm (with base: 70.2 cm), W. 48 cm, D. 26 cm

Signed on truncation of proper right shoulder: *houdon f 1789*

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, George Nixon Black Fund (inv. 1934.129)

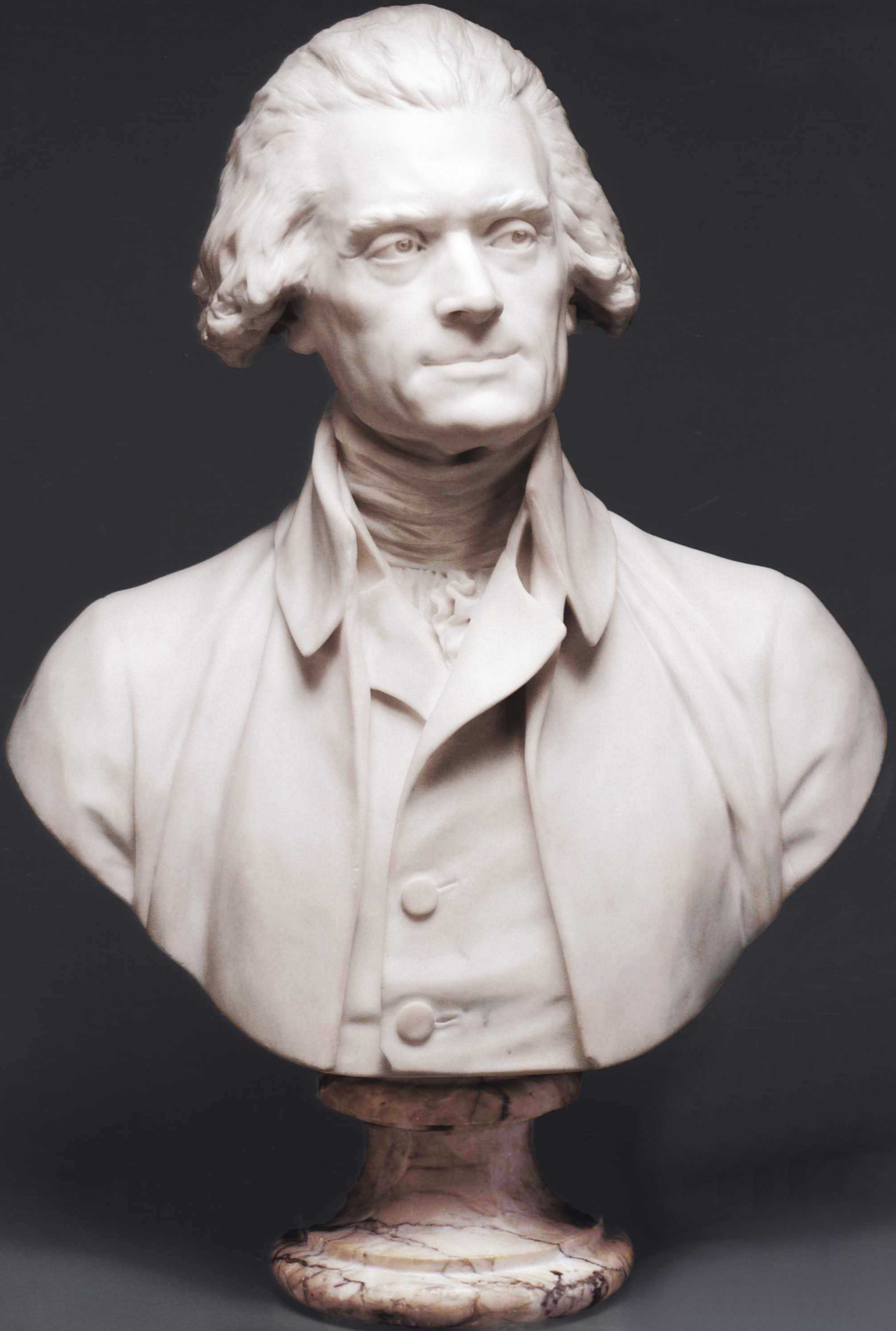
Thomas Jefferson was forty-one years old and a recent widower when he went to France in the spring of 1784. Following the American war of independence, Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, and he were sent to Paris to negotiate trade agreements and strengthen political ties. Jefferson was captivated by the aesthetic and intellectual atmosphere of the city and was soon visiting its architectural monuments, gardens, musical events, salons, and artists' studios, including that of Houdon. In July 1785 Jefferson became American minister to the court of France, replacing his great friend Franklin. In October he moved into the Hôtel Langeac, a beautiful house on the Champs Élysées designed in 1768 by the French architect Jean-François-Thérèse Chalgrin,<sup>1</sup> which became a social center for Enlightenment intellectuals and visiting Americans. It was within easy walking distance of the Faubourg du Roule, where Houdon lived and worked.

Jefferson probably met Houdon through Franklin shortly after arriving in Paris in August 1784. Franklin had already had his portrait modeled by the sculptor in 1778 (see cat. 43), and both he and Houdon were members of the masonic Loge des Neuf Soeurs (for which Houdon had also executed the bust of John Paul Jones in 1780; see cat. 44). Just as Jefferson was

settling in Paris, he learned of the Virginia Assembly's decision to have a marble statue made of George Washington that "should be the work of the most masterly hand," and he was asked "to find out the best in any of the European states."<sup>2</sup> Jefferson wrote to Washington in December to recommend Houdon, adding, "I sent for him and had some conversation on the subject."<sup>3</sup> Jefferson and Franklin worked closely with Houdon to make arrangements for payment, the size and iconography of the statue, and the sculptor's trip to America in 1785 (see cat. 47). Jefferson was later asked to have Houdon carve two marble portraits of his good friend Lafayette, commissioned by the Virginia legislature the same year (see cat. 46).

All of the arts interested Jefferson, and he collected passionately while in Paris,<sup>4</sup> visiting auction houses and dealers as well as the Salon exhibition of 1787<sup>5</sup> (and probably those of 1785 and 1789), where he admired paintings by Jacques-Louis David and Hubert Robert and saw Houdon's portraits of Lafayette, Washington, Louis XVI, and Prince Henry of Prussia (see cats. 50 and 54). Even before he went to France, he had compiled a list of fourteen classical sculptures, copies of which he hoped to acquire.<sup>6</sup>

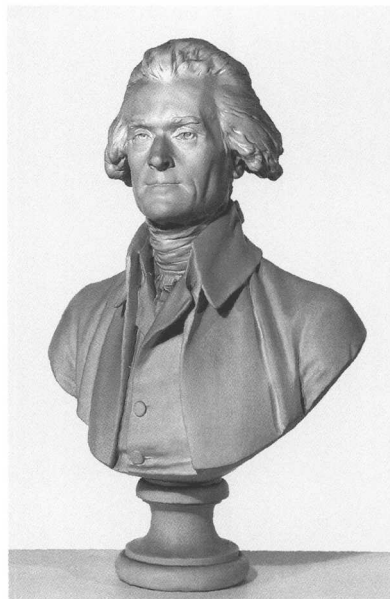
The circumstances under which Houdon modeled the bust of Jefferson are not recorded, probably because the two men



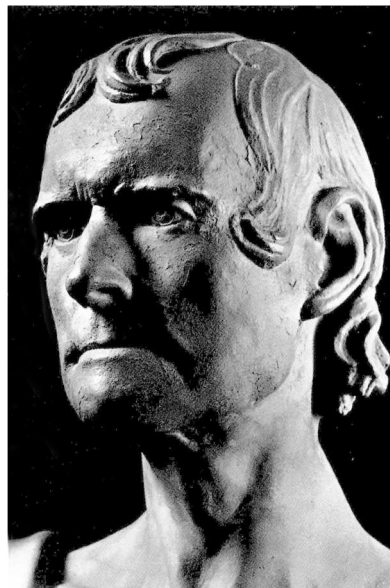
made casual arrangements, sometime in the first half of 1789, either at the sculptor's or the sitter's initiative. In the Salon that opened on 25 August that year, Houdon exhibited a plaster bust of "M. Sefferson [*sic*], Envoyé des Etas de Virginie."<sup>7</sup> Although no life mask of Jefferson by Houdon is known, Jefferson many years later strongly implied that one was made in preparation for the bust, just as Houdon had done for his portraits of Washington and Lafayette. A letter from Jefferson to James Madison mentioned a life mask that the American sculptor John H.I. Browere had taken of him (see fig. 2),<sup>8</sup> recalling that "Browere . . . said his operation would be of about 20 minutes and less unpleasant than Houdon's method."<sup>9</sup> Houdon's bust of Jefferson was considered an excellent likeness, as noted in a Salon review: "M. Houdon . . . distinguished himself in the portrait of M. Jefferson, expressing his lively and witty character."<sup>10</sup>

The present marble bust is signed and dated 1789, coinciding with the year of both the Salon exhibition of the plaster and Jefferson's departure from Paris. Following the same format as the known plasters, this portrait shows the famous American in contemporary costume, wearing a pleated cravat with a ruffled jabot and a plain vest and coat. His natural hair is long, full, and slightly curled over his ears, and pulled back, tied, and wrapped with a ribbon at the nape of his neck. Houdon cut the bust at midchest, curving it to include the sitter's upper arms. The facial expression projects determination, while the deeply carved eyes, which look beyond the viewer, convey both intelligence and introspection. The modeling of the aging skin over the strong bone structure of the cheeks and jaw is particularly sensitive. As is often true of Houdon's premier marbles, the back of the truncation has delicately chiseled vertical striations, giving it a decorative, refined quality. The marble bust is said to have come from the collection of Jefferson's friend, the liberal French nobleman Destutt de Tracy, but no early documents have been found to confirm his ownership. Like Lafayette, Destutt de Tracy was an aristocrat who renounced his title and joined the Third Estate in 1789. He was elected to the Constituent Assembly, then served in the army in 1792 under Lafayette. Jefferson, as author of the American Declaration of Independence, was a hero to both men, and it would not be surprising if one of them acquired his bust in marble in the crucial year of 1789.

Several plaster busts of Jefferson with early histories have survived (see fig. 1). Apparently Jefferson displayed a bust of himself, presumably by Houdon, in the salon of the Hôtel Langeac in Paris; this work was either given to or purchased by his Paris banker, Rodolphe-Ferdinand Grand, who took it with him to



1. Houdon, Thomas Jefferson, ca. 1789, plaster, New-York Historical Society



2. John H.I. Browere, Life Mask of Thomas Jefferson (*detail*), 15 Oct. 1825, painted plaster, New York State Historical Association, Cooperstown, New York.

Lausanne, Switzerland, in 1794.<sup>11</sup> Before leaving Paris in 1789, Jefferson ordered at least seven terracotta-colored plaster busts from Houdon—including portraits of Franklin, Lafayette, Washington, Jacques Turgot, Voltaire, and himself<sup>12</sup>—with the intention of forming a "gallery of worthies" at Monticello in the Roman fashion.<sup>13</sup> He gave one portrait of himself to David Rittenhouse in 1793.



Many artists portrayed Jefferson throughout his long life, but Houdon's bust has had the greatest impact.<sup>14</sup> It was used for the profile on the obverse of the Jefferson dollar, minted in 1903 to commemorate the centennial of the Louisiana Purchase, and it was chosen again in 1938 for the obverse of the American nickel, a coin still in circulation today.<sup>15</sup>

ANNE L. POULET



Back view of cat. 48

#### PROVENANCE

Supposedly from Count Antoine-Louis-Claude Destutt de Tracy (1754–1836), a philosopher, author, and friend of the sitter, at chateau de Paray, Melun, France; by inheritance to Destutt de Tracy's son-in-law, Louis Léopold Le Clercq de Chateaueux, Melun, by 1839; passed on to his son Ferdinand in 1868 and his grandson "P." in 1916 [unverified] (letter of 3 May 1934 from P. Le Clercq de Chateaueux, MFA curatorial files); with the art dealer Jean L. Souffrice, Neuilly-sur-Seine, by 1932 (his certificate of expertise, 3 Oct. 1932, in MFA files); acquired by the museum (through Jacques Furst) from Marie Sterner Gallery, New York, 5 Apr. 1934.

#### EXHIBITIONS

*Sculpture by Houdon, Paintings and Drawings by David* [exh. cat., The Century Association] (New York, 1947), no. 2, ill.; *The French in America 1520–1880* [exh. cat., The Detroit Institute of Arts] (Detroit, 1951), 117–118, no. 290; Alfred L. Bush, *The Life Portraits of Thomas Jefferson* [exh. cat., University of Virginia, Museum of Fine Arts] (Charlottesville, 1962), 23–26, no. 4, ill. p. 24; Worcester 1964, 102–105, ill.; *Western Art* [exh. cat., Museum of Fine Arts] (Boston, 1971), 186, no. 84, ill.; London 1972, 249, no. 385, pl. 54; Washington 1976, xl, 352, no. 1, ill.; New York 1981, no. 7.

#### REFERENCES

Edwin J. Hipkiss, "Portrait Sculpture by Houdon," *Bulletin of the Museum of Fine Arts* 32, no. 193 (Oct. 1934), 70–74, ill. p. 72; Fiske Kimball, *The Life Portraits of Jefferson and Their Replicas* (Philadelphia, 1944), 507; Réau 1964, 1:406–407, 2:34, no. 139, pl. LXVIII; Arnason 1975, 86–87, fig. 168, pls. 116–117; Monticello 1993, 230.

#### RELATED WORKS

##### Documented busts

Salon cat. 1789, 50, no. 241: "M. Sefferson, Envoyé des Etas de Virginie" (*Corr. littéraire*, 15:572).

Posthumous sale of the contents of Houdon's studio, Paris, 15–17 Dec. 1828, 18, no. 47.

##### Extant plasters

American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia (inv. 58.S.22); H. 60.3 cm (with base: 73.7 cm), W. 51.9 cm; painted grayish white; scratched into plaster at middle of underside of back: TJ; probably given by Jefferson to David Rittenhouse in 1793 (see letter of 7 Jan. 1793 in Jefferson Papers [ed. 1993], 25:31); gift of Elizabeth Rittenhouse Sergeant from her father's estate, 1811; "bronzed" at the order of the society upon reception; recorded there by Jonathon Williams in 1814, by William Short in 1819 (letter to Jefferson, 21 Oct. 1819, in *Massachusetts Historical Society Collections*, ser. 7, 1900, 1:289, cited in Kimball 1944, 507 n. 42); and in *A Catalogue of Portraits and Other Works of Art in the Possession of the American Philosophical Society* (Philadelphia, 1961), 52–53, fig. 14.

New-York Historical Society (inv. 1939.1) (fig. 1); H. (with base) 71.12 cm, W. 46.04 cm; signed at truncation of proper right shoulder: "houdon f"; given by Mrs. Laura Wolcott Gibbs in 1839; said to have been given by Jefferson to his friend Hugh Williamson (*Catalogue of American Portraits in the New-York Historical Society* [Yale, 1974], 400–401, no. 1049, ill.).

Musée de Blérancourt (inv. 63–C–10); purchased by Edmond Courty, Châtillon-sous-Bagneux; acquired from him by museum in 1963 (Max Terrier, "Le Buste de Thomas Jefferson par Houdon," *Les Amis du Musée de Blérancourt. Jefferson* [Paris, 1965], 6–8).

Thomas Jefferson Foundation, Monticello; painted terracotta color; H. (with base) 73 cm; *cachet de l'atelier* on back; said to have been purchased at Houdon's posthumous sale, Paris, 15–17 Dec. 1828, no. 47, by Comte Perez; by inheritance to the comte Franceschini d'Accianelli; by purchase to J. L. Souffrice, Paris; acquired by Roy Chalk in 1962; Christie's sale, 29 May 1987, 16–19, no. 8, where acquired by Mr. and Mrs. E. G. Nicholson; acquired by Gilder Lehrman Collection in 1993 (see Monticello 1993, 230, no. 101, ill. p. 231); gift of Gilder Lehrman Collection to Monticello in 2001.

#### Modern copies

In the 1940s Caproni Brothers of Boston made at least two plaster copies of the marble in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (report of Arthur Beale in MFA archives).

#### Medal

John Reich, *Indian Peace Medal*, 1801, distributed by Lewis and Clark to important Indian leaders in the course of their expedition; see Jefferson's quote "taken from Houdon's bust" (Washington 1976, xl, 352); and Charlottesville 1962, 25.

#### Boilly paintings

A terracotta-colored bust of Jefferson appears in both of Boilly's paintings of *Houdon in His Studio* (cat. 66) in the center of the lower back shelf.



Signature on cat. 48

1. See Howard C. Rice, *L'Hôtel de Langeac, Jefferson's Paris Residence, 1785–1789* (Paris, 1947).

2. Letter from Governor Harrison, 20 July 1784, cited in Hart and Biddle 1911, 184–185.

3. Letter of 10 Dec. 1784, cited in Hart and Biddle 1911, 186–187.

4. For a discussion of the decorative arts, textiles, paintings, and sculpture amassed by Jefferson in Paris see Monticello 1993, 23–34, 443–444 nn. 27–63.

5. Jefferson described the Salon in a letter to John Trumbull, 30 Aug. 1787; see Jefferson Papers (ed. 1955), 12:69.

6. Monticello 1993, 28–29.

7. Salon cat. 1789, 50, no. 241.

8. See David Meschutt, "A Perfect Likeness": John H.I. Browere's Life Mask of Thomas Jefferson," *The American Art Journal* 21, no. 4 (1989), 5–25, figs. 1, 6, 7.

9. Letter of 18 Oct. 1825, cited in *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, ed. Albert Ellery Bergh (Washington, DC, 1907), 19:287; see also Hart and Biddle 1911, 249, and Kimball 1944, 505.

10. *Journal général de France*, 9 Sept. 1789 (Deloynes XVI, no. 426): "M. Houdon, ce sculpteur, toujours employé avec raison dans le genre, s'est distingué dans le portrait de M. Jefferson, dont il a exprimé le caractère vif et spirituel."

11. The banker Jean-Antoine Gautier wrote Jefferson on 24 Mar. 1795 to inform him of Grand's death the preceding year and to convey a message from Grand's son: "Le Buste dont vous aviez décoré le Salon de Passy, et qui est cher à toute la famille, sera placé dans

le Salon de Sa nouvelle demeure près de Lausanne et toutes les occasions de vous témoigner, Monsieur, le Sentiment que nous conservons de vos bontés, lui seront, comme à moi, véritablement précieuses" (see Jefferson Papers [ed. 2000], 28:317). This may be the marble bust of Jefferson now in Boston. It is the author's intention to consult the Grand family archives.

12. See Monticello 1993, 15–16, 215–223, 451 n. 2.

13. *Jefferson's Memorandum Books: Accounts, with Legal Records and Miscellany, 1767–1826*, ed. James A. Bear Jr. and Lucia C. Stanton (Princeton, 1997), 1:738 n. 68.

14. For a study of the portraits of Jefferson see Charles Henry Hart, "Life Portraits of Thomas Jefferson," *McClure's Magazine* 11, no. 1 (May 1898), 47–55.

15. See Washington 1976, xl, 352, no. 1.



## + Robert Fulton (1765–1815)

1803-1804

White marble on round blue-gray veined marble base

H. 60.4 cm (with base: 73.6 cm), W. 49 cm.

Signed and dated on truncation of proper right shoulder: *houdon fan XII*

The Detroit Institute of Arts, Gift of Dexter M. Ferry Jr. (inv. 49.23)

The last in Houdon's series of portraits of great American men were those of the inventor, artist, and engineer Robert Fulton and of Fulton's intimate friend, the diplomat, entrepreneur, and poet Joel Barlow (fig. 1). Executed in 1803, the two portraits, commissioned when both were living in Paris, may have been conceived as pendants. They were shown together at the Salon of 1804.<sup>1</sup>

Fulton, best known today for his development of commercially viable steamships on the Hudson and Mississippi Rivers, was born on a farm in Little Britain, Pennsylvania, 14 November 1765, to immigrant Scotch-Irish parents.<sup>2</sup> He lost his father when he was six and was educated by his mother and a local schoolmaster. He also read widely as a child. When about fifteen, he was apprenticed to a Philadelphia silversmith, beginning a trade for which he had little inclination. But he managed to buy back his indenture and establish himself as a miniature painter, manifesting at an early age not only his artistic skill but his ambitious and independent nature and his interest in making money. Obtaining a letter of introduction to Benjamin West, the American painter residing in London, he left the United States in late 1786 and did not return until twenty years later. Fulton studied to become a professional artist there and formed

a deep friendship with West and his family, the first in a series of attachments to successful older men. He exhibited at the Royal Academy in the spring of 1791, and a series of portrait commissions followed.

While painting in Devonshire in 1793, Fulton invented an improved marble-cutting and polishing instrument that won a silver medal at the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Commerce and Manufactures in 1794.<sup>3</sup> He became interested in improving the transportation system in the area, particularly the canals, and came up with an ingenious idea for substituting a system of locks. This led him to abandon painting for engineering, a field for which he had a great affinity. In March 1796 he wrote and published *A Treatise on the Improvement of Canal Navigation* . . . , arguing in the preface that invention consists of recombining old parts and concepts in new and better ways, a defense against those who accused him of relying too much on the ideas of others: "the component parts of all new machines may be said to be old; but it is nice discriminating judgment, which discovers that a particular arrangement will produce a new and desired effect . . . [and] is usually dignified with the term Genius."<sup>4</sup> The publication demonstrated his remarkable ability to place his engineering proposals into a visionary global



1. Houdon, Joel Barlow, 1804, marble, White House Collection, Washington, DC.



2. Houdon, Robert Fulton, 1803-1804, plaster painted a terracotta color, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

social, moral, and economical context, prefiguring the industrial revolution in the nineteenth century. The *Treatise* was well received but led to no lucrative projects in England.

Fulton left for France in the summer of 1797. Enjoying the cultural and social life in Paris, he continued proselytizing his theory of canal construction and trying to sell his design for a torpedo-carrying submarine, which he promoted as such an efficient war machine that it would end all threat of war on sea or land. Having failed to convince the English, he took the plan to the French government in December 1797. Although he demonstrated the viability of his submarine, the *Nautilus*, in the Seine and blew up a ship with one of his torpedoes, Napoleon's administration decided not to work with Fulton.

It was also in 1797 that Fulton first met Ruth Baldwin Barlow, then her husband, Joel, who was just returning from serving as American minister to Algiers. A very close relationship developed among them, and they lived together in a harmonious ménage à trois for the next seven years. Barlow was twelve years older than Fulton and a wealthy and influential figure. He provided both financial and emotional support to the young

inventor, who had become famous but had not made the fortune to which he aspired.

Fulton constructed his first steam-powered boat in Paris in August 1803, demonstrating it on the Seine to public acclaim. It may have been partly in celebration of this event that he and Barlow had Houdon model their portraits. The plaster busts of Fulton and Barlow, now in the collection of the National Academy of Design,<sup>5</sup> are both signed and dated "houdon f. an XII" and are inscribed "Fulton / 38 ans" and "Barlow / 50 ans," respectively. It is most unusual for Houdon to include the name and age of the sitter on a bust, suggesting that it was probably done at the request of the sitters and that the busts were conceived as a pair. Both were exhibited by Houdon at the Salon of 1804, but the material was not indicated in the catalogue. Because Houdon usually first showed plasters, executing marbles or bronzes later, it is likely that he did so in this case as well.

Further evidence that the busts were conceived as a pair (and that Fulton owned two examples) is found in an unpublished letter from Barlow to Fulton dated 17 July 1811. Barlow had hoped that Fulton would resume living with him and his wife

in Washington, but Fulton had married Harriet Livingston in January 1808 and was living with her in New York. Barlow wrote, "Have you rec[eive]d—the four boxes.—two of french china & two of busts, yours and mine. I sent you the bill of lading."<sup>6</sup>

Houdon's bust of Fulton is one of his most beautiful late works. In the present marble he has captured the determination and ambition of this extraordinary self-made American as well as his sensitive visionary and artistic character. The sitter's short-cropped, tousled curly hair is carved with romantic flair and contrasts with the simplicity of his vest and coat. As he often did in his early nineteenth century portraits, Houdon played with linear pattern, contrasting the horizontal folds of the cravat with the finely pleated jabot, and he finished the lower part of the truncation with a decorative pattern of horizontal striations, which are continued on the back of the bust. A similar treatment can be found in his 1808 portraits of Napoleon and Josephine (cats. 63, 64).

Most likely it was Joel Barlow who commissioned the marble portraits of Fulton and himself, for Fulton was not in a financial position to pay for them at that time. On 12 June 1813, however, following Barlow's death, when Fulton had made his fortune in partnership with Robert Livingston in a steamboat business in America, he wrote an affectionate letter from New York to Ruth Barlow in Paris:

Hudon [*sic*] you remember did Mr Barlows Bust while I was in Paris. [in margin: "The bust was executed costing 6000 francs which J Barlow now has"] I wish him to do one for me from it in white marble of the best kind and in his best style. provided it can be done for 1000 francs. if so let him set about it immediately and I will remit the money.... I should also like to know what M Hudon would charge for a Bust in his best style of Franklin, Washington, Jefferson, *Barlow* and *Self*. This is fine if he will do them for 5000 francs he may commence and I will remit funds if not please to let me know his price.<sup>7</sup>

It is not known whether or not this commission was carried out. Fulton died only two years later at the age of fifty-two.

ANNE L. POULET

#### PROVENANCE

Supposedly from the family of Vice Admiral Decrès, minister of the navy under Napoleon, at La Chapelle, Vieille Fôret, France [unverified]; by descent to Philippe Decrès; Percy A. Rockefeller, New York; Jonce I. McGurk, New York; by bequest to Mrs. Emilie McGurk Simpson; purchased from Howard Young Gallery, New York (1 East 57th Street); given to the Detroit Institute of Arts by Dexler M. Ferry in 1949.

#### EXHIBITIONS

Worcester 1964, 124–127, ill.; Cleveland 1975, no. 193, ill.

#### REFERENCES

P. L. Grigaut, "Houdon's Marble Bust of Robert Fulton," *Bulletin of the Detroit Institute of Arts* 28, no. 4 (1948–1949), 79–80, ill. cover page; P. L. Grigaut, "A Marble Bust of Robert Fulton by Houdon," *Art Quarterly* 12, no. 3 (summer 1949), 257–262, ill.; Réau 1964, 1:465–467; 2:49, no. 227; Arnason 1975, 100–101, 119 n. 247, fig. 195, pls. 133, 144d; Cynthia Owen Philip, *Robert Fulton, A Biography* (New York, 1985), 151.

#### RELATED WORKS

##### *Unspecified material*

Salon of 1804, 96, no. 639 [probably plaster]. Florence Ingersoll-Smouse, "Houdon en Amérique," *RAAM* 23 (Jan.-June 1914), 287, mistakenly states that the bust shown at the Salon was marble; this is repeated in *Giacometti 1918–1919*, 2:176.



Back view of cat. 49

### Documented plasters

Posthumous sale of contents from Houdon's studio, Paris, 15–17 Dec. 1828, 18, no. 50: "Plâtre. — Buste de R. Furton [sic], inventeur des bateaux à vapeur"; sold along with busts of d'Alembert and Buffon for 9 francs (Réau 1964, 1:119).

Formerly Musée du Louvre, Paris (inv. 3574 F); H. 57 cm; inscribed "Houdon an XII" [1804]; given to the Louvre by M. de Valcour[t] around 1850 (see Clarac 1853, 6:230, no. 3574 F., pl. 1125; and Réau 1924b, 83 n.2). Present location unknown.

### Extant plasters

National Academy of Design, New York (inv. 55–S); painted cream color; H. 60 (with base: 73.2 cm), W. 48.6 cm; signed and dated on truncation of proper right arm: "houdon an XII"; inscribed on truncation of proper left arm: "fulton / 38 ans"; closed back; white seal of the NAD applied in 1909; purchased from American Academy of Fine Arts in 1842 (NAD minutes, 3 May 1909; 7 June 1909; 18 Oct. 1924; see Réau 1964, 2:49, 119 n. 247).

Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (inv. 1989.329) (fig. 2); painted pale beige terracotta color; signed on proper right shoulder: "houdon f"; open at back; differs from the marble in its shorter truncation, costume (a cape worn over the coat), configuration of the ruffle of the jabot, and treatment of the hair. This bust was with Rosenberg & Stiebel, New York, by 1977 (see *Art News* 76, no. 8 [Oct. 1977], 19); collection of Mrs. Sarah Hunter Kelly, New York; sale Christie's, New York, 20 Nov. 1982, no. 317; Wendell Cherry collection; purchased by museum at his sale, Christie's, New York, 1 Dec. 1989, no. 12, through the Wrightsman Fund (see Arnason 1975, 119 n. 247; Washington 1976, 61, 360, no. 108, ill.; and James D.

Draper, in "Recent Acquisitions: A Selection 1989–1990," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 48 [1990], 29–30, ill.).

Dalva Brothers, Inc., New York; white plaster with traces of terracotta color; H. (with base) 73.66 cm, W. 29.53 cm; open at back; inscribed on proper left arm truncation: "R. Fulton," and on proper right arm truncation: "houdon"; differs from other plasters and the marble: younger, gentler expression; hair more pulled back from forehead; jabot fuller, spilling out over the vest and coat; three buttons rather than one on the coat and no lapel below collar; and no decorative striations on the lower front. Reportedly the plaster from Houdon's posthumous sale in 1828 (no. 50); purchased ca. 1838 in Paris by M. Dejean; acquired by the cousin of Alfred de Vigny; in collection of M. Dubosc, Le Havre, in 1919 (Giacometti 1918–1919, 2:176–181; Giacometti 1929, 2:56–59, ill. opp. p. 56; Réau 1964, 1:49, 2:467).

### Modern copies

Musée de la Marine, Paris; marble after the plaster given by M. de Valcour[t] to the Louvre (see Clarac and Maury 1826–1853, 6:230; Jean Destrem, "Musée de la Marine du Louvre," *GBA* 61, 4th ser. [1919], 383; Réau 1964, 2:467; cf. Henry W. Dickinson, *Robert Fulton, Engineer and Artist, His Life and Works* [London, 1913]).

National Academy of Design, New York; plaster and bronze copies after the plaster in their collection in 1909 (NAD archives)

Juv. Williams Co., New York, cast bronze copies after the plaster now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art; an example in the New-York Historical Society (inv. 1909.29); H. 71.76 cm, W. 46.99 cm.



Signature on cat. 49

1. Salon cat. 1804: "638. Buste de M. Barlow. 639. Buste de M. Fulton."

2. For Fulton's biography see Dickinson 1913; and Philip 1985.

3. Philip 1985, 26.

4. Cited in Philip 1985, 47.

5. The portrait of Barlow is painted plaster (inv. 57-S); H. 58.5 cm (with base: 72 cm.), W. 50.2 cm; purchased from the American Academy of Fine Arts in 1842. For the portrait of Fulton see Related Works.

6. Houghton Library, Harvard University, bMSAm 1448 (495).

7. Houghton Library, Harvard University, bMSAm 1448 (676), published in part in Washington 1976, 61, 360.

## + Louis XVI, King of France (1754–1793)

Dated 1790

White marble with self-base

H. 96 cm, W. 74 cm, D. 41 cm

Inscribed on base: HOUDON / F. 1790

Musée national des châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon (inv. MV 1834; MR 2185)

“When King Louis XV died on 10 May 1774, the dauphin was with the dauphine. A terrible noise like thunder was heard in the front room of the apartment: it was the throng of courtiers deserting the expired king’s antechamber and coming to pay tribute to the young king’s new power. He reportedly exclaimed at the time: ‘What a burden! And no one’s taught me anything. I feel as if the universe is about to fall on me.’”<sup>1</sup> D’Angiviller hired the painter Joseph Siffred Duplessis and the sculptor Augustin Pajou to do the king’s official portraits (see fig. 1). At the Salon of 1777 Pajou’s bust of Louis XVI was displayed beside one by Louis-Simon Boizot (fig. 2). The following year the members of the stock exchange wrote d’Angiviller to request the marble for a bust of the king that they would commission from Houdon. In a letter of 15 November 1784 Houdon reminded d’Angiviller of the audience he had requested with the king and told him of the stroke of luck “that procured me a visit from M. Thierry [the king’s personal valet], whom I had not had the honor of knowing and to whom I replied, when he asked me if I had already done the bust of His Majesty, that I was hired three years ago to do it for an organization and was still waiting to be provided with the opportunity to see the king.”<sup>2</sup> Houdon exhibited the marble bust at the Salon of 1787 (no. 252).

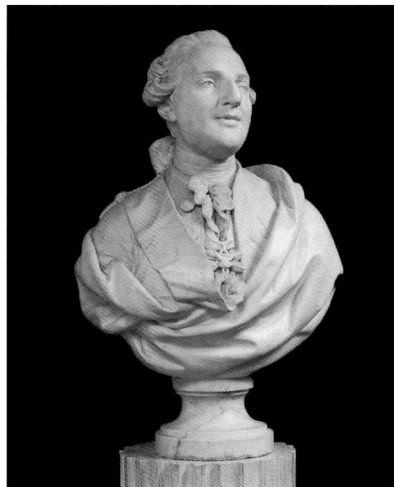
Louis XVI was thirty-three years old when the 1787 bust was done, and he was physically unattractive, his body heavy from overeating; he had “solid good sense, wit, but a weakness of character that led him to yield easily to everyone’s advice.”<sup>3</sup> “To get an idea of his personality,” said his brother the comte d’Artois, “imagine lubricated balls of ivory that you struggle in vain to keep together.” Creating a noble portrait of him was a challenge, but Houdon sculpted the monarch in half-length, his head slightly raised and turned toward his right, wearing a wig with two long curls tied in a ribbon at the nape of his neck. With his courtly attire he wore the jewel of the Order of the Golden Fleece attached by a simple ribbon to a watered silk sash across his chest;<sup>4</sup> a vast mantle embroidered with the badge of the Order of the Holy Spirit enveloped his shoulders and flowed around the base of the sculpture. He is portrayed gazing into the distance. This arrangement, the baroque effect of the drapery—which Houdon also used, at the same Salon, in the busts of Pierre André de Suffren and François-Claude-Amour, marquis de Bouillé<sup>5</sup>—and the meticulous representation of the watered silk and the embroidery made one forget the monarch’s shortcomings and conferred on him a certain majesty. But the Salon critics were not fooled: “Here is the king: his popularity and







1. Augustin Pajou,  
Louis XVI, King of  
France, 1779, marble,  
*Musée national du  
château de Versailles.*



2. Louis-Simon Boizot,  
Louis XVI, King of  
France, 1777, marble,  
*Musée national du  
château de Versailles.*

modesty are rendered through the affectation of mixing him in with the others [busts], and even of placing him at the far end, where he is apt to be jostled and knocked over by all the passersby.”<sup>6</sup>

In 1787 the power of the monarchy was deteriorating. On 23 June 1789, before the deputies of the Estates General, Louis XVI spoke for the last time as the one in charge. Then came 14 July, the October riots, and the royal family’s forced return to Paris from Varennes. A year later, on 14 July 1790, the Feast of the Federation featured a “regenerated society” in which it still seemed possible to unite the Nation, the Law, and the King. It

was within this context that the last commissions for busts of the sovereign came from the municipalities: Houdon competed with Boizot and Louis-Pierre Deseine in Paris and Strasbourg.<sup>7</sup> The bust he executed for the Paris city hall was a replica of the one he had exhibited in 1787; and it may have been destroyed on 10 August 1792, when “a member of the assembly proposed knocking down the busts of Louis XVI, Bailly, La Fayette, Necker, all charlatans of patriotism, whose presence is painful to the eyes of good citizens. . . . Forty arms rose up as one to cast down those false idols: they fell and were reduced to dust amid thunderous applause from the gallery.”<sup>8</sup>

In 1816 a bust of Louis XVI by Houdon was displayed alongside one of Marie-Antoinette by Félix Lecomte at the *Musée des monuments français* (nos. 367 and 368). Alexandre Lenoir, founder of the museum, noted that “the marble busts of the king of France, Louis XVI, and of his wife, Marie-Antoinette, were bequeathed to me for the museum by the late abbé Leblond [Gaspard Michel], who, in order to preserve them, exchanged them with the Comité de l’instruction publique for maps and other objects useful for education.”<sup>9</sup> In a letter to the minister of the interior on 23 January 1816, in response to a claim made by Houdon, Lenoir recalled the conditions under which the bequest was made: “Upon the return of the king [Louis XVIII], I entrusted these two monuments to the museum and hastened to make them available for the public’s enjoyment. The bust of Louis XVI . . . completes the chronological representation of the kings of France, starting with Saint Louis.”<sup>10</sup> No mention was made at the time or subsequently of the date 1790 that is legible on the base.

In 1827 a marble bust of Louis XVI by Houdon was put up for sale in Paris. The previous owner, Balthasar Georges Sage, a chemist and mineralogist, had a collection of curiosities for which he had written and published the inventory in 1807 and again in 1816. In the preface to the 1816 edition<sup>11</sup> he wrote that he had just “acquired a marble of Louis XVI done by the famous Houdon.” As a member of the Institut de France since its founding, Sage would have had the opportunity to get to know the sculptor; the silence of the latter on this subject after 1816 could be understood if Sage owned the bust shown at the Salon of 1787. The bust exhibited during the same period at the *Musée des monuments français* (that is, the Versailles bust) would then be identical with the one shown at the Hôtel de Ville, Paris, miraculously spared on 10 August 1792.

PROVENANCE

Possibly from the Paris city hall, 1790; exhibited at the Musée des monuments français, 1816 (no. 367); Musée du Louvre, warehouse, then modern sculpture galleries (marked so that works could be reunited with those already stored in the Louvre's Beauvais wing), 15 Sept. 1821 (see Clarac 1853, 6:224); Saint-Cloud (the dauphin's billiards room), 1824; Versailles, ca. 1832.

EXHIBITIONS

Versailles 1937, no. 254; *Marie-Antoinette, archiduchesse, dauphine et reine* [exh. cat., Musée national du château] (Versailles, 1955), no. 131; Chicago 1962–1963, no. 134.

REFERENCES

Clarac 1853, 6:224, no. 3571, pl. 1124; Versailles cat. 1837, 59, 403; Versailles cat. 1839, 314, no. 568; Versailles cat. 1854, 2:154, no. 2041; Délerot and Legrelle 1857, 175–176; "Inventaire des richesses d'art de la France," *Archives du Musée des monuments français* (Paris, 1883–1897), 1:428–429, 3:196–197; Giacometti 1918–1919, 1:103–104, 2:155–165, 3:89–91; Réau 1964, 1:89–91, 330, 455–456; 2:37, no. 151, pl. 86; Arnason 1976, 83–84, 119 nn. 195 and 196, fig. 159; Versailles 2001–2002.

RELATED WORKS

Bust of Louis XVI; marble; commissioned by members of the stock exchange; displayed at Salon of 1787, no. 252.

Copy of the bust of 1787; done for the commune of Strasbourg in 1791; destroyed in the fire at Strasbourg city hall in 1870.

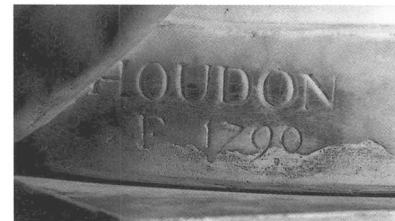
B.-G. Sage sale, Paris (no. 203 bis); life-size bust of Louis XVI; white marble (bust of 1787?).

Art market in late nineteenth century; busts of Louis XVI and Marie-Antoinette as dauphin and dauphine, attributed to Houdon; noted in *Intermédiaire des chercheurs et des curieux* (10 July 1913). Many forgeries seem to have circulated at the time. In his *mémoire* to Bachelier in 1794, Houdon wrote that he had "jamais travaillé que pour les particuliers ou l'étranger, excepté Tourville."

Plaster cast of the Versailles bust done in the Louvre workshops in 1889 (L 877 bis); listed in sales catalogue beginning in 1893. A copy was shown



Back view of cat. 50



Signature on cat. 50

at the Musée de sculpture comparée, palais du Trocadéro (Rionnet 1996, 267, no. 1125).

Duke of Northumberland sale, summer 1989, Monaco, no. 29, life-size plaster bust of Louis XVI, inscribed: "Houdon f. 1790."

1. On the private life of Marie-Antoinette see Campan (ed. 1988).

2. AN, O<sup>2</sup> 1917<sup>4</sup>, 393; cited in Giacometti 1918–1919, 1:103; and Réau 1964, 1:73.

3. J. M. Plane, *Physiologie ou l'art de connaître les hommes sur leur physionomie* (Meudon, 1797), 2:300.

4. In 1761 the Order of the Golden Fleece was conferred on Louis, dauphin of France, by Charles III, king of Spain.

5. Bouillé made a name for himself by repressing the mutiny of the garrison at Nancy and planning the king's escape to Varennes. His bust was in the collection of his descendants.

6. *Mémoires secrets*, letter 3, on the Salon of 26 Aug. 1787.

7. Versailles 2001–2002, 143, 229, nos. 38 and 78. Boizot sculpted a plaster bust of Jacques Necker in 1789 that he intended to execute in marble and place at city hall, but Houdon obtained the commission (see cat. 32). This bust is very close in composition to a lost bust of Louis XVI by Boizot and can be compared to Houdon's bust of the king. The *Journal de Paris* reported on 28 Feb. 1790 that "the king has just ordered Houdon to do a bust of him in marble, which His Majesty wished to donate to the Commune." See Mme Haug-Levallet, "Le Buste de Louis XVI par Houdon à Strasbourg," *BSHAF* (1937), 53–56.

8. Maurice Vachon, *L'Ancien hôtel de ville de Paris*; quoted in Réau (ed. 1994), 325. Not all of the busts were destroyed, however; the bust of Lafayette was salvaged and repaired by Houdon (see cats. 45–46).

9. Lenoir 1800–1806, 124–125. At the start of the Revolution, Leblond, an archaeologist, became a member of the arts commission charged with eliminating the suppressed archives and libraries, for which he became the librarian in 1791. When the Institut de France was organized, he was named a member of the antiquities committee. He was part of the legislative body under the Consulate, retiring in 1802.

10. Houdon's claim concerned the bust he had executed "shortly before the Revolution for members of the stock exchange" ("Inventaire des richesses," 1883–1897, 1:428–429).

11. *Descriptions des objets d'arts de la collection de Balthasar Georges Sage* (Paris, 1816).

## + Marie-Adélaïde de France, called Mme Adélaïde (1732 – 1800)

Dated 1777

White marble on gilded bronze base and white marble counterbase

H. 81.0 cm (with base: 99 cm), W. 56.5 cm, D. 34.0 cm

Inscribed on back: A. HOUDON, FECIT, ANNO 1777

Musée du Louvre, Paris, département des sculptures, Gift of the heirs to A. Veil-Picard, 1947 (inv. RF 2595)

Mme Adélaïde was forty-five years old when Houdon did this bust. She was the fourth child of Louis XV, after Louise-Elisabeth, called Mme Infante, then duchess of Parma; her twin sister, Henriette of France; and the dauphin, father of the future Louis XVI. In 1752, she was the eldest of the “Filles de France” at court, always dominating her younger sister, called Mme Victoire. As a young woman, she resembled her father: “If the portraits I have seen of Louis XV are accurate, [Mme Adélaïde] resembled him and had his commanding gaze. Mme Victoire was shorter and stouter.”<sup>1</sup> Her contemporaries were harsher in assessing her character: “Mme Adélaïde . . . was imperious and quick-tempered. . . . she once had a charming face; but never did beauty disappear as quickly as her own. . . . [she] had more wit than Mme Victoire; but she absolutely lacked kindness, the only thing that inspires love for illustrious people; curt manners, a harsh voice, and a clipped pronunciation made her extremely imposing. She took the idea of the prerogatives of rank to an extreme.”<sup>2</sup> When the king’s daughters shut themselves up with him as he lay dying of smallpox, a dangerous act, it elicited only indifference: “Mesdames were not loved; they had given evidence on too many occasions of the weakness of their character and of their resulting insincerity and had long since ceased

to be of interest.”<sup>3</sup> On Louis XVI’s accession to the throne, Mme Adélaïde attempted to play a political role by advising her nephew, but her influence remained limited. Despite the attachment Louis XVI felt to his aunts, they were disliked by the queen for their haughtiness and “were scarcely seen [at court].”<sup>4</sup> The eventful escape of Mme Adélaïde and Mme Victoire to Italy from their Bellevue estate in 1791 filled the newspapers. They died in exile in Trieste.

The rich collection of portraits of Mme Adélaïde may have flattered her vanity. Jean-Marc Nattier painted her features several times, with various accoutrements: as Diana (1745) and as a musician (1758).<sup>5</sup> A wonderful study for a painting exhibited at the Salon of 1751 shows a round face with large eyes and does recall her father’s likeness.<sup>6</sup> The bust by Jean-Baptiste II Lemoyne (fig. 1) is equally reminiscent of the paternal image.<sup>7</sup> That sumptuous marble was commissioned in 1763 by the marquis de Marigny, director of the Bâtiments du Roi at the time.<sup>8</sup> Two years later, forgetting that he had ordered the bust, he referred Lemoyne to Mesdames for payment; in the end, however, it was the royal administration that paid the bill. A comparable misadventure befell Houdon a few years later: Mme Adélaïde commissioned a bust of herself in 1776 but told the





1. Jean-Baptiste II Lemoyne, Mme Adélaïde, 1768, marble, Musée du Louvre, Paris.



2. Houdon, Mme Victoire, 1777, marble, Wallace Collection, London.

sculptor to address himself to the comte d'Angiviller, then director of the Bâtiments du Roi, for payment (see Provenance).

Houdon's bust of Mme Adélaïde was displayed at the Salon of 1777 along with that of Mme Victoire (fig. 2)<sup>9</sup> and busts of the comte and comtesse de Provence.<sup>10</sup> Of the few commentaries, those in *Mémoires secrets* stand out: "The two aunts also provided him with contrasts to render, which he captured no less well, either by expressing the elder sister's delicacy of features or by modeling the younger's plumpness. I would have to be an artist, Sir, to describe in detail all the skill with the chisel he showed in working the lace, in defining the hair, in setting it off, in elegantly styling it... in rendering all the accessories with no less truth than the souls of his models."<sup>11</sup>

This commission was very important for Houdon, who had just been accepted as a member of the Académie royale and was exhibiting his admission piece (cat. 7). It was remarkable that so early in his career, after exhibiting portraits of Catherine II of Russia and the ducal family of Saxe-Gotha in 1773 and of ministers Turgot and Miromesnil in 1775, he was invited to sculpt busts of members of the French royal family. His position as court portraitist and potential successor to Lemoyne was progressing brilliantly.

Although Houdon may have known the bust of Mme Adélaïde by Lemoyne, which the princess gave to her entourage, the difference in spirit between the two works is striking. Lemoyne executed the portrait of a beautiful young woman, deliberately accentuating her acknowledged resemblance to her father (whose features he knew well), including the protruding

eyes. Her lips are barely parted, her clothing without intricate detail (only the rapid evocation of a jewel on her gown). He was free in his treatment of the marble, favoring the play of lines, with the subtle balance of the composition elegantly enveloping the base. Houdon, in contrast, depicted the features of a mature woman, cinched up in her court gown. A high, elaborate chignon dominates her imperious head, departing from the voluptuous hairstyle that graces Lemoyne's bust. There the drapery is light and falls loosely around her body. Here it has shriveled up, constricting about her shoulders. Mme Adélaïde has grown old and ugly in ten years. Her hard gaze is impeccably rendered by Houdon's usual technique of carving the eyes, yet her features are brightened by a smile that shows her teeth.

In reality, Houdon was pitiless toward his subject, not disguising the bitterness of the old maid in any way. He undoubtedly wanted to compensate for this overly precise analysis of character by exercising his dazzling virtuosity on the gown and the lace ruffle. Never have drill holes been more delicate, nor chisel lines lighter; they cut through the marble as if it were a ductile material. Houdon was well served by marble of superb quality—exquisitely white and almost without flaws—and he emphasized different textural effects with extreme subtlety: the very polished drapery, the lace pocked with tiny holes, the vast veil, the compact mass of smoothed-down hair. Whereas Lemoyne favored the lines, Houdon accentuated the volumes. The back of Houdon's bust, with the handsome fall of the veil, was not hollowed out but retains the shape of the block: the lower part spreads out slightly, and the block is irregular in



*Back view of cat. 51*

shape, which creates the impression that the fabric overflows somewhat onto the base. The back, in fact, was intended to be seen: the sculptor's invoice specifies that the bust was accompanied by a base "and revolving platform."

At the Salon of 1787 Adélaïde Labille-Guiard exhibited a large full-length painting of the princess (now at the château de Versailles); in preparation, she executed an excellent pastel study of the her face.<sup>12</sup> Again there is a dryness to her features, dressed up in grand finery. Elisabeth Vigée-Lebrun painted an oval portrait of Mme Adélaïde while the two were in Rome in 1791. That image, more intimate, exudes the same sense of cruelty that seems to have been a permanent aspect of the princess' nature once the carefree quality of her youth had vanished.

Houdon produced a masterpiece with the present bust, despite what one might call the aggressive personality of his subject: "It is an admirable... work of art, where the master sculptor handled wonderfully the difficulties presented by that unattractive physiognomy, that petty nature, in which the blood-

line nonetheless shows through. He corrected and filled out the overly small head with marvelously flowing hair and a veil that falls back majestically. He emphasized the Bourbon nose and the bulging eyes, like those of Louis XV, and animated the poorly formed and bitter mouth with an expression of intense life. He concealed under prodigiously skillfully carved lace the too-flat chest. He draped the bony shoulders in a fabric with heavy, supple pleats. It is at once alive and solemn, intimate, and decorative."<sup>13</sup>

GUILHEM SCHERF

#### PROVENANCE

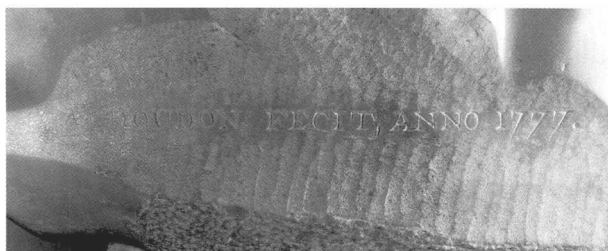
Commissioned by Mme Adélaïde in 1776, but payment was received only in 1785, after protracted negotiations. On 22 Jan. 1785 Houdon wrote to the abbé de Ruallem, chief advisor to Mesdames, that payment of 4,000 livres had been owed for nine years; on 26 Jan. Ruallem informed d'Angiviller that since the bust had been executed under the latter's orders the princess ought not have to pay for it; d'Angiviller noted in the margin that the bust had not been ordered by anyone in his administration (AN, O<sup>I</sup> 1922 A/1, Houdon dossier; Furcy-Raynaud 1927, 157–158). On 29 Jan. Houdon wrote to one of d'Angiviller's assistants (probably Montucla) that he had done the bust of Mme Adélaïde after completing one of Mme Victoire; the latter had urged her sister to sit for him; and when he requested payment, Mme Adélaïde referred him to d'Angiviller (Roberts collection, Haverford College, PA; published in Hart and Biddle 1911, 22–23). On 10 Feb. d'Angiviller reported this to Ruallem (AN, O<sup>I</sup> 1918 1, no. 34; Furcy-Raynaud 1927, 160–161), who replied on 15 June that the debt should not be charged to Mesdames: "Je vous prie de vouloir bien faire finir cette affaire le plus tôt qu'il vous sera possible. Cet homme a travaillé, j'ignore de qui il en a reçu l'ordre; mais toujours est-il certain qu'il est juste qu'il soit payé" (AN, O<sup>I</sup> 1922 A/1; Furcy-Raynaud 1927, 161). On 28 June d'Angiviller finally wrote that the king had consented to have the debt paid from his administration's funds (AN, O<sup>I</sup> 1918 1, no. 211; Furcy-Raynaud 1906, 118). The invoice specified: "Mémoire d'un buste en marbre fait pour le service du Roy, sous les ordres de Monsieur le comte d'Angiviller... par le s<sup>r</sup> Houdon, sculpteur de Sa Majesté, pendant l'année 1776... Estimé 3000 livres... Plus une colonne en marbre servant de piédestal audit buste, avec sa base et son plateau tournant... 1000 livres"; d'Angiviller requested a voucher from the king on 29 June 1785; and payment in full was received later that year (AN, O<sup>I</sup> 1922 A/1; Furcy-Raynaud 1927, 156–157, 161–162).

The bust, included on Houdon's autograph list (ca. 1784) under the year 1778 (no. 53), was surrendered by the princess to her intendant, Pierre Randon de Pommery, before she left France in 1791; it passed to his widow, Marie-Charlotte de Floissac (who had it transported to château de Thil, near Les Andelys); to their eldest son, Randon du Thil; to his son, who died child-

less in 1870; to his sister, the marquise de Champchevrier, née Rochemore; to her heirs at the château of Marcilly-sur-Maulne (Indre-et-Loire). Acquired by the dealer Sylvain Guiraud, Paris, ca. 1906; then Georges Hoentschel; sold by his heirs to Arthur Georges Veil-Picard before 1918; gift of the heirs of Veil-Picard (d. 1944), in memory of their father, 26 Apr. 1947.

## EXHIBITIONS

Paris, Salon cat. 1777, no. 235; Paris 1908, 50, no. 127; *Vingt ans d'acquisitions au Musée du Louvre, 1947–1967* [exh. cat., Orangerie des Tuileries] (Paris, 1967–1968), no. 313, 101.



Signature on cat. 51

## REFERENCES

Délerot and Legrelle 1857, 60, 182; André Michel mentions a letter concerning the payment of the bust in *BSHAF* (1907), 19; Vitry 1907b, 201; Brière and Vitry 1908, 169–170; Vitry 1908b, 2–4; Vitry 1908c, 26–27, ill. 24; Arsène Alexandre, in *La Renaissance de l'art français et des industries de luxe* (Apr. 1918), 2, ill.; Furcy-Raynaud 1927, 156–162; Giacometti 1929, 1:40, ill., 2:44–45; Marcel Aubert, “Le Buste de Mme Adélaïde, par Houdon,” *Bulletin des Musées de France*, no. 7 (Aug. 1947), 20–21, ill.; Réau 1964, 1:75–76, 306–307, 2:25, no. 78, pl. 37; Arnason 1975, 39, fig. 87, pl. 31; Louvre cat. 1998, 430, ill.

1. Félix, comte d'Hézecques, *Souvenirs d'un page de la cour de Louis XVI* (Paris, 1983), 75.

2. Campan (ed. 1988), 25, 27, 31.

3. Besenval (ed. 1987), 161–162.

4. Hézecques (ed. 1983), 73.

5. See Versailles 1999–2000, nos. 43 and 82, respectively.

6. Versailles 1999–2000, no. 60.

7. See Guilhem Scherf, “Un portrait de Mme Adélaïde par Jean-Baptiste Lemoyne entre au département des sculptures du Louvre,” *Revue du Louvre. La Revue des*

*Musées de France* (Oct. 2002), 13–16, no. 4. Lemoyne also did a portrait of Mme Victoire (lost).

8. In 1763 Mme Adélaïde had wanted to be depicted full-length (and in marble), most likely to imitate the statue of her homonym Marie-Adélaïde de Savoie (dauphine of France), executed by Antoine Coysevox at the king's expense in 1710 (Louvre cat. 1998, 170, ill.). This plan went nowhere, officially because of a lack of statuary marble in the storerooms.

9. The bust of Mme Victoire is less severe than that of her sister, but the overeager joviality, though it may prompt warm feelings, is less attractive than severity: “What delicious art [Houdon] deploys in representing the ample ripeness of that fat woman! How well he knows how to render that empty-headedness and

smug solemnity” (Paul Vitry, “La Sculpture française des XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles au musée Wallace,” *Les Arts*, no. 7 [Aug. 1902], 22).

10. The marbles of the comte and comtesse de Provence have disappeared, but a plaster of the comte is at the Nationalmuseum, Stockholm.

11. Fort 1999, 187.

12. Xavier Salmon, *Musée national du château de Versailles. Les Pastels* (Paris, 1997), 100–102, no. 26, ill.

13. Vitry 1908a, 4.





+ Anne-Hilarion de Costentin,  
Maréchal de Tourville (1642–1701)

52–53

1783

Terracotta

H. 52.5 cm, W. 22.0 cm, D. 27.0 cm

Musée national de céramique, Sèvres (inv. MNC 23450)

1809

Biscuit porcelain

H. 48.0 cm, W. 23.0 cm, D. 22.5 cm

Inscription on front of counterbase: TOURVILLE; on back: A.B. 13. dec 09

Musée national des châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon (inv. V 1329; T 706C)

Houdon's marble of the maréchal de Tourville was the only official royal commission that the sculptor was awarded before 1789 (fig. 1). It was part of a program initiated in 1776 by the comte d'Angiviller, director of the Bâtiments du Roi, who had announced to Jean-Baptiste Pierre, director of the Académie royale and *premier peintre du Roi*, his intention to "hire four sculptors from the Académie, each of whom would execute a figure in marble for His Majesty representing some man, famous in the nation for his virtues, his talents, or his genius."<sup>1</sup> He wished to encourage the fine arts by supporting historical sculpture against the invasion of portraits and genre paintings and thus to revive virtue and patriotic feelings.<sup>2</sup>

The first two groups of commissions in the series of "Great Men of France," exhibited at the Salons of 1777 and 1779, portrayed magistrates, philosophers, and men of letters. In 1779 d'Angiviller ordered statues of two military figures, "a naval hero illustrious for his victories [Tourville] and an army hero [Nicolas Catinat] no less illustrious for his military talents than for his disinterestedness, his humanity, and his philosophical mind."<sup>3</sup> Gabriel de Saint-Aubin habitually passed through the Salon at that time sketching the paintings and sculptures on display: in his sketchbook he drew four of the statues of Great Men shown

in 1779 in the garden of the Infante, and he rapidly sketched on the back of the sheet what the next commission might be. A figure of Tourville, which he believed to have been sculpted by Louis-Philippe Mouchy, showed the military hero enveloped in a large drapery, leaning on a small boat that represented the flagship *Soleil royal* and pointing with an extended hand toward what would likely be the enemy flotilla.<sup>4</sup> The primary elements of the composition thus seem to have already been established.

Critics at the Salon of 1781 eagerly anticipated Houdon's performance: "The courtyard, Sir, has become a lyceum where our famous sculptors joust. M. Houdon, whom we were angry not to find accepted earlier for the competition, is finally one of the athletes, and his statue of the maréchal de Tourville is the most striking"; it was "the only one in marble, and does not belie the deserved reputation that excellent artist has acquired."<sup>5</sup> Houdon had furnished the block of marble and accepted the collaboration of an assistant, Joseph-André Vincent Mazetti.<sup>6</sup> The catalogue for the Salon of 1781 described the marble of Tourville as follows: "The marshal is represented at the moment when he shows the war council a letter from the king, which orders him to give the signal for battle . . . and to fight enemies weak or strong if he found them. That admiral, the most skill-





1. Houdon, Maréchal de Tourville, 1781, marble, Musée national du château de Versailles.

ful seaman in France and perhaps in the whole world, did not waver in executing the order he had received.<sup>7</sup>

The comte d'Angiviller wanted the statues of the Great Men to be historically accurate in their representation of their subjects. Houdon respected these rules, providing extensive documentation and depicting Tourville in traditional seventeenth-century costume.<sup>8</sup> He found it more difficult to capture the appropriate expression of character and to avoid the pitfalls of a cold or mannered style. Those criticisms he received focused on the iconography: he was reproached for the lack of austerity in the costume and for his virtuosity in rendering the textures of the fabric and in carving the lace: "Heroism is not coquettish, and unfortunately, the marshal's attire is."<sup>9</sup> The face was also found to be too young, lacking strength and maturity.<sup>10</sup> Finally, the model of the admiral's flagship, a necessary support for the statue, was found to lack inventiveness, even to be shock-

ing. Other criticisms concerned the overly theatrical presentation: "A charlatan who shows the paper on which all the miracles produced by his balm are contained"; "M. Houdon shows us his hero with hair blown back by the wind, as if he had been on the deck at the height of the storm; he makes the feathers on his hat ripple, the plumes falling onto his forehead, and the cravat fluttering about. These tours de force in which the artist revels show a lack of common sense."<sup>11</sup>

Diderot pointedly defended the artist's choices: "The wind that blows through his hair and clothing, the navy attributes that serve to support the figure, indicate the element on which he is about to fight. That figure has movement; the moment chosen is sublime; it is not sculpture, it is painting, it is a beautiful Van Dyck. . . . The head is too covered, there is luxuriance in the clothing, but the clothing is accurate and elegantly so." All the same, in his speech to the Institut de France on 3 October 1829, Quatremère de Quincy harshly condemned the "picturesque figure of Tourville" and that "gust of wind."<sup>12</sup>

Beginning in 1783 the comte d'Angiviller had asked each sculptor to send a reduced model in terracotta of each sculpture in the series of "Great Men" to the Manufacture de Sèvres so that biscuit porcelains could be produced for sale: "My aim henceforth was that the artists commissioned to create these figures should make a small model to scale, fifteen to eighteen inches tall, to be used to execute them in porcelain at the royal porcelain factory of France." Houdon was rushed to produce his model for the Salon of 1783.

The terracotta at the ceramics museum in Sèvres is broadly modeled.<sup>13</sup> The first biscuit porcelains, produced before the Revolution, were delivered to Versailles or intended as diplomatic gifts: for instance, a statuette of Tourville was exhibited in the "silver plate room."<sup>14</sup> The copy currently housed at Versailles was made in 1809; it is signed by Alexandre Brachard and is part of a set of fourteen statuettes delivered from Sèvres to the Musée de Versailles on 28 June 1835.<sup>15</sup> In a different material and on a smaller scale than the marble, it shows a simplified treatment of the figure: a less elaborate costume, a less violently turned head, and a more balanced posture.

CLAUDE VANDALLE



2. Pierre-Adrien Le Beau, Maréchal de Tourville, before 1789, engraving after Houdon, BNEst.

#### EXHIBITIONS

##### + Terracotta +

Paris 1928, no. 49; Versailles 1928, 86, no. 86; Paris 1984–1985, 454–456, no. 133, ill.

#### REFERENCES

##### + Biscuit porcelain +

*Inventaire des richesses d'art de la France, Province, Monuments civils*, vol. 5, *La manufacture de Sèvres* (Paris, 1891), 51; Bourgeois and Lechevallier Chevi-gnard 1914, no. 584, pl. 42; Christian Baulez, "Notes sur quelques meubles et objets d'art des appartements intérieurs de Louis XVI et de Marie-Antoinette," *Revue du Louvre* 3 (1978), 360.

##### + Marble +

Salon cat. 1781, no. 251; Moufle d'Argenville, *Mémoires secrets*, 1781 (Paris, 1783), 371–373; Quatremère de Quincy 1834, 388–402; Versailles cat. 1837, 70, no. 475; Versailles cat. 1839, 279, no. 488; Versailles cat. 1854, 2:321, no. 2768; Délerot and Legrelle 1857, 129–137; Jules Guiffrey, *Notes et documents*

*inédits sur les expositions du 18e siècle* (Paris, 1873), 119; Furcy-Raynaud 1905, 80–81, 264–265 (no. 281), 292, 344; Marc Furcy-Raynaud, *Inventaire des sculptures exécutées au XVIIIe siècle pour la direction des Bâtiments du Roi (1720–1790)* (Paris, 1911), 69–70; Furcy-Raynaud 1927, 163–164; Giacometti 1918–1919, 1:259, 2:78–80; Réau 1922a, 367–379; Réau 1928a, 341; Marthe Gagne, "Les Statues de français illustres" (Ph.D. thesis directed by Paul Vitry, Paris, 1929), abstract in *Bulletin des musées de France* (Sept. 1929), 213–215; Réau 1964, 1:52, 269, 479–480, 2:18 n. 34, pl. 29; Francis H. Dowley, "D'Angiviller's Grands Hommes and the Significant Moment," *Art Bulletin* 39, no. 4 (Dec. 1957), 259–277, ill.; Arnason 1976, 63–65, 118 n. 158, fig. 130, pl. 67; Versailles cat. 1993, 352, no. 1647; Scherf 1993, 58–60; Versailles 2001–2002, 10–15, 20; West 1998, 40; Fort 1999, 243, fig. 42; Antoine Reffuville, *Tourville, gentilhomme des Océans* [exh. cat., Archives départementales de la Manche] (Saint-Lô, 2001), 97–98.

#### RELATED WORKS

Marble commissioned by d'Angiviller for the series of "Great Men"; payments totaling 10,000 francs received between 7 May 1781 and 25 Jan. 1785 (see Furcy-Raynaud 1947, 163–164; Réau 1964, 1:51–52); H. 23 cm; inscribed on right side of base: "Fait Par Houdon, 1781"; on medal around neck: "R. / D. / VENISE / 1690"; on parchment in right hand: "ORDRE / DE COMBATTRE / A / LA HOUGUE / 1692"; on parchment at foot of vessel: "signaux perfectionnés"; on bow of vessel: "LE SOLEIL ROIAL / DE 106 CANONS"; exhibited at Salon of 1781.

Houdon's studio sale, Paris, 8 Oct. 1795; detailed plaster model: "modèle de la grande figure en marbre qui appartient à la nation. H: 25 pouces [63,5 cm]."

Possibly Edmund Courty collection, Châtillon-sous-Bagneux; terracotta; presented as a first conception for the marble statue at Versailles; Ducos sale, 13 Dec. 1837, no. 50.

#### Prints

Engraving by Pierre-Adrien Le Beau, based on drawing by Claude-Louis Desrais after Houdon, published before 1789, depicts Tourville half-length in a medallion above a scene from the battle of La Hougue (source not cited) (fig. 2); and an unsigned and undated engraving published by Duflos, Paris, shows Tourville "after the statue sculpted by Houdon for the king," BNEst (N2, microfilm D 272034 and 272035).

Engraving by Louis-Marie Normand (Sr.), after 1824, in Clarac 1850, 5:337, no. 2665, pl. 371.

Engraving by Ephraim Conquey, in Charles Gavard, *Galerics historiques de Versailles* (Paris, 1850), no. 314.



Signature on cat. 53



Back view of cat. 52



Back view of cat. 53

1. See Furcy-Raynaud 1905, 80–81. See also the essay “Houdon, ‘Above All Modern Artists’” in the present catalogue.

2. Scherf 1993, 58–66.

3. Réau 1964, 1:51.

4. Fol. 101r–101v; see Emile Dacier, *Carnets de dessins de Saint-Aubin, carnets de la Bibliothèque royale de Stockholm* (Paris, 1955), 19, pl. 11–13.

5. *Mémoires secrets*, letter 3 (24 Sept. 1781); and *Journal encyclopédique* (1781).

6. See the dossier of documents assembled in Réau 1964, 1:51–54. The first payment of 2,000 livres was made on 7 May 1781. Mazetti, a witness at Houdon’s wedding, was an Avignon sculptor trained in the studio of Guillaume II Coustou; he also assisted Augustin Pajou in rendering his marble of Jacques Bénigne Bossuet for the “Great Men” series.

7. According to the memoirs of the duc de Berwick, the action occurred in May 1692, off Ile d’Ouessant. For six weeks unfavorable winds had prevented the comte d’Estrées from leaving the Mediterranean with ships from Toulon; and the king, impatient to carry out his plan, sent orders to Tourville, admiral of the flotilla, to enter the Channel with his ships from Brest without waiting for the comte d’Estrées. See Salon cat. 1781.

8. Houdon may have known the portrait by Hyacinthe Rigaud. The inscriptions sought to give the maximum information on Tourville.

9. In 1780–1782 the ministry of the navy commissioned Antoine Graincourt to produce a copy of Rigaud’s half-length portrait of Tourville, which shows him elegantly dressed in breastplate and lace cravat (Versailles; MV 1089, no. 2312); the portrait was engraved by Jean-Jacques Hubert for *Les Hommes illustres de la marine française* (Paris, 1780), 136.

10. *Année littéraire*, Salon of 1781 (Deloynes XII, 446–447, no. 270 MS).

11. Mérard de Saint-Just, Salon of 1781, 35; *Mémoires secrets*, letter 3.

12. Quatremère de Quincy 1834, 397.

13. Giacometti 1918–1919, 3:177: “A much smaller reproduction of it in terracotta can be seen at the museum in Sèvres; however, no copies of it in biscuit porcelain dating from that time are known even today.”

14. Baulez 1978, 360.

15. Manufacture nationale de Sèvres, Vbb9, fol. 43: fourteen statuettes of the Great Men were delivered for 200 francs each. The example in Staatlichen Kunstsammlungen, Dresden (inv. PE 476), was undoubtedly the copy that Emperor Napoleon I gave the king of Bavaria in August 1809.



## + Prince Henry of Prussia (1726–1802)

Dated 1789

Bronze, greenish black patina, on gilt bronze base

H. 67.3 cm (with base: 85 cm), W. 63.6 cm

Inscribed on proper right shoulder: *fonde Ciselé par thomire. / d'après le modèle de Mr. / houdon. 1789.*

Plaque: HEROUM ILLUSTRIS VIRTUTIBUS AT QUE TRIUMPHIS / PACIFICAS COLIT HENRICUS QUOQUE PAL[LA]ADIS  
ARTES: / FÆDERE AMAT STABILI GALLOS, ET AMATUR AB ILLIS; / SIC ÆTERNA DUAS SOCIET CONCORDIA GENTES!

Stiftung Preußische Schlösser und Gärten Berlin-Brandenburg (inv. GK III 528 / Skulpt. Slg. 119)

Contemporary sources describe Prince Henry of Prussia as small, thin, and of unprepossessing appearance, yet charming and friendly: “As for the ugliness of his face, it was on first meeting absolutely repulsive. However, the expression of his two large eyes, of which one looked to the right and the other to the left, had a kind of sweetness to it, which one also noticed in the sound of his voice; and when one listened to him, his words were always of an extreme amiability.”<sup>1</sup> Consistent with this unsparing characterization by the painter Elisabeth Vigée-Lebrun, Houdon portrayed his royal sitter with less-than-perfect features and wearing a wig typical of his time. These realistic elements are in contrast to Henry’s costume of Roman-style armor and a military cape fastened at his right shoulder, which characterizes him as a military hero; the center of his breastplate is dominated by the badge of the Prussian Royal Order of the Black Eagle. His right arm is separated from the body, indicating that it is raised in action.

Prince Henry, the younger brother of King Frederick the Great, never stood in the limelight.<sup>2</sup> Destined for a military career and serving from a young age as his brother’s comrade-in-arms, he became one of Prussia’s most distinguished field commanders and military strategists. He occasionally represented the

throne in confidential diplomatic missions to Russia and France, but despite his superior abilities, his position as a lesser prince precluded any real participation in power or public recognition for his services, contributing to intense friction between him and the king. Henry retreated to his palace in Rheinsberg,<sup>3</sup> about a day’s journey from Berlin, where the enlightened Francophile established a radiant court rivaling the king’s own.

In 1784, at age fifty-eight, Henry visited the country of his dreams for the first time, spending two and a half months filled with cultural and social activities in Paris.<sup>4</sup> He returned in 1788–1789 to renew friendships with people of influence and standing, such as the new minister of finance Jacques Necker, the comtesse de Sabran, and the duc de Nivernais. During the time of the French Revolution Henry offered hospitality to a large number of émigrés, turning his court into a sort of French colony. The last years of his life he spent in the seclusion of Rheinsberg, surrounded by the likenesses of his French acquaintances, whose portraits he had acquired from Houdon’s studio and installed throughout his palace.<sup>5</sup>

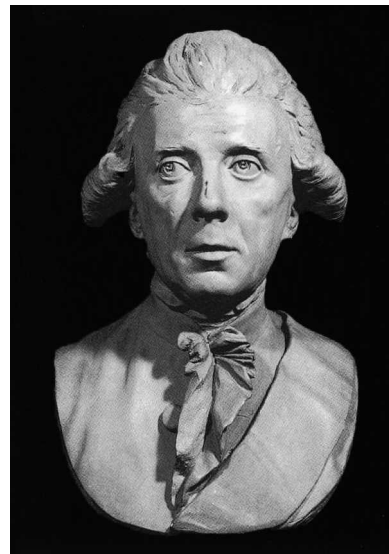
It was probably Frédéric-Melchior Grimm who, in his role as the princely cicerone, established contact between Henry and Houdon. The first version of Houdon’s bust of Prince Henry



(see fig. 2), exhibited in the Salon of 1785, depicts the sitter in contemporary dress “à la française,” with cravat, jabot, and an unadorned sash across his left shoulder. This quiet, reflective portrait received little enthusiasm from the Salon critics of 1785, who, while granting that its expression was “remarkable for the alertness and wit that are characteristic of a general,” could find “neither the value of the hero nor the character of the prince” and missed “the fire and the genius of his physiognomy.”<sup>6</sup> The expanded version of the bust, with full shoulders and a truncation below the chest (see fig. 1), was executed in marble as a royal commission and shown in the Salon of 1787 before it was cast in bronze in 1789. Solemn and majestic, it idealizes Prince Henry as a classical military hero and man of action. Its long format and the sitter’s costume are comparable to those of Houdon’s *Belisarius* of 1773 (Musée des Augustins, Toulouse) and *Alexander the Great* of 1783 (see cat. 13, fig. 2), both displaying the same combination of Roman-style armor and cape. The brooch, or *fibula*, holding Henry’s cape is almost a duplicate of that on the bust of the actor Larive in the role of Brutus (cat. 13).

The similarities between the two types of Henry’s portrait, especially in the facial features and the wig, indicate that both derive from the same model, created during the prince’s first visit to Paris in 1784. The present bronze and at least one other bust were doubtless commissioned in the context of the sitter’s second trip to Paris in 1788–1789, for shortly after his return

1. Houdon, Prince Henry of Prussia, 1785, marble, present location unknown.



2. Houdon, Prince Henry of Prussia, 1785, plaster, Herzogin Anna Amalia Bibliothek, Weimar.

Henry offered a copy to his nephew, the reigning king Frederick William II, and to his brother Ferdinand.<sup>7</sup> The inscription on the plaque attached to the base reads: “One of the heroes famous for virtues and triumphs / Henry also performs the pacifying arts of Pallas: / in a stable alliance he loves the French and is loved by them; / so eternal concord may unite the two nations!”

This bronze is distinguished by its superb quality, the elegance of its cold work, and the brilliance of the patinated surface. The meticulous rendering shows the skill of the man who proudly signed on the truncation of the right shoulder: “Cast and chased by Thomire after the model of Mr. Houdon. 1789.” Pierre-Philippe Thomire, one of the most important founders and bronze workers of his time, is thought to have studied at the Académie de Saint Luc in Paris under Houdon and to have worked in the sculptor’s studio before becoming independent.<sup>8</sup> Houdon kept his own foundry at the Faubourg-Saint-Honoré,<sup>9</sup> where he produced numerous smaller and a few large-scale objects, which, though of high quality, never reached the same level of refinement as Thomire’s. For this prominent commission of a bronze bust of the prince of Prussia, Houdon chose to collaborate again with his talented student, who had previously executed reductions after Houdon’s models.<sup>10</sup>

ULRIKE D. MATHIES



Back view of cat. 54

#### PROVENANCE

From the Prussian royal collection; one of two documented bronzes of the same type, possibly identical with one exhibited in the Salon of 1789, no. 240, and owned by King Frederick William II; in the Stadtschloss in Berlin in the nineteenth century (see "Corr. Frédéric le Grand," 1857, 176; Seidel 1892, 67); listed as belonging to the "Collection du Nouveau Palais de Potsdam" in Paris 1928, 63; part of the collection of Potsdam-Sanssouci since 1945 (Rheinsberg 1994, 62–63).

#### EXHIBITIONS

Possibly Paris, Salon cat. 1789, 50, no. 240: "Le Prince Henri de Prusse. Buste en bronze de grandeur naturelle"; Paris 1900, 68, no. 36, ill. p. 16; Berlin 1910, 48, no. 240, fig. 79 (see also 2nd rev. ed., 49, no. 79); Berlin 1912, 31, no. 69; Paris 1928, 63–64, no. 61; *Meisterwerke aus den Preußischen Schlössern* [exh. cat., Preußische Akademie der Künste] (Berlin, 1930), 34, no. 89; London 1932, 302, no. 591; *Weltschätze der Kunst, der Menschheit bewahrt. Ausstellung anlässlich des 40. Jahrestages des Sieges über den Hitlerfaschismus und der Befreiung des deutschen Volkes* [exh. cat., Altes Museum] (Berlin, 1985), 367, no. 362C, ill.; Rheinsberg 1994, 62–64, no. 14, ill. p. 63; *Von allen Seiten schön. Bronzen der Renaissance und des Barock* [exh. cat., Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Skulpturensammlung] (Berlin, 1995), 616–617, no. 251; Rheinsberg 2002, 231, no. V.66, ill.

#### REFERENCES

"Corr. Frédéric le Grand," 1857, 176; Dierks 1887, 60–61, 134; Seidel 1892, 66–67, no. 1; Seidel 1900, 42–43, 168, no. 187, ill. p. 43; Lami 1910–1911, 1:428; Giacometti 1918–1919, 1:110–111, 2:17, 27, 191–203; Giacometti 1929, 2:67–68; Mussia Eisenstadt, "La Salle française à l'exposition de l'Académie des Beaux-Arts à Berlin," *Beaux-Arts. Chronique des arts et de la curiosité* 8, no. 12 (Dec. 1930), 10; Schwark 1930, 50, pl. 41.2; Maillard 1931, 47; Niclausse 1947, 81–82, 120, pl. 15; Mansfeld 1955, 174–179, no. 49; Réau 1964, 1: 392–394, 2:32–33, no. 130B, pl. LXI; Arnason 1975, 69, fig. 146.

#### RELATED WORKS

##### Type without shoulders

Preceding the present bronze, a variant of the portrait—with truncated shoulders and contemporary French dress—was first exhibited in the Salon of 1785, no. 229. It is represented by the following:

##### Extant plasters

Herzogin Anna Amalia Bibliothek, Weimar (see fig. 2); H. 51.6 cm (with base: 64.6 cm), W. 32.4 cm; formerly with *cachet de l'atelier*; well-documented provenance from Houdon's studio: acquired in Paris 26 Jan. 1785 by Frédéric-Melchior Grimm for Duke Carl August of Saxe-Weimar (3 louis, or 72 livres, or 46 Reichsthaler 2 Groschen; bills and receipts discovered in the Weimar archives; see Mansfeld 1955); the bust was already in Weimar by Mar. 1785 and is therefore not the one exhibited in the Salon of 1785 (Bogyay 1935, 366–367; Mansfeld 1955, 130–135, no. 48).

Stiftung Preussische Schlösser und Gärten Berlin-Brandenburg, Schloss Charlottenburg, Berlin (inv. Ks III 104); H. 53.4 cm (with base: 66.5 cm), W. 33 cm; with *cachet de l'atelier*; bought from Heim Gallery, London, in 1972. See Helmut Börsch-Supan, "Die Erwerbungsstätigkeit der Verwaltung der Staatlichen Schlösser und Gärten in Berlin seit 1945," in *Schloß Charlottenburg, Berlin, Preußen. Festschrift für Margarethe Kühn* (Munich and Berlin, 1975), 93, no. 137, fig. 65; Rheinsberg 1994, 60–62, no. 13, ill. p. 61; Rheinsberg 2002, 38–39, no. 1.36, ill. p. 14.

Collection of Henri Tronchin, Bessigne (near Geneva); modern patina; supposedly given in 1785 by Prince Henry to François Tronchin, ancestor of the present owner; see Bovy 1923–1924, 3:591.

##### Documented versions

A terracotta-colored plaster of this type was delivered by Houdon to the duc de Brissac, 23 Dec. 1788, for 96 livres (BMV, F 946, D 37533, nos. 120–121).

A bust of Henry of Prussia was in the posthumous sale of the contents of Houdon's studio, 15–17 Dec. 1828, 16, no. 18, and sold with the bust of Pierre-Jean-Baptiste Gerbier for 23 francs (see Réau 1964, 1:119); it is probably the one shown in Boilly's paintings of Houdon's studio, a terracotta-colored version at left of lower shelf on the back wall (cat. 66); possibly the bust formerly in the collection of René Rozet, Amiens (Réau 1964, 2:33, no. 130A, pl. LX; Paris 1928, 64–65, no. 62).

##### Type with shoulders

Only a small number of busts with full shoulders and Roman-style armor is documented or has survived.

##### Marbles

The marble in the Salon of 1787, no. 253, one of Houdon's rare commissions for the French king, was ordered in 1785 through the comte d'Angiviller, director of the Bâtiments du Roi, and delivered to his house in



Signature on cat. 54

July 1786. The marble block was provided, and Houdon was paid 2,400 livres (Réau 1964, 1:392–394). The bust remained in d'Angiviller's residence until 21 Apr. 1793, when his belongings were confiscated by the revolutionary Commission temporaire des arts following his emigration. The manuscript inventory of seized objects lists under "sculptures," no. 4: "Un buste du Prince Henry de Prusse, en marbre" ("Registre des réceptions des objets d'art et antiquités trouvés chez les émigrés et condamnés . . .," p. 7; AN, F17\*-23.A). The bust was possibly sold with the rest of d'Angiviller's furnishings 7 June 1793.

This original marble, or one of the same type (see fig. 1)—H. 66 cm (with base: 83 cm), inscribed on truncation of right arm: "Houdon fecit 1785"—was exhibited in Paris 1928, 63, no. 60, but has since disappeared (Giacometti 1929, 68–70, ill.); said to have been owned by J. Baptiste Claude Curmer (1782–1870); passed on by inheritance to M. and Mme Pinel, château de Bardouville near Rouen; and bought at the Pinel sale, Paris, 21 Apr. 1913, 5–7, no. 1, ill., by Philippe Michel; there is no record of it after 1937.

#### Bronzes

A second version of the present bronze, given by Henry to his brother Ferdinand in 1790, was placed in the palace garden at Schloss Bellevue on a fluted column with garland decoration and the inscription: "Frédéric Henri Louis, Prince de Prusse, né le 18 Janvier 1726, mort le 3 Août 1802. Il a tout fait pour l'État." This bust was stolen before 1857 and replaced with a copy, of which the present location is unknown. See "Corr. Frédéric le Grand," 1857, 176; Bogdan Krieger, *Das Königliche Schloß Bellevue in Berlin und sein Erbauer Prinz Ferdinand von Preußen* (Berlin, 1906), 115–119, with an allegedly contemporary sketch of the original setting, and ill. of copy in situ; Rita Hofereiter, "Französische Bildwerke in der Sammlung des Prinzen Heinrich," in Rheinsberg 2002, 445–446.

A later copy of the present bronze is in Stiftung Preußische Schlösser und Gärten Berlin-Brandenburg, Neues Palais, Potsdam-Sanssouci (inv. GK III 2608/ Skulpt. Slg. 120); H. 66.9 cm (with base: 80 cm), W. 62.5 cm; inscribed on proper right shoulder: "fondu Ciselé par thomire. / d'après le modèle de Mr. / houdon. 1789"; mounted on a simple round base.

A variant bronze bust of uncertain authenticity; H. 76 cm; inscribed: "houdon f. 1789"; portraying Henry in a civil costume with sash, badge, and drapery, is in the Muzeum Lubuskie in Gorzów Wielkopolski (formerly Landsberg), Poland (inv. MOG / II / I / 130). The author is grateful to Ulrike Müller-Harang, Weimar, for making her aware of its present location. Originally in the gardens of the Tamsel estate near Küstrin, as described in 1861 by the German poet Theodor Fontane in his "Wanderungen durch die Mark Brandenburg," it belonged to a memorial for Henry of Prussia and his great-grandfather, Frederick William, the Great Elector. In the early twenti-

eth century the bust was recorded inside the house, installed on a limestone pedestal (H. 129 cm) similar to that for the bust in Bellevue; see Kurt Reissmann, *Die Kunstdenkmäler des Stadt- und Landkreises Landsberg (Warthe)* (Berlin, 1937), 125, 129, fig. 293. Its inscription names the donor Graf Ludwig Alexander von Wreech (1735–1795), valet to Henry of Prussia, who had accompanied the prince on both trips to Paris (Rheinsberg 2002, 518–519, no. VIII.16, ill.; cf. p. 446).

#### Print

An engraving dated 1785, by Charles-Etienne Gaucher after a portrait medallion by Charles Nicolas Cochin (see fig. 3; BNEst, 2002 B 168041, fol. 082), is inscribed "Dessiné par C. H. Cochin d'après le Buste modelé par J. A. Houdon en 1784. Gravé par C. E. Gaucher en 1785"; it shows the sitter in contemporary dress with the addition of a shoulder piece of armor, which relates to the inscription in the oval frame, "Général et soldat, héros et citoyen." On 30 Apr. 1785 Cochin, on behalf of the minister of state Bertin, presented to the Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture several copies of this engraving, which were gratefully accepted (*Procès-verbaux*, 9:235).

For other portraits deriving from Houdon's bust, see Rheinsberg 2002, 39–41, nos. 1.38, 39, 41.



3. Charles-Etienne Gaucher, Prince Henry of Prussia, 1785, engraving after a portrait medallion by Charles Nicolas Cochin, BNEst.

1. Vigée-Lebrun 1984, 2:269–270.

2. For a comprehensive bibliography see Rheinsberg 2002. See also Chester V. Easum, *Prince Henry of Prussia. Brother of Frederick the Great* (Madison, WI, 1942); Eva Ziebur, *Prinz Heinrich von Preußen* (Berlin, 1999); Henning and Henning 1988, 303–311.

3. See Andrew Hamilton, *Rheinsberg: Memorials of Frederick the Great and Prince Henry of Prussia*, 2 vols. (London, 1880); Richard Krauel, "Prinz Heinrich von Preußen in Rheinsberg," *Hohenzollern-Jahrbuch*.

*Forschungen und Abbildungen zur Geschichte der Hohenzollern in Brandenburg-Preußen* 6 (1902), 12–37. On the palace itself see Rheinsberg 1985.

4. For Henry's two trips to Paris see Krauel 1901.

5. See essay "Houdon and the German Courts" in this catalogue.

6. See Soulavie 1785, 35; and ["Exposition des tableaux au Louvre"], *Journal de Paris* 266 (23 Aug. 1785), 1096 (Deloynes XIV, no. 351).

7. See Rheinsberg 2002, 231, 445–446. Frederick the Great, often named as one of the recipients, died in 1786.

8. Niclausse 1947, 12, 20; Denise Ledoux-Lebard, *Les Ebénistes parisiens du XIXe siècle (1795–1870). Leurs œuvres et leurs marques* (Paris, 1965), 531–533.

9. See Bresc-Bautier 1994, 373.

10. See Réau 1964, 1:480.

## + Friedrich III, Duke of Saxe-Gotha (1699–1772)

1773

Medallion, plaster painted a bronze color in gilt wood frame

Diam. 48.8 cm (frame: H. 75 cm, W. 65 cm)

Inscribed at bottom center: *houdon. f.*

Legend: DIVO FRIDERICO III · SAX = GOTHANO OPTIMO PRINCIPI

Schlossmuseum Gotha (inv. P 45)

## + Ernst II, Duke of Saxe-Gotha (1745–1804)

Dated 1773

Medallion, plaster painted a bronze color in gilt wood frame

Diam. 48.8 cm (frame: H. 75 cm, W. 64.5 cm)

Inscribed at bottom center: *houdon ft. 1773.*

Legend: ERNEST DIVI FR. F. DUX SAXO = GOTHANUS PRINCEPS OPTIMUS & C.

Schlossmuseum Gotha (inv. P 44)

The medallions of Friedrich III and his son Ernst II of Saxe-Gotha imitate the shape and style of ancient medals or coins. With the plaster painted to look like aged bronze, they combine elements of Greek and Roman coins that represent the king or emperor. The sitters' heads are depicted in sharp profile and truncated just below the neck; their hair falls in soft waves over their foreheads and is tied with a headband, the *diadema*, which in ancient Greece was reserved for some divinities and the king. The relief of Friedrich III represents the obverse of a medal issued in his memory (fig. 1a–b) and is identical with, or a replica of, the plaster model Houdon produced as a prototype for the engraver of the die; the medallion of Ernst II was apparently created solely as a pendant to his father's depiction.

Houdon based both pieces on portraits of the sitters that he had executed during his first visit to Schloss Friedenstein in the winter of 1771.<sup>1</sup> This task extended his stay in Gotha from the anticipated two weeks to six weeks, as reported by Friedrich Wilhelm Doell, the young local artist who was to receive further training in Houdon's studio. Doell wrote a letter to his friend Friedrich Justin Bertuch, later known as a writer and publisher in Weimar, on 2 December 1771: "Six weeks ago M. Houdon, sculptor and *pensionnaire* of the king, came from Paris. He was

in Italy for four years and has been commissioned to build the funerary monument to the late duchess, a model of which he brought along. Their Serene Highnesses asked him to render their heads in bas-relief, which he agreed to do provided I assist him, because he was authorized to stay here for fourteen days only; the Prince promised this, and we have been working for six weeks, day and night. Today we finished!"<sup>2</sup> Although Doell does not reveal how many members of the ducal family Houdon portrayed on that occasion, another source records at least one other portrait medallion in addition to those of the dukes: that of Ernst's wife, Charlotte Amalie.<sup>3</sup>

When only a few months later, after the death of Friedrich III in March 1772, Ernst II decided to honor his father with a dedicatory medal in the style of an ancient coin, he requested that the image on its obverse be modeled after Houdon's portrait.<sup>4</sup> Under Frédéric-Melchior Grimm's direction, the original medallions were shipped from Gotha to Paris, where they arrived by the end of the year. Houdon was charged with remodeling Friedrich's head for its new purpose, and in doing so, he had to adhere to the precise instructions of the duke's iconographic advisor, Abbé Ferdinando Galiani in Naples, who was responsible for ensuring the medal's authenticity and "antique" look.



DIVO FRIDERICO III SAX-GOTHANO OPTIMO PRINCIPI

London J.



ERNEST DUX SAKO-COTHANUS PRINCEPS OPTIMUS & C.

London J. 1773



1a-b. Houdon, obverse and reverse of commemorative medal for Friedrich III of Saxe-Gotha, 1773, bronze, Schlossmuseum Gotha.

The face of Friedrich III, who was rather heavy by the end of his life, is subtly sculpted. Modeled from life, it reflects the distinctive characteristics of the sitter's anatomy, such as the double chin, the bulky neck, and the oddly shaped ear. The same realism and almost unflattering frankness can be found in the highly individualized likenesses of some of the late Hellenistic kings.<sup>5</sup> Ernst II's handsome, regular features, in contrast, reveal youthful energy and seem more idealized.

Both portraits are set in heavy gilt wood frames, each beautifully carved with a laurel wreath and a ribbon tied in a bow on top, probably provided by Houdon himself.<sup>6</sup> The Latin inscriptions around the circumference, certainly Galiani's inventions, imitate the legends on imperial Roman coins in their lettering, language, and content.<sup>7</sup> The adjective *divus*, or "divine," in Friedrich's medallion identifies the duke as deceased, while the Latin dative case indicates a dedication. In ancient Rome the laudatory cognomen *princeps optimus*, "the best leader," here employed for both dukes, served to honor good emperors; it is most frequently to be found on coins of Trajan, referring to his mild nature and his courteous manner.<sup>8</sup> The use of this appellation on portraits of Friedrich III and Ernst II is unique, since the legends on their own coins, as well as on those of their predecessors, refer only to their title as "Duke of Saxe-Gotha" — *GOTHAN. SAXONVM DUX*—and sometimes add the letters *D.G.* for *dei gratia*, "by the grace of God."<sup>9</sup>

The present medallions were completed before August 1773, when Houdon exhibited the portraits of four members of the house of Saxe-Gotha in the Paris Salon, described in the catalogue as depicting the late duke Friedrich III; the reigning duke Ernst II; Ernst's wife, Charlotte Amalie; and his sister

Friedericke Louise (nos. 232–235). Although the catalogue does not define the type of portrait, Houdon's own 1784 inventory of his works (nos. 17 and 18) records: "Buste de la duchesse de Gotha," and "Medaillon du duc et de la duchesse de Saxe Gotha et du duc Père."<sup>10</sup> This corresponds with the physical evidence of two extant medallions (Friedrich III and Ernst II), one documented medallion now lost (Charlotte), and one female bust in the Schlossmuseum Gotha (fig. 2) whose identity as the duchess is confirmed by the recently discovered, earliest known inventory of the plaster cast collection in Gotha.<sup>11</sup> The critical reaction to these Salon entries, scarce as it was, was not enthusiastic. One reviewer wrote: "I cannot judge these busts without knowing the people they represent; there is, however, a mechanical quality to all of these heads."<sup>12</sup> Visitors to the Salon of 1773 had the opportunity to compare Houdon's portrait of Friedrich III with the medal in his honor (fig. 1a-b), engraved by Houdon's friend Pierre-Simon-Benjamin Duvivier, or Duvivier *fiils*, and listed in the catalogue under "gravures": "Médaille à la Mémoire de S. A. S. le Prince de Saxe-Gotha."<sup>13</sup>

ULRIKE D. MATHIES



2. Houdon, Duchess Charlotte Amalie of Saxe-Gotha, 1773, plaster, Schlossmuseum Gotha.

## PROVENANCE

Probably identical with the works exhibited in the Salon of 1773, these medallions must have entered the collection of Schloss Friedenstein shortly thereafter, although the exact date is not known. They remained in the possession of the ducal family ("Herzogliche Familienstiftung") until 1935, when they were transferred to the Herzogliches Museum.

## EXHIBITIONS

Probably Paris, Salon of 1773, 46, nos. 232 and 233: "Le Portrait de feu Frédéric III, Duc de Saxe-Gotha & Altenbourg"; and "Ernest-Louis, Duc regnant"; Berlin 1955, 70, ill. pp. 34–35; Duisburg 1987, 144–145, nos. 92–93, figs. 92–93; Gotha 1989 (not in cat.).

## REFERENCES

*Eloge des tableaux exposé au Louvre le 26 aout 1773 de l'entretien d'un lord, avec M. l'abbé A\*\*\** (Paris, 1773), 75–76 (Deloynes X, no. 148); Dierks 1887, 24–25, 137; "Correspondance de Pierre et de Marigny," *NAAF* 20 (1904), 241–242; Lami 1910–1911, 1:414; Giacometti 1918–1919, 2:324–325; Mansfeld 1955, 85–86, nos. 14–15; Seznec 1959, 113–114; Réau 1964, 1:390, 2:56, nos. 268–269, pl. 39; Grimm (ed. 1972), 192–194, 213–214, 218–220, 222, nos. 127–128, 139, 142–143, 145; Arnason 1975, 24–25, figs. 68–69, pl. 14; Galiani and d'Épinay (ed. 1992–1997), 3:83–85, 91–93, 4:131, 135, 202; Schuttwolf 1995, 142–143, nos. 52–53, ill.

## RELATED WORKS

Modern copies in simple wooden frames in the Forschungsbibliothek Gotha in Schloss Friedenstein (Großer Bibliothekssaal).



Signature on cat. 56

1. From 25 Oct. to 3 Dec. 1771. On Houdon's involvement with Gotha see Frank, Mathies, and Poulet 2002b, 475–483.

2. GSA, Sign. 06/375, fols. 231–23v: "Vor 6 Wochen kam von Paris H[err] Houdon sculpteur und pensionnaires du Roi, welcher 4 Jahr in Italien war, und verscrieb ist worden um das Mausolée zu machen vor die verstorbenene Herzogin wovon er ein Model mit brachte, die Durch[lauchte] Herrschaft bathe ihn, Ihre Köpfe en Bas-relief zu bussieren, welches er versprach, wan ich ihm hülfe dan er häte nur Uhrlaub auf 14 Tage hier zu bleiben, der Prinz versprach es Ihm und wir arbeiten schon 6 wochen Tag und Nacht. heute sind wir fertig." The author is grateful to Petra Rau, Frankfurt, for this reference. As an *agrégé*, or candidate for membership, in the Académie royale, Houdon had to receive authorization for his trip to Gotha from the marquis de Marigny, director of the Bâtiments du Roi, for which he applied in Sept. 1771. See "Corr. Pierre et de Marigny," 1904, 241–242.

3. See Houdon's letter of July 1772, related to the shipment of several crates of his sculptures to Gotha (FLB, Chart A 712, fol. 111); reproduced in the Appendix to the present catalogue, lines 241–244; 416–417.

4. These events and details are known from correspondence among Ernst II, Grimm, and Galiani; see the essay "Houdon and the German Courts" in the present catalogue.

5. See Gisela M.A. Richter, *The Portraits of the Greeks* (London, 1965), 3:278, fig. 1975, for the image of Euthydemos I, who is shown on his coinage as an elderly man with a full face and a prominent lower lip.

6. See Appendix, lines 241–248; 415–418.

7. "To the divine Friedrich III of Saxe-Gotha, the best leader"; and "Ernst, son of the divine Friedrich, Duke of Saxe-Gotha, best leader, etc."

8. See "Optimo. Principi" and "Optimus," in Seth William Stevenson, et al., *A Dictionary of Roman Coins, Republican and Imperial* (London, reprint 1982), 587.

9. Wolfgang Steguweit, *Geschichte der Münzstätte Gotha vom 12. bis zum 19. Jahrhundert* (Weimar, 1987), 225–239.

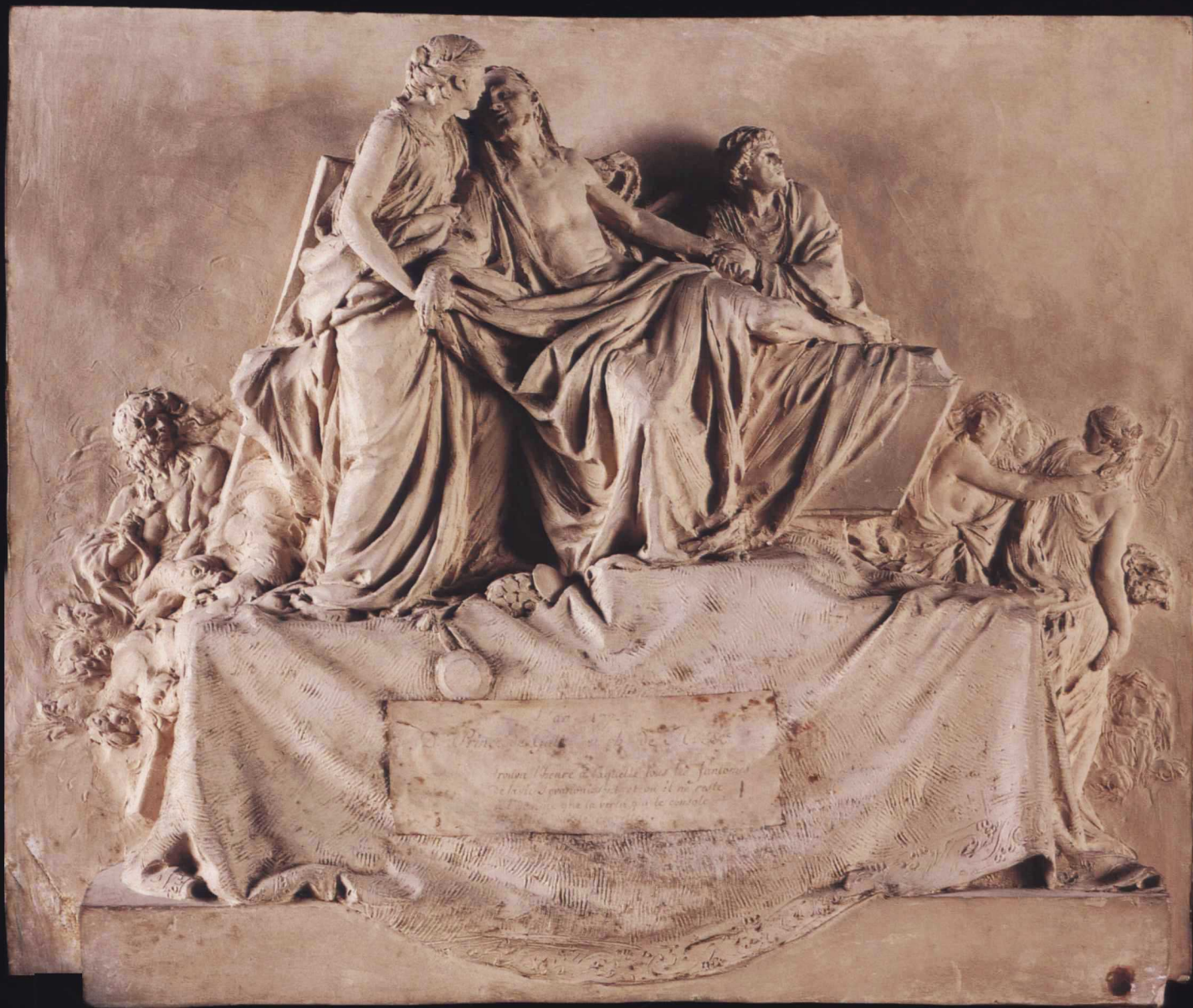
10. Vitry 1907b, 198.

11. "Verzeichniss der im sogenannten Antiken-Saale befindlichen Abgüsse, Büsten pp." (undated, ThStA, no. 63, ca. 1804–1827), under "Cap. III. An kleinen Modellen, antik und modern," fol. 6r, 37: "Büste der verwittweten Herzogin Charlotte, von Houdon."

12. *Eloge des tableaux...*, 1773, 75–76.

13. Salon cat. 1773, 55, no. 284/5.





an 4  
Le Prince...  
trava l'heure de sa gloire pour la justice  
et l'ordre...  
une si vraie qui le console

## + Model for the Tomb of Prince Aleksandr Mikhailovich Golitsyn (1723–1807)

1775

Terracotta

H. 42 cm, W. 50 cm, D. 17 cm

Inscribed in ink on paper label on front: *L'an 177[.] / Le. Prince de Gall[itzin] V[ice] Ch[ancelier] de R[ussie] & / Trouva l'heure à laquelle tous les fantômes / de la vie s'évanouissent et où il ne reste / à l'homme que la vertu qui le console et / l'amitié qui le regrette*

*Cachet de l'atelier* at bottom right

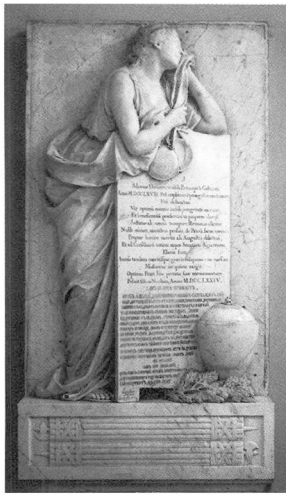
Musée du Louvre, Paris, département des sculptures, Gift of C. D. Caroillon de Vandeul, 1905 (inv. RF 1397)

By the early 1770s when the Golitsyn family, an old princely dynasty of Russian military leaders and statesmen, decided to commission personal funerary monuments from a French sculptor rather than a Russian, the practice was already well established in Moscow and St. Petersburg.<sup>1</sup> Houdon's association with the Golitsyns dates from around the same time he was commissioned by Aleksandr Stroganov to create a portrait bust of Catherine II (1773), generally considered the artist's first work for a Russian patron.<sup>2</sup> Houdon received commissions for four private tombs from the Golitsyns, the first two apparently from Prince Dmitrii Alekseevich (1734–1803), who was *chargé d'affaires* in Paris in 1761, then minister plenipotentiary there from 1763 to 1767, when he moved to The Hague to serve as ambassador until 1782. The prince was particularly close to Denis Diderot and Frédéric-Melchior Grimm; and in 1773, possibly representing his cousin Dmitrii Mikhailovich Golitsyn (1721–1793), then Russian ambassador in Vienna, he appears to have commissioned from Houdon marble tombs for Aleksei

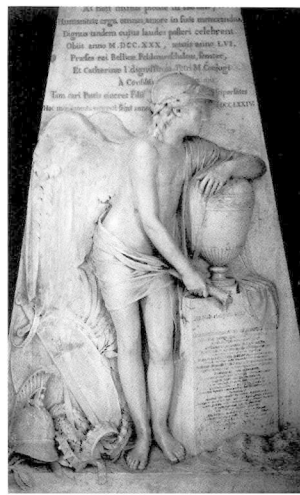
Dmitrievich Golitsyn (1697–1767) and Mikhail Mikhailovich Golitsyn (1685–1764), both carved in Paris and shipped to Moscow (figs. 1 and 2).

Two later commissions came from another cousin, Prince Aleksandr Mikhailovich Golitsyn (1723–1807), a former Russian ambassador to France and England, vice chancellor, and grand chamberlain, who, like his cousin at The Hague, corresponded with Grimm between 1764 and 1775 and was highly regarded by Diderot. Following the early death of his brother Piotr Mikhailovich (1738–1775), who was killed in a duel, he ordered two models for funerary monuments from Houdon in 1775—one for his brother and the other for himself, as a sort of memento mori, it seems. Diderot was to devise the iconographic programs.

Until the important recent discovery of an extensive correspondence involving Aleksandr Mikhailovich, Dmitrii Alekseevich, Diderot, and other parties, relatively little was known about these later commissions—apart from one surviving



1. Houdon, Tomb of Aleksei Dmitrievich Golitsyn, 1773–1774, marble, Shchusev State Museum of Architecture, Moscow.



2. Houdon, Tomb of Mikhail Mikhailovich Golitsyn, 1773–1774, marble, Shchusev State Museum of Architecture, Moscow.

model, mention in the catalogue for the Salon of 1777 (with the lost model for the tomb of Piotr Mikhailovich), a sketch in that catalogue by Gabriel de Saint-Aubin (fig. 3), and a letter from Jean-Baptiste Suard, an acquaintance of Diderot and Grimm, to the margrave of Bayreuth on 30 March 1775.<sup>3</sup> The handwritten inscription on the front of the Paris model clearly identifies it as being for the tomb of Aleksandr Mikhailovich.

Inspired by Jean-Baptiste Pigalle's dramatic monument for the *maréchal de Saxe*, begun in 1753 (Eglise de Saint-Thomas, Strasbourg), the present composition shows a dying man being placed in a sarcophagus, comforted by the allegorical figures of Virtue and Friendship. In the background at the right, in low relief, the figures of Abundance and Envy, representing the “*fantômes de la vie*,” according to Diderot's inscription—in other words, good and bad fortune—are seen fleeing. Although criticized for its strong reliance on allegory, for being “more literary than sculptural and more picturesque than monumental,”<sup>4</sup> the work's handling is nonetheless subtle and delicate.

On 3 March 1775 Dmitrii Alekseevich wrote from The Hague to Aleksandr Mikhailovich in St. Petersburg that Diderot had said that the latter's tomb would be very beautiful, which suggests that the commission had been under discussion for some time.<sup>5</sup> He sent the inscription (nearly identical to the one on the front of the Paris model), as an explanation for the entire monument, and clarified that whereas the iconographic program was by Diderot, its execution would be by Houdon.

Apparently Diderot joked that the patron would be financially ruined but would be compensated by “a beautiful thing, pathetic without being distressing; a great lesson, says [Diderot], for you and for others.” Not surprisingly, the ensuing correspondence focused increasingly on costs, which Dmitrii Alekseevich tried to play down as much as possible.<sup>6</sup> By the end of June 1775 Diderot sent another word of reassurance through Ivan Ivanovich Betskoi, also explaining some delays.<sup>7</sup>

Diderot's authorship, the inscription, and the iconographic scheme were confirmed in the letter from Suard to the margrave of Bayreuth, while Diderot's sepulchral aesthetics, as embodied in other earlier projects, were also recalled: “[Diderot] believed that he had to make an object of it that a man could have continuously in front of his eyes, without the imagination being too much distressed by it, and he has sought to moderate the lugubrious and melancholic ideas necessarily attached to such an image through sweet and consoling ideas.”<sup>8</sup> It was this concept of being touched by the design without being saddened that Aleksandr Mikhailovich particularly appreciated.<sup>9</sup>

By September Aleksandr Mikhailovich wrote Diderot that he was satisfied with the description of the tomb for Piotr Mikhailovich and that he wanted, in view of his brother's recent death, that monument to be completed first.<sup>10</sup> As for his own tomb, “which will have to belong to a man still alive, he is not that pressed, still having a great desire to live.” Until the second half of 1777 further correspondence concentrated on the



3. Gabriel de Saint-Aubin, sketch of model for the Tomb of Prince Aleksandr Mikhailovich Golitsyn in margin of Salon catalogue of 1777 (no. 254) (BNEst).

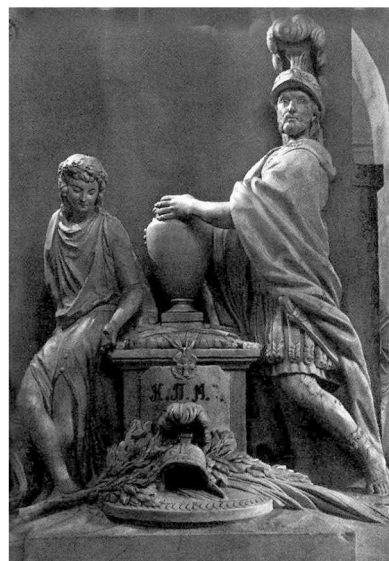
execution of the monument for Piotr Mikhailovich. On 16 May Diderot wrote Aleksandr Mikhailovich singing Houdon's praises — "a man more jealous of glory than of wealth" — then spelled out the artist's terms:<sup>11</sup> Houdon asked 36,000 francs if the figures for both tombs were to be carved in the round; he was willing to reduce his fee to 30,000 francs if they were to be placed against walls. Diderot insisted that Pigalle or Etienne-Maurice Falconet, older and more established, would ask twice these amounts, and he speculated that this would be true of Houdon in ten years, but now he was young and running "less after money than reputation." Finally, Diderot noted that the price for the two monuments was the same as that paid in 1774 by Dmitrii Mikhailovich for the earlier Golitsyn commissions.<sup>12</sup>

By August 1777 the cost of the tombs had become a major consideration for Aleksandr Mikhailovich. On the advice of a certain Fedot Ivanovich Creidemann from St. Petersburg, he asked Fedot Shubin to carve the tomb for Piotr Mikhailovich according to Houdon's model.<sup>13</sup> In January 1778 Diderot complained to Aleksandr Mikhailovich that Houdon had still not received any word regarding the project; if he wanted to withdraw his commission, he should simply inform the artist and thus free him to accept work from other clients.<sup>14</sup> Six weeks later Aleksandr Mikhailovich replied deceptively that Houdon's models had been delayed in transit and that he needed more time to consider them.<sup>15</sup> In the interim he sent the sculptor 600 livres for the second model, later increased to 1,200 for the two.<sup>16</sup> And he expressed regret that neither his nor Diderot's recommendations to Betskoi had resulted in a major commission for Houdon,<sup>17</sup> or a position as professor of sculpture at the Academy of Fine Arts in St. Petersburg.<sup>18</sup> This was a particularly interesting moment, as Falconet had just left the city after the failed first cast of his equestrian monument and after twelve years of dominating the art scene, thus leaving vacant one of the city's most important artistic positions. Indeed, Houdon never visited the new Russian capital, despite renewed efforts to entice him.<sup>19</sup>

Aside from the present model for the tomb of Aleksandr Mikhailovich, which Houdon gave to Diderot, and the tomb of Piotr Mikhailovich executed after a lost model (with considerable artistic license) by Shubin and Iakov Ivanovich Zemelhak (fig. 4), nothing appears to have survived from these commissions. In September 1781 — after the completion of his brother's monument — seemingly displeased with Shubin's and Zemelhak's work, Aleksandr Mikhailovich wrote to his cousin Dmitrii Mikhailovich, then in Paris, asking him to find a capable French

sculptor to execute his own tomb after Houdon's model.<sup>20</sup> Fearing that Houdon and Diderot might have been offended during the previous negotiations, however, he asked his cousin explicitly not to approach either one. In the end, Diderot's and Houdon's congenial composition remained unrealized.

CHRISTOPH FRANK



4. Fedot Ivanovich Shubin and Iakov Ivanovich Zemelhak, based on Houdon's model of the Tomb of Piotr Mikhailovich Golitsyn, 1775–1780, marble, Shchusev State Museum of Architecture, Moscow.

#### PROVENANCE

Mentioned in Houdon's list of his own works (ca. 1784): "En 1777... No. 48. Un modele de monument pour le prince de Galizin, vice chancelier de Russie. No. 49. Un modelle [sic] de monument pour le prince de Galizin, mort d'un duelle" (Vitry 1907b, 200–201); probably given by Houdon to Diderot sometime later; collection of Marie Angélique de Vandeuil, Diderot's daughter; collection of Charles Henri (called Albert) Caroillon de Vandeuil (1837–1911). Donated by the latter to the Louvre in 1905.

#### EXHIBITIONS

Paris, Salon cat. 1777, no. 254: "Deux Esquisses de Tombeaux, pour deux Princes Gallitzin. Ces monuments doivent être exécutées en marbre, de grandeur naturelle"; Paris 1928, 91–92, no. 94; Paris 1958, 106–107, no. 128; *Kunst und Geist Frankreichs im 18. Jahrhundert* [exh. cat., Oberes Belvedere] (Vienna, 1966), 172–173, no. 126, fig. 69; London 1972, 255–256, no. 395, pl. 50; Paris 1986, 258–259, no. 397.

#### REFERENCES

Dierks 1887, 124; Jean Guiffrey, "Notizie di Francia." *L'Arte* 9 (1906), 456–459, 458; André Michel, "Les Récentes Acquisitions du département

de la sculpture (moyen âge, renaissance et temps modernes) au Musée du Louvre," *GBA* 35, 3rd ser., 48th year (1906), 412–413; Réau 1914, 43; Réau 1917, 134–139; Giacometti 1918–1919, 1:67, 2:24–25, 3:63; Louvre cat. 1922, 2:63, no. 1372; Réau 1924a, 193–195; Brinckmann 1925, 134–135, pl. 75; Giacometti 1929, 2:208; Louis Réau, "Les Maquettes des sculpteurs français du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle," *BSHAF* (1936), 23; "Jean-Antoine Houdon," *Connaissance des Arts*, no. 7 (15 Sept. 1952), 44, ill. p. 45; Réau 1964, 1:96, 257–258, 2:18, no. 32, pl. XXVII; Arnason 1975, 42, 62, fig. 96; Hecht 1994, 32–34; Dulac 1997; Louvre cat. 1998, 2:426; Karp 1998, 32–116.

#### RELATED WORKS

Shchusev State Museum of Architecture, Moscow (inv. P. VIIIa 23 and 24); *Tomb of Mikhail Mikhailovich Golitsyn* and *Tomb of Aleksei Dmitrievich Golitsyn* by Houdon, 1773–1774, marble. See Réau 1964, 2:18, pt. 3, nos. 29–30, pl. XXVI; and Salon cat. 1773, 45–46, nos. 229–230; Bachaumont 1780, 13:147–148; and *Corr. littéraire*, 10:379.

Shchusev State Museum of Architecture, Moscow (inv. P. VIIIa 25); *Tomb of Prince Piotr Mikhailovich Golitsyn*, by Fedot Ivanovich Shubin and Iakov Ivanovich Zemelhak after a lost model by Houdon, 1775–1780, marble (originally in the Small Cathedral of the Virgin of the Don at the Donskoi Monastery in Moscow, then in the church of the Archangel Michael at the same monastery from 1929 until recently, together with the other two tombs by Houdon). See J. I. Arenkova and G. I. Mekhova, *Donskoi monastyr* (Moscow, 1970), pls. 49–50; and Karp 1998, 39 n. 1, for further bibliography. In late eighteenth century Moscow this tomb was considered a sight worth seeing; according to Fortia de Piles 1796, 3:325: "Monastère de Donski... Beaucoup de famille nobles y ont leur sépulture: le prince Galitzin, mort en 1775, y a un beau mausolée en marbre: plusieurs autres sont avec des bas-reliefs, dont quelques-uns assez bien traités."

#### Drawing

Sketch by Gabriel de Saint-Aubin in his copy of the Salon cat. of 1777 (see Dacier 1909–1921, 4:49, no. 254; and 59–60, 60 n. 1).

1. See Bernard Black, "Vassé's Tombs for Two Russian Princesses: The Troubetskoy—Galitzin Monuments: New Discoveries and an Old Mystery," *GBA* (Oct. 1996); Paris and New York 1997–1998, 136–140, no. 53; and Sergei Androssov, "Monuments funéraires exécutés par Pajou et Vassé pour la Russie," in *Augustin Pajou et ses contemporains*, ed. Guilhem Scherf (Paris, 1999), 465–480.

2. On 23 Mar. 1770 Diderot wrote to his sister: "The Prince [Dmitrii Alekseevich] of Golitsyn ordered my bust to be made"; see Diderot (ed. 1955–1970), 10:40–41, no. 603. Although the prince is mentioned, it is not clear to which bust Diderot refers or whether it was really commissioned from Houdon; there is no supporting proof.

3. See Karp 1998. For the letter from Suard see Diderot (ed. 1955–1970), 14:135–136. See also Salon cat. 1777, 49, no. 254.

4. Réau 1964, 1:258, pt. 2.

5. Dmitrii Alekseevich Golitsyn to Aleksandr Mikhailovich Golitsyn (hereafter DAG and AMG) (RGADA, Fonds 1263, opis 1, no. 1124, fol. 37; see Karp 1998, 54, no. 4).

6. AMG to DAG, 16 [27] Mar. 1775; and DAG to AMG, 21 Apr. 1775 (RGADA, no. 4261, fol. 4, and no. 1125, fol. 63; see Karp 1998, 55–56, nos. 5–6). On the dual system of dating in eighteenth-century Russia see note 1 in the essay "A Man More Jealous of Glory than of Wealth" in the present catalogue.

7. Betskoi to AMG (RGADA, no. 590, fol. 24v-25v; see Karp 1998, 57, no. 7).

8. Paris 1986, 258–259, no. 397. On Diderot's involvement in earlier sepulchral monuments see Frank, Mathies, and Poulet 2002a; and Frank, Mathies, and Poulet 2002b.

9. AMG to Diderot, 30 Dec. 1775 [10 Jan. 1776] (RGADA, no. 4458, fol. 1–2; see Karp 1998, 59, no. 9).

10. AMG to Diderot (RGADA, no. 4847, fol. 1v-2v; see Karp 1998, 67–68, no. 12).

11. Diderot to AMG (RGADA, no. 1243a, fol. 6r-7v; see Karp 1998, 77–79, no. 20).

12. Until further research is carried out, it is difficult to determine the exact roles of DAG and Dmitrii Mikhailovich Golitsyn (hereafter DMG). Réau 1964, 1:257–259, pt. 2, incorrectly, held the former solely responsible for all four tombs; involvement of the

latter has only recently come to light with the discovery of the letter from Diderot (see Karp 1998, 79).

13. Karp 1998, 84, no. 21.

14. Diderot to AMG (RGADA, no. 1243a, fol. 4–5v; see Karp 1998, 90–91, no. 26).

15. AMG to Diderot (RGADA, no. 1243a, fol. 10–11; see Karp 1998, 95–97, no. 2).

16. DAG to AMG, 10 Mar. 1779; Houdon's receipt for 600 livres, 16 July 1778; and DAG to AMG, 6 July 1779 (RGADA, no. 1125, fols. 102v, 104, and 110; see Karp 1998, 110–111, nos. 39, 40, and 42).

17. AMG to Diderot, 12 [23] Mar. 1778 (RGADA, no. 1243a, fol. 10–11; see Karp 1998, 96–97).

18. This last hypothesis is advanced in Karp 1998, 92 n. 1. It is supported by Nicolas-François Gillet's departure from St. Petersburg in Sept. 1777.

19. See the essay "A Man More Jealous of Glory than of Wealth" in the present catalogue.

20. AMG to DMG, Sept. 1781 (RGADA, no. 4136, fol. 2v; see Karp 1998, 114, no. 43).

## + Charles-François Du Périer, called Dumouriez (1739–1823)

1793

Terracotta on circular terracotta base

H. 63 cm (with base: 77 cm), W. 45 cm, D. 26 cm

Inscribed on left side of base: *HO*

Musée des Beaux-Arts, Angers (inv. MBA 760)

Houdon did the bust of Dumouriez at a moment of glory in the general's life. Born in Cambrai, an army volunteer at eighteen, discharged as unfit in 1763 with the cross of Saint-Louis, Dumouriez carried out various more-or-less secret missions abroad during his youth, for which he was eventually imprisoned in the Bastille. Freed with the rise of Louis XVI in 1774, he resumed his army career, was named a colonel, and in 1778 commanded the naval base at Cherbourg. He established ties with the revolutionaries and was a familiar figure at the Club des Jacobins. Rising quickly to power during the Revolution, he was given the military command stretching from Nantes to Bordeaux in 1791. He became a lieutenant general in February 1792, then minister of foreign affairs on 15 March. Allied with the prowar policy of the Girondins, briefly serving as minister of war, he became commander in chief of the armies of Nord and Ardennes and won the victory of Valmy (20 September 1792), alongside the duc de Chartres, eldest son of Philippe Egalité. He then won the victory of Jemmapes (6 November 1792), again with Louis-Philippe, which allowed him to occupy the southern Low Countries. On his return to Paris on 29 December 1792, he was welcomed as a conquering hero by the Girondins.

It was at that time that Houdon made a life mask of him in preparation to sculpt his portrait. On 2 February 1793 Dumouriez returned to the army of Nord, conquered the United Provinces, and settled in Brussels. But misfortune, both political and military, followed glory (he opposed the Convention nationale and refused to explain himself in Paris; and he lost the battle of Neerwinden and had to evacuate the Netherlands). He turned over to the Austrians the minister of war, Pierre de Riel, comte de Beurnonville, and four representatives on a mission to arrest him, but he did not manage to rally troops behind him when he wanted to march on Paris. He was therefore forced to surrender to the Austrians on 5 April 1793, accompanied by the duc de Chartres, his aide-de-camp. Driven out everywhere he went, in 1800 he obtained asylum in England, where he would die forgotten in 1823.

According to Louis-Philippe, who knew Dumouriez intimately, Houdon executed the life mask after the victory of Jemmapes. The mask was a better likeness than the marble bust at the Palais Royal and a greater inspiration for the painters charged with reconstituting the glorious victories of the Revolution.<sup>1</sup> In a letter to his secretary and librarian Vatout, dated 11 November 1822, Louis-Philippe explains: "The thing that best



captures what [Dumouriez] was like when he commanded our armies, is the bust in my home. . . . It was in Houdon's studio at the Bibliothèque du Roi that I discovered [the mask]. That studio was a gold mine. There M. Barrière could find the busts of many of the people whose memoirs he is publishing. Houdon, who is still alive, rambles incoherently and can no longer distinguish one from another, but Mme Houdon knows them all."<sup>2</sup>

Dumouriez did not have the most commanding physical appearance. He had a "little body, well set and nervous; a plain, almost ugly face. . . . small, but sharp and bold eyes, a large mouth. . . . sometimes fine and disdainful. The sound of his voice was hollow, but with a clear and firm tone; his manners were curt without being crude."<sup>3</sup> Mme Roland, whose husband was a minister at the same time as Dumouriez, described him as a man "who has a nimble mind, shifty eyes, and of whom one ought to be more wary than of anyone else in the world":

I found him a very witty rogue, a bold cavalier who had to make fun of everything apart from his own interests and glory. . . . Diligent and brave, a good general, a skillful courtier, a good writer, expressing himself with ease, capable of great undertakings; all he lacked was more character for his wit, or a cooler head to pursue the plans he had devised. Agreeable with his friends, and prepared to deceive them all; gallant with the women, but unable to inspire anything in those who might be seduced by tenderness, he was made for the ministerial intrigues of a corrupt court. His brilliant qualities and his interest in glory persuaded some that he could be usefully employed in the armies of the Republic; and perhaps he might have toed the line if the Convention had behaved itself, since he is too clever not to act like an honorable man when his reputation and interests advise him to do so. . . . Dumouriez is active, vigilant, witty, and brave, made for war and intrigue. A skillful officer, he was, even in the judgment of his jealous colleagues, the only one capable of properly leading a large army; a deft courtier, he was better suited, by virtue of his character and his immorality, to the old court than to the new regime.<sup>4</sup>

Houdon's bust admirably captures the character of this ambitious and two-faced general, "this dangerous schemer":<sup>5</sup> tight lips, oblique but piercing gaze, a face that communicates a cruel firmness. The military uniform, with its two large lapels starchily turned back, hardly softens the authoritarian impression made



1. Jean-Sébastien Rouillard, Général Dumouriez, 1834, oil on canvas, château de Versailles.

by the portrait. The painter Jean-Sébastien Rouillard was directly inspired by it for his three-quarter-length portrait of the general, done in 1834 for the château de Versailles (fig. 1).<sup>6</sup>

Houdon's bust of the plebeian Dumouriez stands in contrast to those he did of the elegant aristocrats, the marquis de Lafayette (cat. 45) and Jacques-Antoine-Hippolyte de Guibert, whose grace, in the first case, and wit, in the second, the sculptor rendered with benevolence. In Houdon's gallery of portraits, Dumouriez, wearing a strict military uniform, could be the brother of John Paul Jones (cat. 44), whose virile face is self-assured, with a look of tenacious determination.

Houdon was meticulous in preparing to sculpt a portrait, taking his subjects' measurements with a pair of calipers and even making life or death masks.<sup>7</sup> David d'Angers, though he admired Houdon and possessed several of his works—including the bust of Dumouriez—did not like this emphasis on the reproduction of reality: "Houdon did his busts the same size as the model, using a mold taken from life. That is a mistake. Nature molded never renders the man. The physiognomy of an illustrious figure must be modeled in full freedom in the artist's mind."<sup>8</sup> This remark criticizes the intent, but Houdon never thought the mask taken from a living or dead man, or rigorous measurements, could take the preeminent place of the sculptor's work of plastic transcription. His *Dumouriez* is not a pure anatomical reproduction. Houdon's genius lay in making use of reality in order to shape it, to cultivate it with sensitivity and intelligence. If Dumouriez takes on new life in this portrait bust, he does so through the artist's magic and not the anatomist's science.





Back view of cat. 58

#### PROVENANCE

Probably the model for the marble bust commissioned by Philippe Egalité, made from the life mask done in the winter of 1792–1793. Gift to the city of Angers by David d'Angers, as set out in a letter of 5 Dec. 1836: "J'ai été assez heureux pour faire l'acquisition d'une terre cuite exécutée par le célèbre Houdon: c'est pour ainsi dire un manuscrit, la terre étant l'oeuvre de l'artiste seul et sa première pensée. Elle représente le général Dumouriez. . . J'aurai l'honneur de vous l'envoyer pour votre musée." See Angers 1994–1995, 76 n. 2, which mentions letters from the sculptor between 1834 and 1839 attesting to his fondness for this bust.

#### EXHIBITIONS

Paris 1878, no. 475; Versailles 1937, no. 279; London 1972, no. 394, pl. 55; *Louis-Philippe. L'Homme et le Roi 1773–1850* [exh. cat., Archives nationales and

Hôtel de Rohan] (Paris, 1974–1975), no. 125, ill.; *Autour de David d'Angers. Sculptures du XVIIIe siècle et du début du XIXe siècle dans les collections des musées d'Angers*, Houdon entries by Patrick Le Nouène [exh. cat., Musée des Beaux-Arts] (Angers, 1994–1995), no. 19 ill.

#### REFERENCES

Mercier, *Notice des tableaux du museum d'Angers. . .* (Angers, 1838), no. 55; Jouin 1870, 234, no. 742; Jouin 1881, 269, no. 760; Gonse 1904, 47–48, ill.; Réau 1924b, 15–17; Giacometti 1929, 2:40–42, ill.; Jacques Levron, "A propos d'un anniversaire. Les Œuvres de Houdon à Angers," *Les Cahiers de Pincé et des musées de la ville d'Angers*, n.s., no. 4 (Jan.-June 1941), 78, ill.; Morant 1950, 12, pl. 7; Réau 1964, 1:89, 441–442, 2:48–49, no. 221, pl. 121; Arnason 1975, 91, fig. 187.

#### RELATED WORKS

Marble probably commissioned by Philippe Egalité in 1792 and executed with the help of an apprentice, who wrote in a notebook on 22 Mar. 1793, "comancé le bust dumourié," and on 11 July, "reçu de madame Houdon. . . 150 [livres] pour le bust de Dumourié" (BMV, MS G 179); see H. Léonard, "Un aide-sculpteur de Houdon et de François Masson," *Mémoires de la Société des sciences morales, des lettres, et des arts de Seine-et-Oise* 18 (Versailles, 1894), 154. Still housed at the Palais Royal, Paris, in 1822 (letter from Louis-Philippe to his secretary Vatout, 11 Nov. 1822; see text above). Badly damaged with a bust of Voltaire during a palace fire, Feb. 1848: "entièrement perdus, la restauration en est impossible" (AMN, S 12, 2 May 1848); possibly restored, however, before being sold after Louis-Philippe's death: sale, rue des Jeûneurs, Paris, 28 Apr. 1851, 37, no. 331, lists "Le général Dumouriez. Buste en marbre" without the artist's name (the previous item is a bust of Voltaire, identified as being by Houdon).

Tinted plaster retouched with a tool; inscribed on truncation of right arm: "houdon"; possibly cast from the marble, as there are slight variations compared with the terracotta. See Giacometti 1929, 2:41–42; reproduced in Réau 1924b, 16, as belonging to M. Bacri, a dealer.

Plaster cast from the Angers terracotta; made by Jacquet in May 1835 for the historical galleries at the château de Versailles (Versailles cat. 1993, 131, no. 533, ill.).

Engraving by Quenedy, "d'après Houdon," showing Dumouriez in profile, opposite General Baptiste, BNEst (N2, microfilm D 131612).

Late engraving by Dien reproducing Houdon's bust, BNEst (N2, microfilm D 131600).

1. See the paintings for the 1792 room at the château de Versailles (in situ) in which Dumouriez is omnipresent. Louis-Philippe wanted Horace Vernet to use the mask to capture Dumouriez' features in his paintings of the battles of Valmy and Jemmapes commissioned for the Palais Royal (National Gallery, London).

2. Quoted in Réau 1964, 1:441–442. Houdon's posthumous sale of 1828 mentions, under no. 73: "Un grand nombre de masques de personnages

célèbres, la plupart moulés de leur vivant, tels que ceux de M. Moitte, statuaire, M. Arnaud, de l'Académie française, etc." The mask of Dumouriez is not included. Barrière edited the memoirs of Dumouriez, among others (*Mémoires relatifs à l'histoire de France pendant le 18e siècle*, vols. 11–12).

3. Pierre Louis Roederer, *Mémoires sur la Révolution, le Consulat et l'Empire* (Paris, 1942), 86.

4. Mme Roland (ed. 1986), 65, 67, and 161.

5. Bombelles (ed. 1993), 3:322, 7 Apr. 1792.

6. Constans 1995, 2:803, no. 4535, ill.

7. See the essay "Houdon, 'Above All Modern Artists,'" in the present catalogue.

8. Jouin 1878, 49. The assistant who helped Houdon take the life mask of Robespierre (unknown date) was also employed by David d'Angers. See Réau 1964, 1:88–89.

## + Mme Adrien-Cyprien Duquesnoy, née Elisabeth-Antoinette Jadelot

Circa 1801–1803

White marble with black and gray flecks on white marble base

H. 57 cm (with base: 68.6 cm), W. 46.2 cm

The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, Roscoe and Margaret Oakes Collection (inv. 54.9)

## + Adrien-Cyprien Duquesnoy (1759–1808)

Circa 1801–1803

White marble on separate white marble base

H. 65 cm (with base: 78 cm), W. 49 cm, D. 20 cm

Inscribed on center back: *houдон*

Musée national des châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon (inv. MV 4965)

Adrien-Cyprien Duquesnoy, a lawyer and publicist from Lorraine, belonged to the group of cultured, idealistic, moderate local leaders who emerged all over France in the early phase of the Revolution.<sup>1</sup> Interested in the practical problems of agriculture and commerce, he was an enthusiastic member of the Third Estate in the Estates General and the Constituent Assembly, where he sided with the likes of Mirabeau. Duquesnoy was elected mayor of Nancy in 1792 but was prosecuted as a royalist under the Terror and barely escaped the guillotine. He resurfaced on the political scene in Paris under the Consulate (1799–1804) as director of the bureau of statistics and advisor to Napoleon's brother Lucien Bonaparte, the new minister of the interior. When in November 1802 he was named mayor of Paris' 10th arrondissement (where Houdon lived) and in March 1803 he became a member of the General Council of Almshouses, a brilliant career seemed to lie ahead of him.

He fell into disgrace, however, after the marriage of Lucien Bonaparte and Alexandrine Jouberton (née Jacob de Bleschamp) in his district on 26 October 1803, a union of which Napoleon fiercely disapproved. Although supposedly stripped at once of all public positions, Duquesnoy was awarded membership in the Legion of Honor in June 1804; and he must have retained

some political influence and duties, for he officiated at the marriage of Houdon's daughter Sabine to Henry Jean Pineu-Duval on 30 September 1805.<sup>2</sup> He later retreated to Rouen, where he had established his own spinning mill. In 1808 he committed suicide by drowning himself in the Seine, an act attributed to his severe financial difficulties.<sup>3</sup> Duquesnoy kept a journal recording his efforts in the Constituent Assembly, was the author of works on charitable organizations and on the history and rights of the poor, and translated texts from German and English. Virtually nothing is known about his wife, Elisabeth-Antoinette Jadelot, called Mirabelle, a lawyer's daughter from Nancy with whom he had one son.

The half-length busts of M. and Mme Duquesnoy share the same elaborate format and were doubtless conceived as companion pieces. The couple's heads are turned toward one another, while their draperies are drawn in opposite directions. Under his togalike wrap, M. Duquesnoy wears the typical costume of the French Consulate. His cravat is wrapped around his neck several times up to the chin and is knotted in front, and his double-breasted coat with standing turnover collar is buttoned up. A receding hairline frames his high, furrowed forehead and bald cranium. His slightly bowed head and







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*Back view of cat. 59*



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*Back view of cat. 60*

sorrowful face, dominated by a long nose, piercing eyes, and thin lips, seem to convey tension and emotional instability.<sup>4</sup> The bust is unusual in that, possibly owing to the shape of the marble block, it is very thin from front to back but has a deep truncation. It has also been overcleaned and suffers from the consequential loss of detail and finish.

The portrait of Mme Duquesnoy, on the other hand, stands out for its pristine condition and luminous surface. Following the neoclassical fashion, the sitter's hair is artistically arranged "à la grecque," with a protruding chignon held in place by braids, and loose curls around her face and neck. This lavishness contrasts with Mme Duquesnoy's plain face, double chin, plump build, and simple attire. Her thin muslin top is almost completely covered by an ample shawl that is gracefully wrapped around her shoulders and corresponds to her husband's drapery. The bust is beautifully carved and is characteristic, in all its neoclassical refinement, of Houdon's gift for rendering natural textures such as the hair and skin. It shares these qualities with the slightly later portrait of Dorothea von Rodde-Schlözer (cat. 61), who, her intellectual accomplishments notwithstanding, was a middle-class housewife and mother like Mme Duquesnoy. Houdon depicts both sitters as respectable women of standing, emphasizing assets such as abundant hair, healthy skin, and even features without altering their unpretentious and down-to-earth appearance.

Houdon's portraits of the Duquesnoys were executed at the height of Adrien's power and wealth, after 1800 and before his fall from grace. Through his work in the ministry of the interior, he was involved with the administration of the arts and would certainly have been familiar with Houdon's reputation. During these years his friend and superior Lucien Bonaparte ordered a posthumous bust of his first wife, Christine Boyer, from Houdon, who may also have done his first portrait of Napoleon around the same time.<sup>5</sup> In April 1801 Duquesnoy had acquired a distinguished property in Paris' 12th arrondissement, the château de Monceaux, in which he welcomed other intellectuals and men of letters.<sup>6</sup> Either its large entrance hall or its spacious salon on the ground floor would have provided the appropriate setting for displaying the owner's marble busts.

ULRIKE D. MATHIES

## PROVENANCE

## + M. Duquesnoy +

Bequeathed to the Musée de Versailles by M. Marin in 1866; on long-term loan to the Louvre in 1900; transferred to the Musée historique lorrain in Nancy, 1966.

## + Mme Duquesnoy +

Supposedly from the sitter's family (collections of her brother M. Jadelot; Mme Alfonse de Faultrière; Mme Aimée Lascoux; and Mme Riberon); [Camoin] sale, Paris, 14 Nov. 1949, no. 95, pl. II (500,000 francs); [not in Galerie Charpentier sale, Paris, 23 May 1950, as stated in Réau 1964, 1:127]; acquired from French and Co., New York, 5 May 1954, with funds provided by Roscoe and Margaret Oakes.

## EXHIBITIONS

## + M. Duquesnoy +

Paris 1900a, 46, ill.; Paris 1900b, 230, no. 1684 (mistakenly as "buste terre cuite"); Paris 1928, 35, no. 18, ill. facing p. 34; *La Révolution française dans l'histoire, dans la littérature, dans l'art* [exh. cat., Musée Carnavalet] (Paris, 1939), 162, no. 1150

## + Mme Duquesnoy +

Paris 1939, 163, no. 1151; Worcester 1964, 116–119, ill.

## REFERENCES

## + M. Duquesnoy +

Lami 1910–1911, 1:432; Giacometti 1918–1919, 2:148–149; Giacometti 1929, 2:42–43; Réau 1964, 1:442–443, 2:49, no. 222, pl. CXX; Arnason 1975, 98, 119 n. 240, fig. 191, pl. 128b; Versailles cat. 1993, 133, no. 547.

## + Mme Duquesnoy +

Réau 1964, 1:443, 2:49, no. 223, pl. CXXII; Arnason 1975, 97–98, 118–119 n. 238, fig. 190, pl. 128a.

## RELATED WORKS

## + M. Duquesnoy +

*Terracotta*

Posthumous sale of the contents of Houdon's studio, 15–17 Dec. 1828, no number (6 francs; see Réau 1964, 1:119), probably identical with the bust depicted in Boilly's paintings of the sculptor's studio (cat. 66) on the lower shelf on the back wall, between *Diana* and *La Frileuse*.

*Modern plasters*

Musée national du château de Versailles (inv. MV 6674); H. 66 cm (with base: 79 cm), W. 53 cm, D. 29 cm; made after the marble by the workshop of the Musées nationaux, Paris, probably around 1900; entered into the collection in 1942 (Versailles cat. 1993, 133, no. 548).

Palais du Trocadéro, Paris, in 1910. See Enlart and Roussel 1910, 221, no. G 147.

## + Mme Duquesnoy +

A terracotta-colored bust is shown in Boilly's 1804 painting of *Houdon in His Studio*, Musée des arts décoratifs, Paris (cat. 66, fig. 1), behind the legs of the *Seated Voltaire*.

Signature on cat. 60



1. On Duquesnoy see most recently Stuart Woolf, "Les Bases sociales du Consulat. Un mémoire d'Adrien Duquesnoy," *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine* 31 (Oct.-Dec. 1984), 597–618, and references therein; *Dictionnaire de biographie française* 12 (Paris, 1970), cols. 631–632; and Robert de Crèvecoeur, ed., *Journal d'Adrien Duquesnoy*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1894).

2. BMV, F 945 (4), no. 44.

3. Most older dictionaries make no mention of Duquesnoy's suicide; see *Biographie universelle, ancienne et moderne* (Paris, 1811–1862), 12:334–335. But a contemporary source unkindly suspected that "he spread the news of his death in order to facilitate his flight to Rome"; see Aulard 1923, 3:495.

4. Houdon's bust cannot be compared to other portraits of the sitter, as Duquesnoy is not among the engraved likenesses of members of the National Assembly (BNEst, Na41a-45). See Henri Bouchot,

*Le Cabinet des estampes de la Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris*, vol. 2 (Paris, n.d.).

5. Réau 1964, 1:454, 456–457, 2:47–48, 51, nos. 214 and 242, pl. CXVII.

6. This property disappeared in the nineteenth century and is not related to the famous parc de Monceau. See *Des Ternes aux Batignolles. Promenade historique dans le XVIIe arrondissement* [exh. cat., Mairie du XVIIe et Musée Carnavalet] (Paris, 1986), 40, 44, no. 45.



## + Dorothea von Rodde-Schlözer (1770–1825)

Circa 1803–1806

White marble on gray marble base

H. 54.3 cm (with base: 69.8 cm), W. 48.2 cm

Inscribed on truncation of proper right arm: *houdon. f.*

Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Skulpturensammlung (inv. M 230)

Contemporary sources describe Dorothea von Rodde-Schlözer as an extraordinary individual, with “a noble, masculine character, noticeable in her beautiful profile as well as in her movements and the way she talks and acts.”<sup>1</sup> Famous in her day, Dorothea was the first woman to receive the degree of Doctor of Philosophy from a German university. She was raised as a pedagogical experiment by her “enlightened” father, August Ludwig Schlözer, a distinguished professor of history and politics in Göttingen, prolific writer-publisher, and educationalist, who was determined to disprove the theories of an opponent using the example of his firstborn child. In 1787, when only seventeen, Dorothea took the masters examination at the University of Göttingen, which included comprehensive tests in mathematics, mineralogy, history, Latin, and architecture, and was awarded a Ph.D.—an honor for her father as much as for herself. Her achievement was published all over Europe and even in the United States, where the *Columbian Magazine* dedicated a three-page article to the “celebrated learned lady, in the Electorate of Hanover, who was thought worthy of the highest academical honours.”<sup>2</sup>

After a financially advantageous marriage to the older merchant and senator Mattheus Rodde, Dorothea presided over a

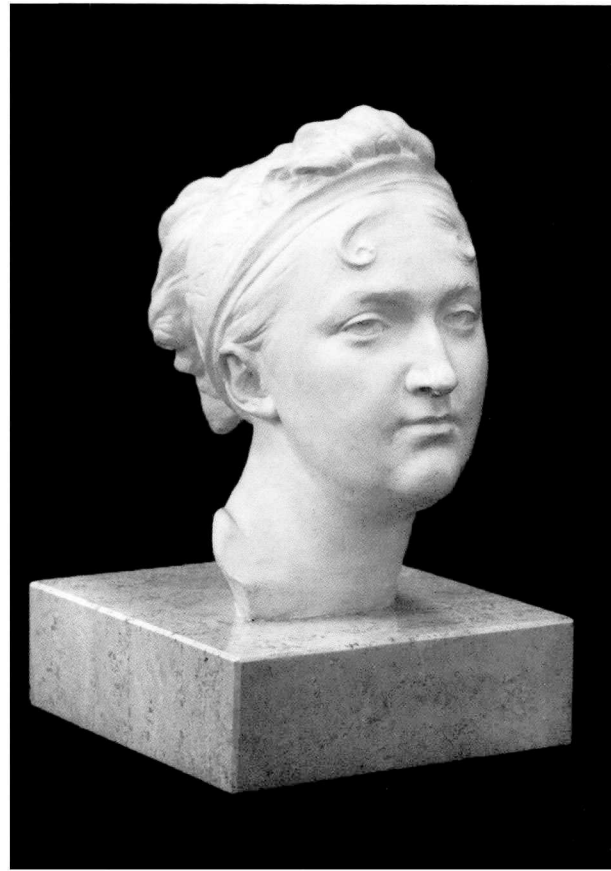
residence in the independent city of Lübeck that became a center of intellectual and social life, attracting visitors from all over Germany and France. In 1794 she entered into a relationship with the French writer Charles Villers and established an unconventional, semipublic ménage à trois. Her life took a tragic turn when her husband’s business declared bankruptcy in 1810 and he grew prematurely senile, then Villers and two of her children died. Frail from disease herself, Dorothea traveled to southern France to save the life of her only surviving daughter and died in Avignon at the age of only fifty-five.

On two earlier trips to Paris, from May through September 1801 and from fall 1803 to June 1805, Dorothea visited the usual tourist attractions and salons, met with important people, and was celebrated for her accomplishments. On her second trip she was even introduced to the Empress Josephine, who was delighted with her vivacity and cheerfulness.<sup>3</sup> In cultural matters the “Domherr” Meyer from Hamburg was her guide through historical sites, museums, and the studios of famous artists such as Jacques-Louis David, Jean-Baptiste Isabey, and Anicet-Charles-Gabriel Lemonnier.<sup>4</sup> It must have been in this way that she met Houdon, who was supposedly so impressed by her appearance that he asked her to sit for him.<sup>5</sup> The plaster





1. Houdon, Dorothea von Rodde-Schlözer, 1801–1802, plaster, Niedersächsische Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Göttingen.



2. Fragment of plaster bust by Houdon of Dorothea von Rodde-Schlözer, before 1806, Niedersächsische Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, Göttingen.

bust of “Mme. Rodde” was exhibited in the Salon of 1802 (no. 432), followed by the marble in 1806 (no. 607).

The present marble bust shows a woman in her early thirties who is not conventionally beautiful. Her features, however, are even and well formed, and she has a calm, engaging expression. Her hair, arranged in the fashion of the time, is bound in a bandeau, with two curls falling onto her forehead and the rest drawn back into long ringlets. She wears a scarf around her shoulders that covers most of her low-cut dress. The subtlety of the surface and the detail of characterization place this marble among the finest of Houdon’s late works. Especially the delicately rendered eyes framed by somewhat heavy lids, the softness of the skin, and the texture of the beautifully dressed hair are evidence of the sculptor’s enduring abilities.

A variant of this bust represents Dorothea with a scarf wrapped around her head like a turban, while her face and torso

are basically unchanged (fig. 1).<sup>6</sup> Although similar in format, the entire appearance and attitude are very different: Dorothea looks rougher and less well groomed, the neckline of her dress is more closed, and instead of the complicated, fashionable Empire hairstyle she has a kerchief tied over her forehead, suggesting the working-class style worn during the height of the Revolution and still popular in the early 1800s. If it is true that Houdon did Dorothea’s portrait on his own initiative in 1801, it is conceivable that he first created his personal vision of her. Without an official commission he would have been free to emphasize certain traits: her strong character, her intellectuality, her qualities as scholar and liberal thinker—all expressed in the portrait with turban, exhibited in the Salon of 1802. When a more formal portrait was ordered, Houdon could easily have adapted the earlier bust, giving it a more sophisticated and fashionable look. The modifications in dress

and hairstyle would not have required additional sittings, and this practice was consistent with Houdon's habit of deriving several variants from the same basic model.

The present marble is almost certainly identical with the bust shown in the Salon of 1806, as no other marble has survived or has been documented. The Salon review in *Le Pausanias français* confirms that the exhibited bust was of the same type as the Berlin marble, alluding to the sitter's hairstyle, which would not have been visible under the scarf of the earlier variant. This review, while criticizing some minor faults, notes that the face has been sculpted with care and with a "soft and agreeable chisel."<sup>7</sup>

ULRIKE D. MATHIES

#### PROVENANCE

From the family of Dorothea von Rodde-Schlözer (through her daughter Dorothea, to granddaughter Auguste von Lasperg, to great-grandson Constantin von Geysso, and to his wife, Elisabeth von Geysso); offered, but not sold, for 50,000 Reichs-Mark through Rudolph Lepke's Kunst-Auctions-Haus, Berlin, 5–6 Mar. 1929, 66, no. 451, pls. 1–2 (ill. with a separate square marble base); sold by Elisabeth von Geysso to Dr. Jacob Hirsch in 1938 (40,000 Reichs-Mark); brought to the U.S. where it stayed during World War II; supposedly offered for sale in 1954 (Mansfeld 1955, 244 n. 197); acquired at Jacob Hirsch sale, Adolph Hess AG and William H. Schab, Lucerne, 7 Dec. 1957, 46, no. 146, pl. 67 by the Kaiser-Friedrich-Museums-Verein (30,000 Swiss francs).

#### EXHIBITIONS

Paris, Salon cat. 1806, III, no. 607: "Mme Rodde—Buste en marbre"; *French and English Art Treasures of the XVIII Century* [exh. cat., Parke-Bernet Galleries] (New York, 1942), 33, no. 140; Paris 1958, 107–108, no. 129, pl. XXXV; London 1972, 250–251, no. 387; *Bilder vom Menschen in der Kunst des Abendlandes* [exh. cat., Nationalgalerie] (Berlin, 1980), 189–190, no. 47, ill.

Signature on cat. 61



Back view of cat. 61

#### REFERENCES

Lami 1910–1911, 1:433; Louis Réau, "Un buste inédit de Houdon," *Beaux-Arts* 8 (1931), 25, ill.; Verres, "Kleine Nachrichten," *Pantheon* (Mar. 1929), X-XI; Lieselotte Ilschner, "Bildnisse und Büsten Dorothea Rodde-Schlözer," *Göttinger Jahrbuch* (1957), 56–57; Peter Metz, "Das Marmorbildnis der Dorothea von Rodde-Schlözer von Jean-Antoine Houdon," *Berliner Museen*, n.s. 8 (July 1958), 2–14, figs. 5–8; Réau 1964, 1:464, 494; 2:53, no. 250B, pl. CXXXIV; Peter Metz, *Bildwerke der christlichen Epochen von der Spätantike bis zum Klassizismus. Aus den Beständen der Skulpturenabteilung der Staatlichen Museen, Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin-Dahlem* (Munich, 1966), 150, no. 925, pl. 129; Peter Bloch and A. von Schoenewerk, *Kaiser-Friedrich-Museums-Verein Berlin. Erwerbungen 1897–1972* (Berlin, 1972), no. 230; Arnason 1975, 99, 119 n. 244, fig. 192, pl. 129; Martha Küssner, *Dorothea Schlözer. Ein Göttinger Gedenken* (Göttingen, 1976), 86–87; Peter Bloch, *Bildwerke 1780–1910, aus den Beständen der Skulpturengalerie und der Nationalgalerie, Die Bildwerke der Skulpturengalerie 3* (Berlin, 1990), 12–14, no. 8, ill.

#### RELATED WORKS

##### Plasters of model with headband

Fragment of a plaster bust in the Niedersächsische Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Göttingen (inv. Schlözerstiftung Gegenstände DCa) (see fig. 2); H. 30.4 cm; the undamaged bust was signed "houdon f" (Metz 1958, 8 n. 24) and given to the university by Charles Villers in 1810 (Liste Reuß, NStUB, Bibl. Archiv B 14b, Büsten, p. 6); displayed in the so-called "Schlözer-Fenster," an installation juxtaposing Houdon's portrait with Alexander Trippe's of the sitter at eleven years old (recorded in photograph by Schmalhaus; see Küssner 1976, fig. 22); destroyed except for the head and neck in an air

raid in 1944. See W. Falckenheiner, "Einiges über die Büsten und Bildnisse der Dorothea von Schlözer," *Göttinger Blätter für Geschichte und Heimatkunde* 1–4 (1919); and Karl Arndt, *Katalog der Bildnisse im Besitz der Georg-August-Universität Göttingen* (Göttingen, 1994), no. 196, III–III, ill.

#### Plasters of variant with "turban"

Niedersächsische Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Göttingen (fig. 1); H. 57 cm (with base: 69.7 cm), W. 48 cm; signed at truncation of proper right arm "houdon. f." and thickly painted a shiny off-white.

Present location unknown, sold in de Frey sale, Paris, 12–14 June 1933, 55, no. 214, pl. XX, as: "Plâtre original, sans doute celui du Salon de Paris

1801–1802"; supposedly from the Schlözer family collection, signed on the right side, H. 65 cm; bought by M. Gouvert for 7,500 francs (Réau 1964, no. 250A).

#### Modern reproductions of type with headband

One of two Galvano plastics imitating bronze, executed ca. 1900, in the Sankt Annen-Museum, Lübeck (inv. 1948/151); one of three plasters made in 1937 after the Berlin marble in Niedersächsische Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Göttingen (inv. Schlözerstiftung Gegenstände DCa); in the same location, a modern marble copy, given in May 1937 by Maria von Schlözer, née Rigal, from Dresden-Blasewitz.

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1. Translated from Johann Georg Rist, *Lebenserinnerungen*, ed. Gustav Poel (Gotha, 1880), 2:62–63. Most of the early bibliography on Dorothea is based on the idealizing biography of her great-nephew, Leopold von Schlözer: *Dorothea von Schlözer, der Philosophie Doctor. Ein Frauenleben um die Jahrhundertwende 1770–1825* (Stuttgart, 1923). From the 1950s Dorothea was adopted as a role model for the emancipated woman: see Ida Hakemeyer, *Three Early Internationalists of Goettingen University Town* (Michigan, 1955), 19–24; Maria Dehn, "Doktor Dorothea," in *Isabell. Das Buch für die berufstätige Frau* (Munich, 1957), 227; and Renate Feyl, "Dorothea Schlözer 1770–1825," in *Der lautlose Aufbruch. Frauen in der Wissenschaft* (Berlin,

1981), 70–80. Others approached the subject from the point of view of local history: Küssner 1976; Lieselotte J. Eberhard, *Von der berühmten, gelehrten, schönen und trefflichen Dorothea Schlözer, Doctor der Philosophie, verehelichte von Rodde in Lübeck: eine Sammlung von Bildern und historischen Texten*, Kleine Hefte zur Stadtgeschichte 12 (Lübeck, 1995). The first critical account of Dorothea's life is by Bärbel Kern and Horst Kern, *Madame Doctorin Schlözer. Ein Frauenleben in den Widersprüchen der Aufklärung* (Munich, 1990), with full bibliography.

2. *The Universal Asylum and Columbian Magazine* (Sept. 1790), 156–158.

3. *Staats- und Gelehrte Zeitung des Hamburgischen unpartheyischen Correspondenten* 185 (20 Nov. 1804), 1.

4. See Friedrich J. L. Meyer, *Briefe aus der Hansestadt und dem Inneren Frankreichs* (Tübingen, 1802).

5. Schlözer 1923, 215.

6. There are minor differences in the contour of the truncation and the execution of the face. See Metz 1958, 10–11; Küssner 1976, 82–86, fig. 23; Arndt 1994, no. 195, II.

7. Chaussard 1806, 478–479.

## + Napoleon Bonaparte, Emperor of France (1769–1821)

Dated 1806

Terracotta

H. 52.5 cm, W. 26 cm, D. 20.5 cm

Inscribed on truncation at right side: *Sa Majesté / l'Empereur et Roy / fait d'après nature / St Cloud Aoust 1806 / houdon f.*

*Cachet de l'atelier* on back of right shoulder

Musée des Beaux-Arts, Dijon (inv. CA 1026)

The narrative of revolutionary and imperial France as it unfolds on the walls of the historical galleries in the south wing at Versailles glorifies the seemingly irresistible rise to power of the “little corporal.” Paintings are displayed of the Italian campaign, during which Napoleon Bonaparte, leading a destitute, malnourished, rebellious army, sparked the enthusiasm of his soldiers, galvanized their energy with his speeches, commanded the admiration of his adversaries, and stood up to generals older than he. “He frightened me,” said General Charles-Pierre Augereau, “and I cannot understand the crushing power he had over me the first time I saw him.” On his return from Egypt, even before landing on French soil on 9 October 1799, Bonaparte seemed the leader for whom everyone had been waiting. The constitution of year VIII (1799–1800) established a true monarchical regime for him. Within four years his ten-year term of office was replaced by a consulate for life, then, with a new outbreak of war and the fear of royalist plots, by a hereditary empire. On 2 December 1805, the anniversary of his coronation at Notre Dame in Paris, he won an indisputable victory in Austerlitz, near Vienna, and expanded the borders of the Great Empire beyond the natural borders of France. At this point Napoleon was at the height of his power: “For the pope, I am Charlemagne,

because, like Charlemagne, I have joined the crown of France with the crown of the Lombards, and my empire borders on the Orient.”<sup>1</sup>

Houdon received few official commissions during the Consulate and Empire, but a painting by Louis-Léopold Boilly of the sculptor in his studio (unknown location; formerly in the Denain collection) shows him seated at his work table modeling a bust of Consul Bonaparte.<sup>2</sup> Several busts of Consul Bonaparte attributed to Houdon are in public and private collections, but none bears a signature.<sup>3</sup>

The creation of the present terracotta bust was associated with the commission of a colossal bronze statue to surmount a column at Boulogne-sur-Mer (see Related Works). On 15 August 1806 the emperor and empress were staying at Saint-Cloud,<sup>4</sup> and their presence drew a crowd. Houdon won the unusual favor of having the emperor pose for him, as indicated in the inscription: “executed from life at Saint-Cloud, August 1806.” This herm-shaped bust, in which the shoulders, chest, and arms have been truncated at right angles, was displayed at the Salon of 1806 alongside a bust of the empress.

On the night of 24 September 1806 the emperor left Saint-Cloud, taking the road to Germany “at a moment when war



seemed imminent.” The *Journal de Paris* of 25 September wrote: “Among the busts of the emperor that attracted the public’s attention this year at the Salon of painting and sculpture, amateurs singled out one executed from life by M. Houdon; in addition to the merits of its execution in conformity with the rules of art, this bust has the merit of being a striking likeness.”<sup>5</sup> *La Gazette de l’amateur d’art* went a step further: “The figure of the emperor especially radiates dignity. . . it is the calm of power.” *La Revue philosophique, littéraire et politique* added: “It is nature, it is life, it is flesh with its different planes, its reliefs, its softness.”<sup>6</sup> The bust remained in the sculptor’s possession until his death and was sold along with the contents of his studio in December 1828: “Carved herm-shaped bust of Napoleon Bonaparte with crown, modeled in Saint-Cloud in 1806. This bust, for which the emperor posed many times, is rightly considered, among all the portraits of Napoleon, the one that renders his physiognomy with the greatest truth.”

For this portrait “à l’antique” Houdon chose frontality; the face was made to look younger, with the features extremely simplified and the gaze intense; the soft locks of the short-cropped hair are held in place by a ribbon, its ends falling onto the chest. As Emeric David, champion of neoclassicism, wrote upon leaving the Salon in 1824: “So you wish to beautify modern heroes? Seek sustenance in the beautiful forms of antiquity. To uplift human nature, study the gods.”<sup>7</sup> The aged Houdon, whose works Dominique-Vivant Denon considered “somewhat marred by the style of the last century,”<sup>8</sup> had undoubtedly produced one of the masterpieces of classicism in 1806, reconciling in his portrait realism and the antique, psychological truth and idealism. The likeness to the model was achieved through the details: through the care Houdon showed in suggesting the bone structure beneath the flesh, setting off the locks of hair, indicating “the veins that rise fleetingly to the skin’s surface” on the forehead,<sup>9</sup> and rendering with fine striations the texture of the skin. In 1933 André Suarès wrote, in a polemical and insolent work: “Napoleon was totally lacking in taste. One sees it in his portraits; the least truthful ones were those he liked the best. . . . He never accepted the marvelous bust Houdon made of him after Iéna, when Napoleon was about to turn forty. Houdon went so far in the analysis of character as to bestow grace on Napoleon’s excitable nature, on the almost feminine weakness of his will—though certainly despotic and virile whenever it felt threatened. He concealed it under the veil of a charming gravity, so well that, in this bust, Napoleon seems to be a Pallas crowned by laurel. The artist brought out



Back view of cat. 62



Side view of cat. 62

of the shadows what the man most concealed from himself, and even what he did not know.”<sup>10</sup> For official iconography, the portraits by Lorenzo Bartolini, François-Joseph Bosio, Antonio Canova, and Antoine-Denis Chaudet (see figs. 1 and 2) were preferred to Houdon’s beautiful bust.<sup>11</sup> These formal images, which have a timeless frigidity, were widely diffused throughout the Empire and no doubt better incarnated the principle of grandeur and authority on which the imperial system depended.<sup>12</sup>

#### CLAUDE VANDALLE

#### PROVENANCE

In Houdon’s collection until his death; sold for 41 francs at the posthumous sale of the contents of his studio, 15–17 Dec. 1828 (no. 43): “buste taillé en hermès et diadémé de Napoléon Bonaparte, modelé à Saint-Cloud en 1806. Ce buste, pour lequel l’artiste obtint beaucoup de séances, passe avec raison pour celui de tous les portraits de Napoléon où sa physionomie est rendue avec le plus de vérité”; collection of Théophile Foisset; bequeathed to the museum in Dijon, 1873.

#### EXHIBITIONS

Paris, Salon cat. 1806, no. 601; Paris 1900b, no. 1683; London 1932, no. 1320; *Huit siècles de sculpture française. Chefs d’œuvres des musées de France* [exh. cat., Musée du Louvre] (Paris, 1964), no. 93; *Der Wiener Kongress* [exh. cat., Hofburg, Schauräume, Kaiserappartements] (Vienna, 1965), no. 75; *Napoléon* [exh. cat., Grand Palais] (Paris, 1969), no. 166; London 1972, no. 388; *De Houdon à Maillol. La Sculpture française au XIXe siècle* [exh. cat., Grand Palais] (Paris, 1986), no. 295; Dijon and Orléans 1992, no. 30.

#### REFERENCES

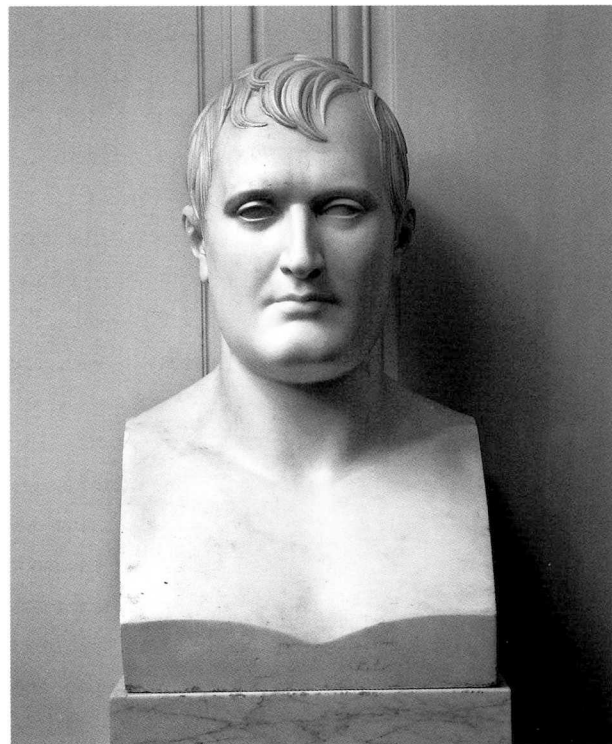
Chaussard 1806, 477; Délerot and Legrelle 1857, 198–199; *Catalogue historique et descriptif du Musée de Dijon* (Dijon, 1883), no. 1026; Gonse 1904, 158; Giacometti 1918–1919, 1:259, 2:78–80; Réau 1924b, 77; Quarré 1960, 46, no. 249, pl. 33; Réau 1964, 1:89–91, 180, 453–455, 2:51–52, no. 242A, pl. 132; Marie-Louise Biver, “La Colonne napoléone et le camp de Boulogne-sur-Mer,” *Revue de l’Institut Napoléon* 95 (Apr. 1965), 76–83; Firmiani 1971, 18, fig. 7; Arnason 1976, 108, fig. 201, pl. 137; Pierre Georget, *Catalogue du musée des Beaux-Arts de Dijon* (Dijon, 1985), 222, no. 208, ill.; West 1998, 126, fig. 168; Boyries 1998, 97–98; Hubert and Ledoux-Lebard 1999, 112–117, figs. 84–85; Dijon 2000, 304, fig. 5.

#### RELATED WORKS

Colossal bronze statue of Napoleon I. The acclamation Napoleon received from his soldiers on 16 Aug. 1804, at the second distribution of crosses of the Legion of Honor at Boulogne-sur-Mer, prompted the maréchal Nicolas Soult and the army of the English Channel to vote to erect a “Napoleon column” in honor of its leader, the new French emperor. Soult commissioned Houdon to sculpt a standing statue of Napoleon crowned with laurel leaves



1. Lorenzo Bartolini, Napoleon Bonaparte, Emperor of France, ca. 1806, marble, Musée national du château de Versailles.



2. François-Joseph Bosio, Napoleon Bonaparte, Emperor of France, 1810, marble, Musée national du château de Versailles.

and wearing the imperial ornaments, standing on a shield supported by three eagles with their wings spread. The work was completed in 1813. According to Charles-Jean Lafolie, *Mémoires historiques* (Paris, 1819): “the standing statue of Napoleon for the column of Boulogne and the bas-reliefs are the best castings done recently in Paris.” The five-meter tall colossus was never erected, and a column one-third the height was completed only in 1821. In the meantime, the bronze in Houdon’s statue had been melted down so that François-Frédéric Lemot could restore the statue of Henri IV at the Pont-Neuf.

A few modern plaster casts were made by the studios of the *Musées nationaux* and tinted to resemble terracotta. One was exhibited in Versailles 1928, perhaps the same one that belonged to the Dijon museum and was placed in the Musée Marmottan, Paris, before 1939. It was inventoried in 2001 during the closure of the museum storehouses (inv. Sup 00–8-1); another was offered to the city of Versailles by the city of Dijon and placed in the Musée Lambinet (inv. 1845).

Musée des Beaux-Arts, Bordeaux; marble copy by an anonymous artist.

Signature on cat. 62



1. Frédéric Masson, *Napoléon et sa famille* (Paris, 1903), 3:187, quoting a letter from Napoleon to Cardinal Joseph Fesch.

2. Painting reproduced in a lithograph by Bataille, one copy of which is housed at the Musée Marmottan and another at the Musée Lambinet in Versailles.

3. Hubert and Ledoux-Lebard 1999, 55–62.

4. At the invitation of the residents of Saint-Cloud, and after visiting the château and its grounds in spring 1803, Bonaparte provided the labor and furnishings necessary to establish himself there. Saint-Cloud was one of the emperor’s favorite residences during the Empire, and baptisms and major family events took place in its living room.

5. Fouché, report of 16 Aug. 1806, cited in Ernest d’Hauterive, *La Police secrète du Premier Empire* (Paris, 1913), 2:463 (no. 1445), and in Aulard 1914, 2:700.

6. *La Revue philosophique, littéraire et politique* (21 Dec. 1806), no. 36 (Deloyne XXXVIII, no. 1040).

7. T. B. Emeric David, *Sur les progrès de la sculpture française*, first published in 1824; reprinted in part 2 of his *Histoire de la sculpture française* (Paris, 1853), 191.

8. Letter from Vivant Denon to Napoleon, 10 Apr. 1805, on the sculptors chosen to execute portraits of dignitaries of the time (Vivant Denon [ed. 1999], 2:1277).

9. Giacometti 1918–1919, 1:317–319.

10. André Suarès, *Vues sur Napoléon* (Paris, 1933), 19.

11. See Hubert and Ledoux-Lebard 1999, 121–125, particularly on the role played by Elisa Bacciochi, grand duchess of Tuscany and sister of Napoleon, in the quarrying of Carrara marble and the marketing of these busts and statues.

12. The fourth amendment of the imperial catechism, *Catéchisme à l’usage de toutes les églises de l’Empire français* (Tours, 1806) recommended “love, respect, obedience, and fidelity... because God, who creates empires and allocates them according to his will by lavishing our emperor with gifts, whether in peace or in war, established him as our sovereign, made him the agent of his power and his image on earth. To honor and serve our emperor is therefore to honor and serve God himself.”





## + Napoleon Bonaparte, Emperor of France (1769–1821)

1808

Marble

H. 72.5 cm (with base: 85.5 cm), W. 53 cm, D. 29 cm

Inscribed on truncation of right arm: *houdon f.*

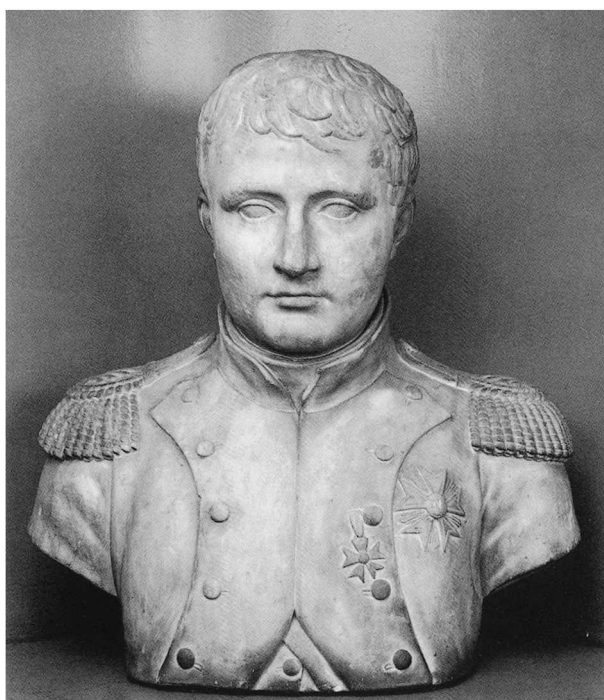
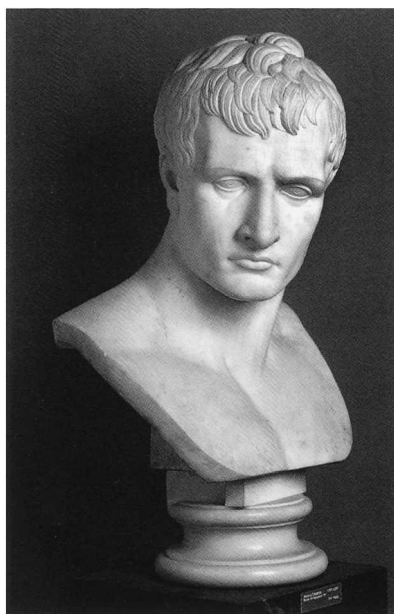
Musée national des châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon (inv. MV 1518; MR 2186)

Houdon persuaded Dominique-Vivant Denon, director of the Musée Napoléon, to have Napoleon and Josephine grant him a few posing sessions when they were staying at Saint-Cloud in August 1806. He then executed the bust in terracotta that bears the inscription “executed from life” (cat. 62). On 17 August he informed Pierre, comte Daru, chief administrator of the emperor’s household: “I submitted my work to the emperor yesterday. He did me the great kindness of chatting with me about the difficulties that sculpture, lacking the charm of color, presented for resemblance; I said that marble, by virtue of its transparency and its pleasant appearance, removed part of those difficulties, and I expressed my wish to execute the busts of Their Majesties in that material. . . . From what the emperor told me, I may consider myself authorized to execute the busts.” Daru wrote a note in the margin of the letter: “I saw M. Houdon and asked him for an estimate of that expense.”<sup>1</sup> In reply to the decision made in his favor, Houdon wrote on 27 August: “I shall comply with what you see fit to prescribe for me, being only too happy to fix in marble the features that posterity will be envious to know and which Their Majesties have deigned to judge that I rendered faithfully.” Nevertheless, it was not the bust in the form of a herm that was rendered in marble but rather a portrait of Napoleon I

in military uniform. Although that work was displayed at the Salon of 1808 (no. 703), no official reproductions of it were made. On 22 November Vivant Denon sent Daru “two invoices for payments to be made to M. Houdon for the execution of the marble busts of Their Majesties the emperor and empress, which he has completed and delivered to the museum. These payments amount to 3,000 francs each, totaling 6,000 francs.”<sup>2</sup>

The bust of the emperor at Versailles is not dated, but it was listed in the royal collections in 1824, and an illustration of it appeared in the Clarac album in 1853.<sup>3</sup> Houdon yielded to Napoleon’s wish to be depicted in uniform. It is the only sculpted portrait in which the subject was dressed in his favorite costume, as colonel in the National Guard,<sup>4</sup> and it gave Houdon the opportunity to indulge his taste for exactitude in the details. Napoleon is shown with his head held high by a cravat, the cross of the Legion of Honor hanging from a ribbon attached to his buttonhole, and the Grande Croix affixed to his uniform. Houdon worked the marble as if it were clay, leaving obvious tool marks on the surface: a firm ridge marks the outline of the lips and the line of the half-open mouth; the nostrils are well defined; the large, modeled planes of the sculpture are not polished. As in the bust of Josephine and other works done toward the end

1. Antonio Canova, Napoleon Bonaparte, Emperor of France, ca. 1806, marble, former collection of Prince Napoleon, Musée national du château de Reuil Malmaison.



2. Gilles Lambert Godecharle, Napoleon Bonaparte, Emperor of France, 1821, stone, Musées royaux de Bruxelles.

of Houdon's career, the truncation of the arms and torso above the base is finished with parallel striations.

The Salon of 1808, where Houdon exhibited only two busts, was particularly important in the history of the Empire Salons: 834 works were included, with 400 artists represented. In a

letter to Daru on 3 March 1806 Napoleon had already given the list of subjects he wished to see treated by artists and depicted in paintings, with precise indications regarding the dimensions, the deadlines to be observed, and the money set aside in the budget.<sup>5</sup> Hence the emperor clearly conceived of art shown at the Salon as an instrument of imperial policy. On 18 October it was reported: "The Salon exhibition of works of painting, sculpture, architecture, and engraving by living artists has just opened this morning at the Musée Napoléon, on the anniversary of the battle of Iéna. . . . There was advance praise for the large number of products exhibited, for the choice of subjects, and for the merit of their execution, guaranteed by the names of the artists. . . . All hopes have been realized, or rather, the current exhibition greatly surpasses them."<sup>6</sup> The emperor was at Saint-Cloud on 20 October and visited the Salon on the 22 October: "His Majesty, having then entered the sculpture room, gave particularly close attention to the various objects exhibited, and said that there was reason to hope that, by the next exhibition, the talent of the sculptors would have achieved the same high level that the paintings had already reached. He then awarded the decoration of the Legion of Honor to M. Cartellier."<sup>7</sup> Public interest in the plastic arts shifted to the exhibition in Paris of "several works by the famous Canova" (fig. 1) and to the arrival of the Borghese antiquities.

#### CLAUDE VANDALLE

#### PROVENANCE

Musée du Louvre, Paris, in storage in 1816; then at the Tuileries and Fontainebleau, 1824; Musée de Versailles, ca. 1832–1834 (AMN, S3: inventory of statues and busts transferred from Fontainebleau); at the opening of the Musée de Louis-Philippe, this bust and that of Josephine were paired in the "Napoleon vestibule" on the ground floor of the south wing.

#### EXHIBITIONS

Paris, Salon cat. 1808, 41, no. 37; Chicago 1962–1963, no. 134; Paris 1999, no. 430.

#### REFERENCES

Clarac 1853, 6:235, no. 3579, pl. 1127; Versailles cat. 1837, 70, no. 475; Délerot and Legrelle 1857, 198–199; Versailles cat. 1854, 1:144, no. 1516; Giacometti 1918–1919, 1:259, 2:78–80; Réau 1924b, 77; Vaudoyer 1928, 602, ill.; Réau 1964, 1:89–91, 180, 453–455, 2:51–52, no. 242B, pl. 132; Arnason 1976, 109n. 252, fig. 200; Versailles cat. 1993, 284, no. 1306; Boyries 1998, 98, fig. 59; Hubert and Ledoux-Lebard 1999, 116–117, figs. 86–87; Firmiani 1971, no. 19, 18, figs. 1–4, 6.



Back view of cat. 63

#### RELATED WORKS

##### Plasters

Civico Museo di Storia ed Arte, Trieste, since 1874; Napoleon I in military uniform; signed “houdon” and wrongly identified at one time as a bust of Consul Bonaparte; mentioned in first museum catalogue in 1898 (13, no. 122); catalogue of 1925 gives provenance as Villa Murat in Trieste.

Camoin collection; formerly owned by Colonel Bolnot; displayed at Paris 1928 (59, no. 54); at the Invalides in 1949; and at the Musée des arts décoratif, Paris, in 1954. Napoleon seems younger in this bust, which is closer to the 1806 terracotta.

Casts were made in the studios of the Musées nationaux: beginning in 1864, the cast of a bust of Napoleon I by Houdon appeared in the sales catalogue under no. L 896 (Rionnet 1996, 267, no. 1129). Several copies were listed in public collections: at the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Dijon (inv. 4907), at the Palais du Luxembourg (inv. 91–01781), at the small Musée Noiset in Fixin, and at the Musée du Caillou in Waterloo.

##### Reductions

Gilt bronze, inspired by Houdon’s bust and part of a series of Napoleonic portraits; executed ca. 1810 by the goldsmith J. B. Biennais; H. 12 cm. An example is in the Musée des arts décoratifs, Bordeaux. See Guy Ledoux-Lebard, “La Série des petits bustes en bronze des napoléonides par l’orfèvre Biennais,” *BSHAF* (1990), 130–142.

Reductions cast in iron seem to have been sold commercially (in the second half of the nineteenth century?). An example is in the collection of the Musée de Bourges.

##### Stone copy

Musée royal des Beaux-Arts, Brussels (inv. 3507); bust by Gilles Lambert Godecharle inspired by this portrait by Houdon (fig. 2).



Signature on cat. 63

1. For these letters see AN, O2 202 (226–227).

2. Dominique-Vivant Denon, *Notes et documents*, ed. Réunion des musées nationaux (Paris, 1999), 1:533, no. 1546.

3. Clarac 1853, 6:235, no. 3579, pl. 1127 (in 1853 the bust was at Versailles).

4. That image, painted by Jacques-Louis David and Jean-Baptiste Isabey, established the traditional iconography for Napoleon; for example, see G. Montorgeuil and Onfroy de Breville, called Job, illustrator of *Le Grand Napoléon des petits enfants* (Paris, 1921).

5. *Corr. Napoléon*, 1862, 12:151, no. 9915.

6. *Le Moniteur*, quoted in Aulard 1923, 3:761.

7. “On 13 November, the artists who were presented to the emperor [Houdon was not among them] when His Majesty distributed the Croix d’Honneur to a few of them, resolved to immortalize their gratitude with a painting that would represent that touching ceremony.” See Aulard 1923, 3:782.



## + Josephine, Empress of France (1763–1814)

Dated 1808

Marble

H. 72.5 cm (with base: 85.5 cm), W. 53 cm, D. 29 cm

Inscribed on truncation of right arm: *houdon f. 1808*

Musée national des châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon (inv. MV 1521; MR 2187)

Marie-Joseph-Rose Tascher de la Pagerie was born on 23 July 1763 in Les Trois-Ilets, Martinique. Summoned to France in 1779, she married Alexandre de Beauharnais on 13 December; a son, Eugène, and a daughter, Hortense, were born of that union. De Beauharnais, a deputy in the Constituent Assembly, then general in the revolutionary army in 1792, was arrested on his property in the region of Blois in March 1794, transferred to Paris, and guillotined on 23 July (5 Thermidor). His wife was arrested, freed on 5 August, and became part of Mme Tallien's circle of friends, where she met an as-yet-unknown general, Napoleon Bonaparte. They were married on 9 March 1796 and, to please her new husband, Marie-Joseph-Rose took the name "Josephine." Crowned empress and queen beside Napoleon on 2 December 1804, she kept that title after their divorce on 15 December 1809.<sup>1</sup>

At the Salon of 1806, where Houdon exhibited the terracotta bust of Napoleon I (see cat. 62), he also displayed one of the empress. The Salon catalogue does not indicate the medium, but the *Journal de Paris* reported on 25 September: "The same art lovers [who took notice of the bust of Napoleon] seem divided in their opinion of the two busts of Her Majesty the empress, one in marble by M. Chignart [*sic*], an artist from Lyons, the

other in plaster, modeled by Houdon. The first, more advantageously located, more rich in ornament and, in addition, executed with outstanding talent, made a more striking impression on everyone. But the other, which was perhaps justifiably criticized for its excessive simplicity, benefits from attentive consideration and leaves nothing to be desired in terms of likeness. Many artists prefer that one."<sup>2</sup> J.-B. Chaussard, a critic at the Salon, was more reserved in his analysis: "I thought I could recognize, in the one case, the epitome of might, and, in the other, the epitome of grace. I do not find all the artist's talent here, either because he was short on time, or because, in the desire to do too much, he did too little." The line engravings that illustrate his review, showing the head in profile, do not seem to correspond to the description of this bust.<sup>3</sup> At the Salon of 1808, where Jacques-Louis David displayed his painting of *The Crowning of Josephine by Napoleon*, a similar confrontation occurred between Houdon and Joseph Chinard, who exhibited more than eleven works, including another bust of the empress (fig. 1).

In the present bust, an official commission, Josephine appears bare-headed, her hair held in place by a diadem adorned with two rows of precious stones.<sup>4</sup> She is dressed in a simple Greek tunic with soft pleats and short sleeves, a panel of the



1. Joseph Chinard, Josephine, Empress of France, 1806, marble, Musée national du château de Reuil Malmaison.



2. François-Joseph Bosio, Josephine, Empress of France, 1808, plaster, Musée national du château de Reuil Malmaison.

tunic falling over her left shoulder.<sup>5</sup> Her head, held proudly, is turned slightly to her right; her small mouth, accentuated with a deep line, hints at a smile. Here again, one can only admire the realistic technique Houdon used to depict the curls and locks of hair that frame Josephine's forehead and the fine details of the costume, extending even to the delicate relief of the embroidery pattern that borders the tunic. The same finishing touches can be seen here as on the bust of the emperor (cat. 63).

Houdon, sensitive to the empress' charms, provided a portrait of her that is undoubtedly true to life and keenly observed.<sup>6</sup> At the same Salon of 1808, François-Joseph Bosio put the Canovian theory of the "ideal portrait" into practice, with another bust of the empress in a Greek tunic (fig. 2). Josephine's personal tastes would favor that new generation of sculptors of the French school as well as the Italian, Antonio Canova.<sup>7</sup>

CLAUDE VANDALLE

#### PROVENANCE

Musée du Louvre, Paris, in storage in 1816; then at the Tuileries and Fontainebleau, ca. 1824; Musée de Versailles, 1832 (AMN, S3; inventory of the statues and busts transferred from Fontainebleau); at the opening of the Musée de Louis-Philippe, this bust was paired with that of the emperor in the "Napoleon vestibule," on the ground floor of the south wing.

#### EXHIBITIONS

Paris, Salon cat. 1808, 102, no. 704; Paris 1928, 47, no. 41; Versailles 1928, 24, no. 22; *Lettres de Bonaparte à Joséphine* [exh. cat., Bibliothèque Nationale] (Paris, 1935); *Cinq siècles d'histoire de France* [exh. cat., World's Fair] (New York, 1939), 85, no. 334; Chicago 1962–1963, no. 135; *Le Roi Louis-Napoléon et la Hollande* [exh. cat., Institut Néerlandais / Rijksmuseum] (Paris, 1959), 31, no. 21; Paris 1999, no. 431.

#### REFERENCES

Chaussard 1806, 477; Clarac 1853, 6:235, no. 3580, pl. 1127; Délerot and Legrelle 1857, 4:198; Giacometti 1918–1919, 1:259, 2:78–80; Vaudoyer 1928, no. 4449, 602, ill.; Réau 1964, 1:89–91, 180, 453–455, 2:51–52, no. 242, pl. 132; Arnason 1976, 109, fig. 200; Versailles cat. 1993, 204, no. 913.

#### RELATED WORKS

Salon of 1806, nos. 601 and 602: two busts "faits d'après nature"; *His Majesty the Emperor* and *Her Majesty the Empress*; possibly the model with a base

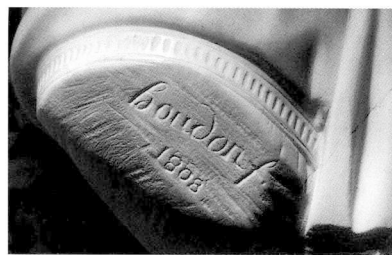
that remained in the sculptor's studio alongside a terracotta bust of the emperor and that sold for 41 francs at the posthumous sale, 15–17 Dec. 1928; or possibly plaster, as indicated in the *Journal de Paris*. A plaster bust, identified during the Second Empire as formerly in the collection of the painter C. Jacques, then later in the collection of Henri Rochefort, was inscribed "Houdon 1808." According to Giacometti 1929, 2:15, it could be the plaster model (it bore tool and finishing marks).

Plaster bust acquired by André Joubin from the Edmond Courty collection, Châtillon-sous-Bagneux; Albert Besnard sale, Paris, 31 May 1934, no. 105 (Réau 1964, 126).

Terracotta bust (head only), also listed in the Edmund Courty collection, in which the diadem worn by Josephine is adorned with a medallion bearing the emperor's profile.

Musée national du château de Reuil Malmaison; two busts of Josephine after Houdon, one in plaster and one in terracotta, by Jean Chrysostome Sanson, famous in the nineteenth century for his reproductions in terracotta, porcelain, and biscuit porcelain.

Olivier Choppin de Janvy and Massol sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 9 Dec. 2002, 150, no. 97, ill.; H. 56.5 cm, W. 25.5 cm, D. 24 cm; ca. 1806; probably a cast of the terracotta from the Salon of 1806; compared to Versailles marble, it has a shorter truncation and lacks drapery, the hair is pulled back from the face in long strands, with a diadem worn on top of the head bearing a profile portrait of Napoleon; said to come from the collection of Charles-Jacques then Henri Rochefort [unverified] (see Giacometti 1929, 2:15; Reau 1964, 2:50, no. 234 B, pl. CXXIV; Arnason 1975, 120 n. 252).



Signature on cat. 64



Back view of cat. 64

1. Biographical information excerpted from *Dictionnaire Napoléon* (Paris, 1987), 976–978, entry compiled by Nicole Hubert and Gérard Hubert.

2. Fouché, report of 16 Aug. 1806, cited in Ernest d'Hauterive, *La Police secrète du Premier Empire* (Paris, 1913), 2:463 (no. 1445), and in Aulard 1914, 2:700.

3. Chaussard 1806, pl. 24. The bust of the empress is represented as a head on a base; the bust of the emperor in military uniform is cut off above the shoulders.

4. AMN, S6–1. On 15 Nov. 1808 an order of payment in the amount of 3,000 francs was issued for Houdon's execution of a marble bust of the empress and queen, which was delivered to the museum.

5. Consulate and Empire fashions were inspired by antiquity; fashion trends were reported in the newspapers and were also the subject of reports from the minister of the interior.

6. AMN, V2, letter of 26 June 1855. Vital Dubray, hired to execute the statue of Empress Josephine for Martinique, was inspired, for the reproduction of her features, by Houdon's bust, which he borrowed from the Musée de Versailles.

7. Gérard Hubert, "La Collection de sculptures modernes réunie par l'impératrice Joséphine dans son domaine privé de Malmaison," in *Rencontres de l'Ecole du Louvre. La Sculpture du XIXe siècle, une mémoire retrouvée* (Paris, 1986), 69–81.





## + Statue of François-Marie Arouet, called Voltaire (1694–1778)

Circa 1806–1812

White marble on self-base

H. 199 cm (with base: 209 cm), W. 74 cm

Le Panthéon, Paris, Centre des monuments nationaux

After having been left in the vault of the Abbey of Scellières in Champagne for thirteen years, the remains of Voltaire were returned to Paris in 1791 and deposited, accompanied by theatrical festivities, in the crypt of the Panthéon, the former church of Sainte-Geneviève, rededicated as a Temple of Great Men.<sup>1</sup> Fifteen years later, in 1806, Napoleon chose the Panthéon as one of the architectural projects in his new imperial capital that were to help justify his dual legitimacy from dynastic monarchs and the representatives of the Enlightenment. Consequently, he ordered several structural changes to the edifice, especially to the crypt, which, as the designated sepulcher for past and future “Great Men,” was to be rearranged into a series of niches for additional sarcophagi.

Napoleon intended to associate the tombs of Voltaire and Rousseau, today in the vestibule of the crypt, with a mausoleum for his brother-in-law, General Charles-Victor-Emmanuel Leclerc, and to honor each man with a full-length statue, as he outlined on 26 February 1806: “The minister... will have work done to embellish the church and the construction of a mausoleum in memory of Voltaire and General Leclerc. These monuments must be very beautiful. It would seem appropriate to return to the practice of placing the statues on the tombs,

avoiding as much as possible any type of allegory in the compositions.”<sup>2</sup> While Houdon was selected to execute the tomb of Voltaire, the mausoleum for General Leclerc was assigned to Jean-Guillaume Moitte, who learned the news from Houdon on 4 April 1806.<sup>3</sup> In July the Parisian newspapers made the official announcement that the tomb of Voltaire in the church of Sainte-Geneviève would soon be replaced by a marble monument, commissioned from “the celebrated sculptor Houdon,” to be placed against one of the walls of the sepulchral chapel.<sup>4</sup>

Although the exact terms of Houdon’s commission are unknown, the documents concerning Moitte’s reveal some pertinent information: Moitte received 36,000 francs in total compensation, paid in three equal installments, for a funeral monument consisting of a life-size statue, a pedestal with bas-reliefs, and an inscription tablet.<sup>5</sup> Interestingly, only the models, completed in September 1808, were by Moitte’s own hand; he subcontracted their execution in marble to other sculptors. Around the turn of the year 1811–1812, and after Moitte’s death, the statue of Leclerc was placed in the Panthéon to “the right of the nave,”<sup>6</sup> whence only a few years later it began an odyssey that eventually led to a public square in Leclerc’s native town of Pontoise.



1. Houdon, Cicero, 1804, plaster, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

Houdon's marble statue of Voltaire, exhibited in the Salon of 1812, was received with moderate enthusiasm by the reviewers: "M. Houdon is accustomed to reproducing in marble the features of Voltaire. The new statue of this famous man, which he exhibited under the no. 1090, has the same kind of quality, but because the figure is standing and the artist believed that the thinness of the body of the one he has represented should be felt, even under an ample drapery, this statue seems a little too tall."<sup>7</sup> The fact that another critic, Castellan, referred to Houdon's "renewed" presentation of this statue suggests that the marble had been preceded by another public display, perhaps of its rendering in plaster.<sup>8</sup>

Houdon portrays the late philosopher with a scarf knotted around his neck and dressed in a long, heavy *robe de chambre*, which is gathered under his left elbow like a Roman toga to reveal his stocking-covered legs up to the knees. Shown in a classical contrapposto stance, Voltaire's elongated figure seems

to move with the drapery, the folds of which draw attention to the writing pads in his left hand; his relaxed right hand holds a quill pen. A sword and a mask are placed at his feet, symbolizing his conquest of the realms of theater and justice. Voltaire's face is a lively reinterpretation of the sculptor's own bust of Voltaire "tête nue" (cat. 23), created almost thirty years earlier and repeated innumerable times. With the energetic smile, the extra hair on top of the head, and the less gaunt features, the standing Voltaire is a younger version of the same subject seen in the seated portrait (Frank essay, fig. 2). Consistent with Napoleon's request to avoid allegorical depictions, Houdon represents the celebrated philosopher in the manner of the statues of ancient legislators commissioned for the French senate, such as his own figure of *Cicero* (fig. 1), choosing a contemporary costume while at the same time alluding to its classical prototypes.

ULRIKE D. MATHIES

Back view of cat. 65



## PROVENANCE

Commissioned in 1806 by Napoleon for Voltaire's tomb in the Panthéon (see text above); exhibited in the Salon of 1812 and probably installed in the crypt of the Panthéon shortly thereafter; moved in 1821, along with the sarcophagi of Voltaire and Rousseau, from its provisional location in the middle of the crypt to its present location at the far end of the crypt ("Proces-verbal de transférement," 29 Dec. 1821; in Damilaville 1878, 185–187).

## EXHIBITIONS

Paris, Salon cat. 1812, 114, no. 1090: "Statue en marbre de Voltaire."

## REFERENCES

Anatole de Montaiglon, "Un Voltaire de Houdon," *L'Intermédiaire des chercheurs et curieux* 1, no. 5 (1 May 1864), 68; Damilaville 1878, 185–187;

Desnoiresterres 1879, 137; Lami 1910–1911, 1:434; [Paul Vitry], "Séance du 3 Novembre 1911," *BSHAF* (1911), 352–353; Giacometti 1918–1919, 3:206–207; Réau 1924b, 69; Giacometti 1929, 2:282; Réau 1964, 1:71–72, 450–451; 2:20, no. 42, pl. 34; Arnason 1975, 105–106, 120 n. 259, fig. 204, pls. 140–142.

## RELATED WORKS

Reduced plaster model of the statue offered in posthumous sale of the contents of Houdon's studio, 15–17 Dec. 1828, 15, no. 14: "Plâtre—Modèle réduit de la statue de Voltaire, par M. Houdon, qui était placée au Panthéon français"; another statuette of "Voltaire debout tenant un livre" in M. Vidal sale, 3–5 Feb. 1868, no. 290.

1. See *Le Panthéon. Symbole des révolutions. De l'église de la nation au temple des grands hommes* [exh. cat., Hôtel de Sully] (Paris, 1989).

2. Napoleon's letter to M. Champagny, in *Corr. Napoléon*, 1862, 12:102, no. 9890.

3. *Un ménage d'artistes sous le Premier Empire. Journal inédit de Madame Moitte, femme de Jean-Guillaume Moitte, statuaire, membre de l'Académie des beaux-arts, 1805–1807*, ed. P. Cottin (Paris, 1932), 19.

4. Almost identical notices in the *Journal de Paris* (23 July 1806) and the *Mercure de France* 25 (July-Sept. 1806), 182; quoted in Réau 1964, 1:71, 450.

5. See Gisela Gramaccini, *Jean-Guillaume Moitte (1746–1810). Leben und Werk* (Berlin, 1993), 1:161–163, 2:103–104, no. 239; Isabell Lemaistre, "De Sainte Geneviève au Panthéon. Les Différents Programmes de sculpture, à la lumière des récentes découvertes," in Paris 1989, 241–242 (see note 1 above).

6. Lemaistre 1989, 241.

7. R. J. Durdent, *Galerie des peintures français du Salon de 1812 ou coup d'oeil critique sur leur principaux tableaux et sur les différents ouvrages de sculpture, architecture et gravure* (Paris, 1813), 81.

8. [Castellan], *Moniteur universel*, 5 Jan. 1813; published in Réau 1964, 1:71–72. The Salon catalogue of 1810, however, does not list any entries for Houdon.



✦ Louis-Léopold Boilly (1761–1845),  
*Houdon in His Studio*

After 1803

Oil on canvas

85 x 105 cm

Musée d'art Thomas Henry, Cherbourg-Octeville, Gift of Thomas Henry, 1835 (inv. 835.94)

“In addition to [the works that] I deliver to those who honor me with their trust, I always keep an exemplar for myself,” Houdon once wrote, emphasizing that “the mold always belongs to the artist, unless different arrangements are made.”<sup>1</sup> Houdon’s practice of exhibiting examples of his own works in his studio, both as models for himself and as showpieces for interested customers, was much noted by his admirers and rivals, and it is illustrated quite literally in Louis-Léopold Boilly’s painting of Houdon in his studio at the Musée des arts décoratifs in Paris (fig. 1) and its variant in Cherbourg. Both show the sculptor surrounded by myriad statues and busts, either displayed on pedestals or lined up on two shelves along the back and side walls. The veracity and detail of Boilly’s style make possible the identification of a large percentage of the depicted works, giving concrete evidence of their authenticity. These paintings provide important visual confirmation of the appearance of Houdon’s studio, of his working methods, and of the sculptures completed before 1804, when the version in Paris was first shown at the Salon.

One of the most prolific genre painters in France during the Napoleonic era, Boilly received popular acclaim at the Salon for his refined coloring, meticulous technique (emulating sev-

enteenth-century Dutch artists), and animated subjects. His repertoire ranged from sentimental moralizing themes and trompe-l’oeil still lifes to vivid representations of everyday life and group portraits, all executed in small, carefully finished compositions. There are no documents to illuminate the nature of Boilly’s relationship with Houdon, who was twenty years his senior, but the importance of his portraits of the sculptor and the fact that he also rendered a likeness of Houdon’s brother suggest a close connection.<sup>2</sup>

In the Cherbourg painting Houdon, watched by two bystanders, applies final touches to an academic study in clay.<sup>3</sup> The sketch is placed on an adjustable tripod modeling stand, with a bowl of water and a cloth nearby to moisten the clay. In the right foreground, next to a pile of clothing, a male nude model assumes a traditional academic pose, while two young students on the left are drawing him from life. A veritable gallery of the famous, dozens of Houdon’s own works crowd the dim background, including busts of Cagliostro, Molière, Franklin, Rousseau, Henry of Prussia, Gluck, and Sophie Arnould, along with statues of the *Ecorché*, *Diana*, *La Frileuse*, and the *Seated Voltaire*. A large rectangular bas-relief, resting against the pedestal of the *Seated Voltaire* may represent the terracotta

of *The Queen of Sheba Presenting Gifts to Solomon* (now lost), for which Houdon received the Prix de Rome in 1761 and which he kept in his possession until his death.<sup>4</sup> Another lost object, a profile portrait of one of the Mongolfier brothers, is documented in the oval medallion next to the bearded head on the right wall (cf. cat. 34).<sup>5</sup> Some objects not actually present in Houdon's studio may have been added by Boilly solely to enhance the composition: the plaster cast of a female torso after the famous Capitoline Aphrodite (front right) and the vase by Clodion (back wall, lower shelf), for example, appear in various sizes and details in several other paintings by Boilly.<sup>6</sup>

The canvas in Paris was exhibited at the Salon of 1804 under the title "A Sculptor's Studio. Picture of a Family" (fig. 1). Generally thought to have preceded the painting in Cherbourg, it shows Houdon in an analogous spatial setting, this time working on the bust of the mathematician and astronomer Pierre-Simon Laplace.<sup>7</sup> The focus on Houdon's wife and three daughters, all wearing fashionable dresses in the style of the Directoire, lends a more intimate character to this composition. Mme Houdon sits in a chair matching and facing the one in which Laplace poses, her shawl draped over its right arm. Immediately behind her stand her two oldest daughters, Sabine and Anne-Ange, while the youngest, fourteen-year-old Claudine, holds up a drawing, possibly by Boilly, that she has pulled from a portfolio. Although the public admired the painting for its verisimilitude, some of the Salon critics accused it of being done with too dry a brush and a lack of liveliness.<sup>8</sup> The eye-catching, crowded background is almost identical to that in the Cherbourg version, with only a few busts or reliefs and some accessories replaced, such as the antiquities added to the latter. Exclusive to the painting in Paris are the bust of Mme Duquenoy behind the feet of the *Seated Voltaire* and the hanging medallion of a man in profile on the right wall.

By the early nineteenth century Houdon's studio, "a place that has won him so many crowns,"<sup>9</sup> was located in the Palais des Beaux-Arts, formerly the Collège Mazarin and later the Institut de France; the Houdon family occupied rooms in the same building.<sup>10</sup> Boilly characterizes the sculptor, then in his sixties, as a short man of robust health and vitality. In the more workshop-oriented painting in Cherbourg Houdon sports a short smock over long pants instead of the dressier long coat over stockings that he wears in the family portrait. Unchanged, however, is his footwear—very comfortable looking "pantouffles," or slippers. One wonders if Houdon had these in mind when he wrote to his friend Ernst II of Saxe-Gotha more than

thirty years prior to the execution of these paintings, criticizing the impracticality of the fashionable footwear of his time: "Many people who found my shoes ridiculous have changed their opinion based on a simple explanation. Some among them have even had shoes made in my style."<sup>11</sup>

ULRIKE D. MATHIES

#### PROVENANCE

Given to the museum in 1835 by the art dealer, collector, and connoisseur Thomas Henry (1766–1836), who probably acquired it in Paris between 1810 and 1830 (the author wishes to thank Benjamin Simon, Cherbourg, for this information), possibly from Houdon's family after his death or directly from Boilly.

#### EXHIBITIONS

Paris 1889, 44, no. 61; *Maler und Modell* [exh. cat., Staatliche Kunsthalle] (Baden-Baden, 1969), no. 91, ill.; London 1972, 23–24, no. 36; Washington 1976, 136, no. 215, ill.; *Le Nu dans l'art de l'âge préhistorique à nos jours* [exh. cat., Fondation Prouvost] (Septentrion, 1992–1993), 27, no. 31, ill.; *The Art of Louis-Leopold Boilly: Modern Life in Napoleonic France* [exh. cat., Kimbell Art Museum] (Fort Worth, 1995–1996), no catalogue; *Le Chemin de Millet. Autour des collections du Musée Thomas Henry, Cherbourg* [exh. cat., Musée Mercian] (Karuizawa, 2001), 117, no. 102, ill.

#### REFERENCES

*Notice des tableaux composant le musée de Cherbourg* (Cherbourg, 1835), 34, no. 94 (and 2nd ed., Cherbourg 1870, 29, no. 94); Baron de Preux, "Houdon dans son atelier par Boilly," *GBA* 14 (1895), 306, 308; Henry HARRISSE, *L.-L. Boilly, peintre, dessinateur, et lithographe; sa vie et son oeuvre, 1761–1845*. . . (Paris, 1898), 40, III, no. 312; Louis GONSE, *Les Chefs-d'oeuvre des musées de France. La Peinture* (Paris, 1900), 97–98, ill.; *Cherbourg. Musée Henry. Peinture et Sculpture* (Cherbourg, 1912), 24, no. 94; Paul MARMOTTAN, *Le Peintre Louis Boilly (1761–1845)* (Paris, 1913), 86, III–III, pl. 28; Andre MABILLE DE PONCHEVILLE, *Boilly* (Paris, 1931), 107–108; Réau 1964, I:191–192; vol. 2, pl. CLVII.7; Arnason 1975, fig. 206; *Boilly 1761–1845. Un grand peintre français de la Révolution à la Restauration* [exh. cat., Musée des Beaux-Arts] (Lille, 1988–1989), 98, ill.; Susan SIEGFRIED, *The Art of Louis-Leopold Boilly: Modern Life in Napoleonic France* (New Haven and London, 1995), 103–107, 210–211 nn. 21–28, fig. 81.

#### RELATED WORKS

##### **Cherbourg painting**

Preparatory study (fig. 2) with slight variations in model and bystanders; unknown location (formerly in possession of Jean Perron, descendent of Houdon). See Paris 1928, 99, no. 108; and Réau 1964, I:192, vol. 2, pl. CLIX.12.



1. Louis-Léopold Boilly, *Houdon in His Studio*, 1803–1804, oil on canvas, Musée des arts décoratifs, Paris.



Copy by Maurice Lecesne, oil on canvas, 88 x 106 cm, Musée national du château de Versailles (inv. MV 5280; RF 793); commissioned by the state for the museum in 1892. See Constans 1995, 2:562.

#### Paris painting

Musée des arts décoratifs, Paris (inv. Pe 63) (see fig. 1); oil on canvas, 88 x 115 cm; signed at bottom left: "L. Boilly"; Salon cat. 1804, 9, no. 41: "L'atelier d'un sculpteur. Tableau de famille"; from Sabine Duval, Houdon's daughter; passed on to Mme Maurice Sand, her niece; collection of Emile Peyre, dealer, collector, and fashion decorator under the Second Empire; bequeathed by him to the museum in 1905. See HARRISSE 1898, 79–80, no. 29; and Lille 1988–1989, 98, no. 31, ill. p. 99.

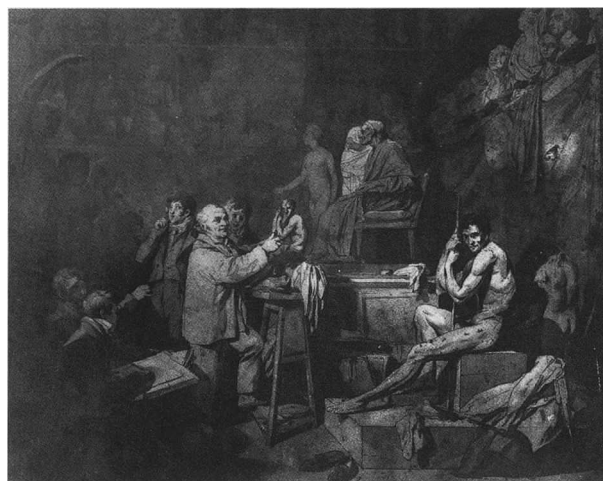
Preparatory study of Houdon modeling Laplace, oil on canvas, 45 x 37 cm, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lille (inv. 364); possibly sale after Boilly's death, 31 Jan. 1845, no. 12; given to museum by Julien Boilly in 1863. See HARRISSE 1898, III, no. 310; and Lille 1988–1989, 96–97, no. 30, ill.

Preparatory studies of Houdon's two older daughters and Mme Houdon, charcoal heightened with white (?), unknown location (formerly in possession of Jean Perron). See Paris 1928, 99, no. 107; and Réau 1964, 1:191, vol. 2, pl. CLVIII.10–11.

Attributed to Boilly, *Houdon in His Studio*, pen and ink with gray wash (?), unknown location (formerly Astron collection) (see fig. 2). See HARRISSE 1898, 173, no. 1039; and de Preux 1895, ill. facing p. 306.

#### Related painting

Boilly, *Houdon Modeling the Bust of Napoleon as First Consul*, oil on canvas, 55 x 45 cm, unknown location. See HARRISSE 1898, III, no. 311; and Lille 1988–1989, 96, ill.



2. Louis-Léopold Boilly, *Houdon in His Studio*, pen and ink with wash (?), unknown location.

1. Unpublished correspondence between Houdon and the treasurer of cardinal de Rohan, 16 Mar. through May 1788: "Outre ceux que je livre à ceux qui m'honorent de leur confiance, j'en garde toujours un exemplaire pour moy...Le moule appartient toujours à l'artiste à moins qu'on ne prenne des arrangemens differens" (BMV, F 946, nos. 116 and 117).

2. The portrait of "frère d'Houdon" was in the sale after Boilly's death, 31 Jan. 1845, 5, no. 13. A sentimental anecdote has Houdon's youngest daughter, Claudine, at one time engaged to Boilly's son Julien. See Marmottan 1913, 87–88, on the painting in Paris.

3. The identifications of the tall man behind Houdon as the artist, collector, and art administrator Dominique-Vivant Denon and one of the pupils as Boilly's son Julien (de Preux 1895, 306 and 308) lack any documentary or iconographical support.

4. Posthumous sale of contents of Houdon's studio, 15–17 Dec. 1828, 14, no. 8. See Guilhem Scherf, "Pierre Julien et le décor sculpté de l'église Sainte-Geneviève à Paris," *La Revue du Louvre et des musées de France*, no. 2 (1988), 134 n. 27, fig. 19.

5. Painted plaster, in Houdon's posthumous sale, 1828, 17, no. 38.

6. E.g., *A Painter's Studio* (National Gallery of Art, Washington), and *Studio of a Young Artist* (Pushkin Museum, Moscow); see Siegfried 1995, figs. 151–152. For the Clodion vase see Paris 1992, 78–86, nos. 1–2.

7. Marmottan 1913, III–113, erroneously suggested the often-repeated date of 1808. A plaster bust of Laplace by Houdon was bequeathed to the Musée des arts décoratifs by the collector Peyre together with the painting (inv. PE 846).

8. "Lettre adressée à Messieurs les rédacteurs du journal," *Annales des sciences, de la littérature et des arts* (Deloynes XXXII, 437–438, no. 888); M. B., "Salon de 1804," *Journal des débats* (Deloynes XXXII, 51–52, no. 880); "Petites affiches du Salon," *Arlequin au muséum*, no. 2 (1804), 4 (Deloynes XXXI, 666, no. 866); *Lettres impartiales sur les expositions de l'an XIII par un amateur* (Paris, 1804), 11 (Deloynes XXXI, no. 876).

9. Ducray-Duminil, "Suite de l'exposition des tableaux du Salon," *Journal des petites affiches de Paris* (Deloynes XXXII, 254, no. 883).

10. Vitry 1907d, 220.

11. See Appendix in the present catalogue, lines 208–211.





# Abbreviated Chronology of Houdon's Life and Career

Monique Barbier, translated and edited by Anne L. Poulet

1735

5 Feb. — Marriage at Versailles of Jacques Houdon (b. 1706), son of farmers, and Anne Rabache (b. 1712), daughter and sister of gardeners at Versailles (J. Foulques Josseaume, "Les Origines familiales du sculpteur Jean Houdon," *Bulletin de la Société historique et archéologique de Corbeil, d'Etampes et du Hurepoix* [1978], 27–32). Ten children are born of this union, five of whom survive. Jacques is a servant in the home of M. de La Motte, a high-ranking official of the Bâtiments du Roi at Versailles.

1735

29 Oct. — Birth of Jacques-Philippe Houdon, who will become curator of collections at Menus Plaisirs du Roi, Paris, beginning in 1767.

1741

20 Mar. — Birth of Jean-Antoine Houdon, baptized 23 Mar. at the church of Saint-Louis, Versailles. Godfather, Jean-Antoine Lemire, is an officer of the queen.

1742

Houdon family moves to Paris, parish of Saint-Germain l'Auxerrois.

1748

Establishment by the king of the Ecole royale des élèves protégés in the Paris house of M. de La Motte; Jacques Houdon is named concierge (AN, 01 1928; Louis-Charles Courajod, *L'Ecole royale des élèves protégés* [Paris, 1874], 30).

1756

26 Sept. — Jean-Antoine Houdon, sculpture student, wins third-class medal in third-quarter (July) competition at the Ecole royale (ENSBA, MS 93, fol. 31; *Corr. directeurs*, 12:22).

1758

1 Oct. — Jean-Antoine Houdon registers as student of sculptor Michel-Ange Slodtz at the Académie royale (ENSBA, MS 45, fol. 18).

1761

29 Aug. — Houdon wins first prize in sculpture for the relief *The Queen of Sheba Presenting Gifts to Solomon*, and thus qualifies to enter the Ecole royale as a resident student for three years,

followed by four years at the Académie de France in Rome. His father has power of attorney to receive the son's quarterly pension payments from the king (ENSBA, MS 93, fol. 33; AN, 01 1927, no. 6; *Procès-verbaux*, 7:161, 175, 205).

1762

Five other students are residents at the Ecole royale with Houdon, including Pierre Julien, Dominique LeFebvre, and Louis-Simon Boizot; each student receives 751 livres per quarter (AN, 01 1927, no. 7).

1764

18 Aug. — Carle Van Loo, director of the Ecole royale, awards first prizes for 1761 to LeFebvre for painting and Houdon for sculpture, enabling them to enter the Académie de France in Rome under the direction of Charles Natoire.

19 Aug. — Houdon receives his certificate as a sculpture student.

20 Aug. — He is given 300 livres to cover the cost of his trip to Rome.

3 Oct. — He leaves Paris with LeFebvre and travels by boat from Toulon to Civita Vecchia.

11 Nov.—He arrives in Rome (*Corr. directeurs*, 12:40, 49, 50, 58, 65, 118, 119, 122, 137, 140, 146, 151).

1765

With Houdon at the Académie de France in Rome are Lefebvre, Boizot, Julien, Clodion, Jean-Bernard Restout, and Félix Lecomte among others.

1766

16 July—Houdon begins models for two statues of Saint Bruno and Saint John the Baptist for the Carthusians in Rome.

24 Aug.—Houdon's project for the Carthusians is approved.

1767

11 Feb.—Houdon has completed a life-size anatomical study, his *Ecorché*, in preparation for the statue of Saint John the Baptist for the Carthusians and has had it cast in order to sell copies. Natoire asks permission to acquire a version of it for the Académie. Houdon and a fellow student at the Académie, German painter Johann Christian von Mannlich, are studying anatomy with a surgeon, M. Séguier, at Saint-Louis des Français (Réau 1964, 1:39).

1768

Houdon's leaves Académie de France in Rome 2 Nov., arriving in Paris 22 Nov. (BMV, F 945, no. 3).

1769

20 May—An *Ecorché* is offered to the cardinal de Bernis, French ambassador to Rome.

23 July—Houdon is accepted as an *agrégé*, a candidate for membership in the Académie royale, by a vote of twenty-seven to three (AN 01 1927; *Procès-verbaux*, 8:19).

25 Aug.—Salon du Louvre opens, with Houdon exhibiting for the first time. Though his name does not appear in the Salon catalogue [*livret*], his submissions are documented in sketches by Gabriel de Saint-Aubin and in Salon reviews.

30 Sept.—Houdon gives a plaster *Ecorché* to the Académie royale (it is painted realistically in polychrome by the Académie, 22 June 1793) (*Procès-verbaux*, 8:29).

8 Nov.—The Académie de Toulouse asks that the king give them a plaster of the *Ecorché*, but he refuses.

1771

25 Aug.—Salon opens, and Houdon exhibits several works, including the plaster model for *Morpheus* and portrait bust of Diderot.

20 Sept.—The marquis de Marigny, then director of the Bâtiments du Roi, grants Houdon (as an *agrégé*) permission to visit ducal court of Saxe-Gotha between 12 Oct. and 20 Dec.

25 Oct. to 3 Dec.—Houdon stays at Schloss Friedenstein in Gotha (FLB, Chart A 1692; see Bogay 1935, 135).

1772

8 Mar.—Houdon occupies workshops at the foundry of the city of Paris in the faubourg du Roule, initially free of charge, then accepting a nine-year lease to rent space for 375 livres per year beginning in 1782. But see below, under 22 Mar. 1787 (BMV, F 945, no. 3; Vitry 1907d, 217–220; Bresc-Bautier 1994, 372–377).

July—Houdon sends a shipment of works to Duke Ernst II of Saxe-Gotha, including sixteen of his early sculptures in plaster and other objects intended for the duke's planned art academy (FLB, Chart A 712, fols. 8r–14r; see Appendix in the present catalogue, pp. 355–360).

1773

23 Apr. to 1 July—Houdon makes second trip to the court of Saxe-Gotha.

1773

25 Aug.—Salon opens, showing works done by Houdon for Russian and German patrons as well as his *Head of Belisarius*.

1775

By this time (or earlier) Houdon has a studio in the Bibliothèque du Roi, rue Richelieu, located in a large room on the ground floor of the Robert de Cotte wing in front of the Salle des Globes. But see below, under 27 July 1796 (Vitry 1907d, 217–220).

5 Apr.—Houdon signs a contract with the actress Sophie Arnould to execute her portrait in marble by Aug. and provide thirty copies in plaster as well as the terracotta bust.

9–13 Aug.—The Ecole royale des élèves protégés closes, and Jacques Houdon retires. He, his wife, and three younger children move in with Jean-Antoine at 197 faubourg du Roule. 25 Aug.—Salon opens, including Houdon's plaster model of a *Bather*, several portrait busts, and the model for the tomb of Duchess Louise Dorothea of Saxe-Gotha.

1776

Houdon is elected an honorary associate of the Académie de Toulouse, with the *Head of Belisarius* (Salon of 1773) as his reception piece (Réau 1964, 1:27).  
 13 Feb. — At his studio Houdon sells reduced plaster casts of the model of his *Ecorché*, its arm raised above the head, with an order from the Conseil du Roi that prohibits counterfeiting (BMV, F 946, nos. 229 and 231 bis).  
 14, 15, 16, 23 July — Subscription held for a marble bust of Gluck to be delivered in 1777 and placed in main entrance hall of the Paris Opéra (AN, MC, étude III, l. 1079, étude Me Athanase Lemoine; Bachaumont 1780–1789, 9:191–192, 18 Aug. 1776).  
 30 Sept. — Actors from the Comédie-Française commission Houdon to do a marble bust of Molière, which is completed in Mar. 1778 (ACF, “registre des délibérations”; *Journal de Paris*, 10 Mar. 1778).

1777

26 July — Houdon is received as a member of the Académie royale, with *Morpheus* (marble reduction of the life-size plaster exhibited at the Salon of 1771), as his reception piece (*Procès-verbaux*, 8:59, 273; 10:19, 52; Réau 1964, 1:42).  
 25 Aug. — Salon opens, with Houdon exhibiting more than twenty-five sculptures, including many portraits busts, a marble *Bust of Diana*, models for two Golitsyn tombs, and the marble *Morpheus* (Vitry 1907d, 217–220).

Aug–Sept. — Houdon’s *Naiad*, announced in the Salon catalogue of 1777, is on view in his studio along with his *Diana the Huntress* (“Exposition au Salon du Louvre. . . en 1777,” *Mercur de France* [Deloynes X, no. 191, pp. 1104–1105]; Bachaumont 1780, 274–275, letter III, 22 Sept. 1777).

1778

Members of the stock exchange commission Houdon to do a bust of Louis XVI (Réau 1964, 1:73).  
 10 Mar. — *Journal de Paris* announces that Houdon’s bust of Molière for the Comédie-Française is finished and on view in his studio at the Bibliothèque du Roi.  
 End of Mar. — Houdon’s bust of Voltaire is finished and on view in his studio.  
 16 Apr. — “All of Paris” is going to see the bust of Voltaire in Houdon’s studio (Métra 1787–1790, 6:164).  
 4 June — Académie française commissions Houdon to do a bust of Voltaire, who had died 30 May.  
 10 June — Houdon offers plaster busts of Voltaire to “most” of the academicians (*Registres* 1895, 3:435, 436, 440, 442, 447).  
 3 July — Houdon takes the death mask of Jean-Jacques Rousseau.

1779

10 Jan. — Houdon proposes to Jean-Baptiste Pierre, premier peintre du Roi, that he execute his *Bather* in marble and her attendant, a *Negress*, in lead (Réau 1964, 1:47). His offer is declined.  
 18 Feb. — Houdon’s bust of Voltaire is installed in foyer of the Comédie-Française (ACF “registre des assemblées”; Bachaumont 1780–1789, 13:294–295, 26 Feb. 1779; *Journal de Paris*, 20 Feb. 1779).

20 Feb. — *Journal de Paris* announces Houdon’s acceptance as a member of the Loge des Neuf Soeurs.

7 Mar. — Société des Beaux-Arts, Montpellier, purchases a large plaster *Ecorché*. Houdon offers them a smaller *Ecorché*, a bust of Molière, and a skull (ADH, D 235, Ms 247; see Réau 1964, 1:40).

25 Aug. — Salon opens, with Houdon exhibiting numerous works, including portrait busts of Molière, Voltaire, Rousseau, and Benjamin Franklin as well as a gilt bronze *Seated Voltaire* and a marble bust of Voltaire “à l’antique” made for Catherine II of Russia.

Oct. — Houdon receives royal commission for a statue of the maréchal de Tourville for the Salon of 1781 (Réau 1964, 1:51, 52).

28 Dec. — Houdon exhibits works at the Société des Beaux-Arts, Montpellier, nos. 178–184, 186, 187 (Stein 1913, 375–378, 402).

1780

Feb. — Large model of the *Seated Voltaire* is completed for the writer’s niece, Mme Denis (AN, 01 845, 01 8459; Réau 1964, 1:54).  
 1 May — Loge des Neuf Soeurs commissions Houdon to do a bust of John Paul Jones (*Corr. littéraire*, 12:394; Réau 1964, 1:84).  
 29 Aug. — City of Langres requests a portrait of Diderot, who sends a bronze bust by Houdon, delivered 30 Apr. 1781. Houdon offers several plasters of Diderot to the city (Réau 1964, 1:78).

1781

13–19 May—Houdon exhibits the marble statue of Diana in his studio at the Bibliothèque du Roi (Bachaumont 1780–1789, 17:185 and 198–199, 13 May and 19 May 1781).

6 July—Catherine II of Russia commissions Houdon to do a marble bust of the comte de Buffon, which is delivered 29 June 1782 (Réau 1964, 1:82).

25 Aug.—Salon opens, with Houdon showing marble statues of Tourville and the *Seated Voltaire* and several portrait busts in plaster and marble. Concurrently he exhibits the marble statue of Diana in his studio at the Bibliothèque du Roi (Réau 1964, 1:44).

1783

6 Mar.—Houdon's bust of Franklin is installed at the Musée de Paris (Bachaumont 1780–1789, 22:154–155, 11 Mar. 1783).

7 Aug.—U.S. Congress passes resolution to commission an equestrian statue of George Washington (BMV, F 946, no. 78).

25 Aug.—Salon opens, and Houdon exhibits *La Frileuse*, the model for a fountain for the duc de Chartres, and portrait busts of Larive, Buffon, La Fontaine, and Antoine Louis.

1784

Houdon gives a bust of Jean Le Rond d'Alembert to the Académie royale des sciences (Bachaumont 1780–1789, 25:288, 21 April 1784; *Histoire de l'Académie royale des sciences* [Paris, 1786]). Louis XVI orders a bust of Prince Henry of Prussia from Houdon (Salon of 1785, no. 299); it is delivered to the comte d'Angiviller, director of the Bâtiments du Roi, in 1786 (Réau 1964, 1:392).

10 Dec.—Jefferson recommends Houdon to Washington as the best artist to execute his statue (BMV, F 946, no. 223; see Vitry 1907b, 147–209; Réau 1964, 1:57).

1785

Houdon submits a proposal for a monument to Louis XVI in Brest (AN o 19182; Réau 1964, 1:65).

The duc de Brissac commissions his bust from Houdon, to be delivered in 1788 (BMV, F 946, nos. 119–131).

28 July—Houdon leaves for America, traveling with Franklin, to do a portrait of George Washington.

25 Aug.—Salon opens, excluding Houdon's *Frileuse* and his busts of the cardinal de Rohan and Cagliostro but includes other portrait busts in plaster and marble, such as those of Larive and Prince Henry of Prussia (BMV, F 946, no. 117; Métra 1787–1790, 18:345).

25 Dec.—Houdon arrives in France, returning from America (BMV, F 945, no. 2; Hart and Biddle 1911, 206).

1786

1 July—Marriage of Jean-Antoine Houdon to Marie-Ange-Cécile Langlois (b. 21 Sept. 1765), daughter of Jean Langlois, an employee of the king, and of Marie-Françoise Lorteau (d. 22 Oct. 1765), at the home of the bride's adoptive mother, the countess de Villegagnon. Marriage contract is executed 12 June 1786, and the bride receives 52,000 livres from Mme de Villegagnon (BMV, F 945, nos. 3, 18; Réau 1964, 1:31).

29 July—Jacques Houdon, aged 81, dies at the home of his son Jean-Antoine.

28 Sept.—Marble bust of Lafayette is installed in the Hôtel de Ville, Paris, as a gift of the Commonwealth of Virginia (Lacroix 1894–1898, 4:636 n. 5; Bachaumont 1780–1789, 33:90–92, 6–7 Oct. 1786).

Dec.—Marble bust of Washington is displayed in Houdon's studio (Bachaumont 1780–1789, 33: 274, 16 Dec. 1786).

1787

25 Feb.—Birth of Houdon's first daughter, Sabine-Marguerite-Josèphe (BMV, F 945, no. 17).

22 Mar.—Expelled from the workshops and foundry belonging to the city of Paris, which he has occupied since 1772, Houdon purchases a house across the street and builds new furnaces (AN, MC, Me Aleaume, étude LXXXVI, l. 851; Simone Granboulan-Féral, "Maisons de Jean-Antoine Houdon 'puis' Monastère des Pères dominicains du Roule," *La Rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré* [Paris, 1994], no. 405; BMV, F 946, no. 52; Houdon's *mémoire* to Bachelier, 1794).

25 Aug.—Salon opens, with Houdon exhibiting busts of Prince Henry of Prussia, Lafayette, and Washington (BMV, F 946, no. 241).

1788

19 Sept.—Bronze *Apollo* is cast in Houdon's studio in the faubourg du Roule (BMV, F 946, no. 245; *Journal de Paris*, 24 Sept. 1788; Réau 1964, 1:47).

15 Oct.—Birth of Houdon's second daughter, Anne-Ange (BMV, F 945, no. 15).

28 Nov.—The duc d'Orléans offers Houdon an annual and perpetual subsidy of 500 livres, in addition to paying 10,000 livres for the bronze *Frileuse* (AN, MC, étude LXXVI, l. 88, notaire Rouen).

## 1789

25 Aug. — Salon opens, with Houdon showing portrait busts that include a bronze of Prince Henry of Prussia and a plaster of Thomas Jefferson.

7 Sept. — The district of Saint-Philippe du Roule recommends Houdon to the Commune of Paris to execute a marble bust of Jacques Necker, and he receives the commission (Lacroix 1894–1898, 1:497).

30 Dec. — Houdon announces that the bust of Necker is finished and on view in his studio; it is installed in the Hôtel de Ville on 21 Jan. 1790 (Lacroix 1894–1898, 3:319, 505 n. 3; 4:636).

## 1790

11 Feb. — Louis XVI commissions Houdon to execute his bust in marble so he can give it to the city of Paris. The bust is completed by 30 Nov. and installed without ceremony in the Hôtel de Ville, probably 23 Mar. 1791 (Lacroix 1894–1898, 4:127, 128, 175, 489; Réau 1964, 1:73, 74).

29 Oct. — Birth of Houdon's third daughter, Antoinette-Claude (BMV, F 945, no. 16).

21 Dec. — National Assembly votes to have a statue of Rousseau executed and in Feb. 1791 orders that it be an open competition (BMV, F 946, no. 90–106; Hippolyte Buffenoir, *Les Portraits de Jean-Jacques* [Paris, 1913], 1:227–228; Réau 1964, 1:66).

## 1791

21 Aug. — Constituent Assembly decrees that the Salon will no longer be limited to members of the Académie royale, and instead of opening in Aug., the Salon opens in Sept.

9 Mar. and 23 June — Houdon submits model for the statue of Rousseau, with

two letters to Camus, president of the Comité des pensions, who replies that the commission is open to competition (A. Tuetey, *Répertoire général des sources manuscrites de l'histoire de Paris pendant la Révolution française* [1894], 3:122, no. 1354). The statue was never executed.

13 Oct. — Commune of Paris decides to commission a replica of Houdon's statue of Washington to offer to Lafayette.

Contract is signed 21 June 1792 (Lacroix 1900–1914, 7:168, 172; Réau 1964, 1:64, BMV, F 946, nos. 83–89). The statue was never executed.

## 1792

7 July — Houdon is named adjunct professor at the Académie royale (*Procès-verbaux*, 10:170).

10 Aug. — Houdon's busts of Lafayette, Necker, and Louis XVI along with Louis-Pierre Deseine's bust of Bailly are removed from the Hôtel de Ville and reportedly smashed (Lacroix 1900–1914, 7:172, 173; *Procès-verbaux de la Commune de Paris*, 1894, p. 6).

27 Oct. — Houdon gives the Académie royale a second *Ecorché* in bronze with the arm raised as well as several plaster casts (*Procès-verbaux*, 10:24, 58, 187, 197, 210, 211, 213, 221).

22 Nov. — Houdon is assigned lodgings in the museum section of the Cour du Louvre, but he is forced out 26 Apr. 1794 (BMV, F 946, no. 7).

26 Nov. — Houdon begins work on the statue of Saint Scholastica (H. Léonardon, "Un aide sculpteur de Houdon et de François Masson," *Mémoires de la Société des sciences morales, des lettres et des arts de Seine et Oise* [1894] 18:152–155).

## 1793

25 Aug. — Salon opens, with Houdon exhibiting a model for the statue of Washington, a small *Frileuse*, a *Vestal*, and several busts.

8 Aug. — National Convention suppresses the academies. The artists want to retain their apartments in the Louvre (M. Bonnaire, *Procès-verbaux de l'Académie des Beaux-arts* [1937–1947] 1:XXXVI).

25 Sept. — Houdon renounces his title as academician at meeting of the Commune générale des arts, joined by Boizot and others on 30 Sept., and by Lecomte and Claude Dejoux on 1 Oct. (Henry Lapauze, *Procès-verbaux de la Commune générale des arts...* [1903], 103, 121, 127; Réau 1964, 1:32).

## 1794

28 Mar. — Revival committee of the Lycée républicain thanks Houdon for giving them terracotta busts of Voltaire and Rousseau and a plaster bust of Franklin (BMV, F 946, nos. 29, 30, 31; Réau 1964, 1:99).

26 Apr. — Houdon is expelled from his apartment in the workshops of the Louvre, but is still living there in 1796 (BMV, F 946, no. 1).

1 May — Committee of Public Safety decides to purchase Houdon's statue of Philosophy to be placed in the first assembly room of the National Convention. The statue is installed in Feb. 1795 (BMV, F 946, nos. 64–71; François-Alphonse Aulard, *Recueil des actes du Comité de salut public* [1900], 13:179, [1910], 20:205).

11 Oct. — Houdon writes *mémoire* to Bachelier (BMV, F 946, no. 52; Réau 1964, 1:99).



1795

Salon — Houdon exhibits only one work, the bust of Barthélemy.

8 Oct. — Houdon sells a number of his works at the Bibliothèque du Roi.

27 Nov. — Houdon is named a member of the Institut de France – third class for “literature and fine arts,” sixth section, “sculpture” – by order of the Directoire, dated 20 Nov. 1795 (Lapauze 1903, p. LXXVI; BMV, F 946, no.10 bis; Bonnaire 1937–1947, vol. 1, preface; Réau 1964, 1:33).

1796

Salon — Houdon exhibits two works, a small marble statue of the *Frileuse* and a terracotta bust of Claude-Emmanuel de Pastoret.

Jan. — Houdon ships the statue of Washington to Richmond, Virginia, in three crates: one for the marble statue; two for the pedestal. The total weight is 36,000 pounds (Réau 1964, 1:62).

22 Feb. — Houdon regularly attends meetings at the Institut. For the instruction of sculpture students he donates six casts after antique torsos, several heads, masks, antique feet, and hands, a cadaver, and heads cast after nature (Bonnaire 1937–1947, 1:9; Reau 1964, 1:32).

27 July — Houdon is forced to leave the studio at the Bibliothèque du Roi that he has occupied since 1775. He protests the move, which requires him to sell some of his works, and receives in exchange a location in the Salle du Zodiaque, which he uses until his death in 1828 (Montaignon and Duplessis 1855, 398–399).

1797

27 Jan. — At a meeting of a fine arts class at the Académie des Beaux-Arts Houdon announces that he had invented an instrument to be used to facilitate the study of drawing before that of the painter Bachelier. An investigation concludes that the instruments are different (Bonnaire 1937–1947, 1:44).

1798

Houdon does not exhibit at the Salon of 1798 but does exhibit at the Salon de l’Elysée, nos. 83, 91, 92 (Réau 1964, 1:102).

3 Feb. — Houdon gives advice on the feasibility of restoring several plaster casts of antique figures at the Ecole nationale de peinture et de sculpture (Bibliothèque d’art et d’archéologie, Jacques Doucet, carton 101). Six statues of Greek and Roman legislators are commissioned to be placed in the niches of the Tribune of the 500. After the fall of the Directoire, the Senate adopts the same program but enlarges it to include twenty-eight statues. Houdon is asked to execute that of Cicero.

1799

Houdon does not exhibit at the Salon. 2 Mar. — *Moniteur universel* announces that many artists, including sculptors Houdon, Jean-Guillaume Moitte, Augustin Pajou, Antoine-Denis Chaudet, and François-Frédéric Lemot, have presented a petition to the minister of the interior requesting that all public sculpture, painting, and architecture projects for the Directoire be awarded not by favor, but through official competition.

1800

Salon — Houdon exhibits several marble and plaster busts.

1801

Salon — Houdon exhibits several busts. 22 Aug. — The government orders all occupants of the Louvre to leave their apartments before 22 Nov. 1802, though the time limit is extended. Houdon is relocated to the Collège des Quatre Nations (Institut de France). He is given an apartment on the second floor in the west pavilion; his studio is on the ground floor in the east pavilion (Bonnaire 1937–1947, 3:13).

1802

Salon — Houdon exhibits a small statue of *La Frileuse*, a bronze of *Diana the Huntress*, marble busts of d’Alembert and Barthélemy, and plasters of Dorothea von Rodde-Schlözer and others.

## 1803

6 Jan. — *Moniteur universel* announces that the terracotta of Houdon's *Seated Voltaire* has been purchased by the Société des Beaux-Arts, Montpellier.

23 Jan. — The academies are reformed, grouped according to the five classes at the Institut.

18 Dec. — Houdon is named chevalier of the Legion of Honor (founded 19 May 1802) (Archives de la Grande chancellerie; Réau 1964, 1:34).

## 1804

Salon — Houdon exhibits several busts, including Robert Fulton and Joel Barlow, and the plaster statue of Cicero.

21 Mar. — Robert Livingston, American ambassador to France, approaches Houdon about the commission of a bronze equestrian statue of George Washington by the U.S. Congress. Houdon requires 600,000 francs, but the project is abandoned for lack of funds (BMV, F 946, nos. 72, 75, 76).

23 Sept. — Houdon is commissioned to create a colossal bronze statue of Napoleon to be placed atop a column at Boulogne-sur-Mer; Moitte receives the commission for bronze reliefs on the pedestal. Houdon's model is completed in 1806, and M. Getty casts it in 1812, but the statue is never installed. After 1815 it is melted down and the bronze used by Lemot for the statue of Henri IV on the Pont Neuf (BMV, F 946, nos. 132–219; *Monuments des victoires et conquêtes des français de 1792 à 1815* [Paris, n.d.], p. 218; Réau 1964, 1:72).

## 1805

5 Jan. — Houdon is named professor at the Ecole spéciale de peinture et de sculpture (Bonnaire 1937–1947, 2:299; AN, AJ 52441; *Journal de Paris*, 18 Pluviôse an XIII; *Moniteur universel*, 17 Pluviôse an XIII).

9 Feb. — Houdon is named “professor rector” at the Ecole spéciale (BMV, F 946, no. 22).

11 Apr. — Napoleon awards Houdon a gold medal in recognition of his contribution to the Salon of 1804 (BMV, F 946, no. 19).

30 Sept. — Marriage of Sabine Houdon to Henry-Jean Pineu-Duval, employee of the interior ministry (BMV, F 945, nos. 43–44; Réau 1964, 1:34).

## 1806

Salon — Houdon exhibits busts of Napoleon and Josephine, a marble bust of Dorothea von Rodde-Schlözer, and others.

3 Apr. — Houdon receives an imperial order for a statue of Barthélémy-Catherine Joubert, to be finished for the Salon of 1808; it is not delivered until the Salon of 1812 (BMV, F 946, no. 235; Vivant Denon [ed. 1999], no. 857; Réau 1964, 1:72).

25 Sept. — Marriage of Anne-Ange Houdon to Jean-Baptiste-Esprit Pélage Louyer de Villermay, a medical doctor (BMV, F 945, no. 20; Réau 1964, 1:34).

## 1808

Salon — Houdon exhibits the marble portraits of Napoleon and Josephine.

24 Sept. — Henry-Joseph Rutxhiel, one of Houdon's students, receives first prize in sculpture from the Académie (Bonnaire 1937–1947, 3:186).

21 Nov. — Notorized document signed before maître Trutat, notary in Paris, confirms the personal fortune of Houdon, “owner of buildings and of permanent income from the government, shares in the Banque de France, the annual income from which exceeds by a great deal 3000 francs” (AN, MC, étude LVIII, l. 641; BMV, F 946, no. 16; Réau 1964, 1:34).

## 1809

28 Jan. — Houdon is named chevalier of the Empire.

## 1810

Salon — Houdon does not exhibit.

27 Oct. — Marriage of Antoinette-Claude Houdon and Désiré-Raoul Rochette, professor agrégé at the Lycée impérial, later a member of the Institut, chevalier of the Legion of Honor, and curator of antique medals at the Bibliothèque royale (Réau 1964, 1:34).

## 1812

Salon — Houdon exhibits the marble statue of Joubert, the marble statue of Voltaire for the Panthéon, and a plaster bust of the comte Boissy d'Anglas.

13 June — Académie des Beaux Arts names Houdon, Lemot, Dejoux, Pierre Cartellier, and François-André Vincent as judges for Joseph Chinard's project for a colossal statue at Marseilles (Jean-Michel Léniaud, *Procès-verbaux de l'Académie des Beaux-Arts* [Paris, 2001], 1:148).

21 Dec. — *Journal de l'Empire* announces that Houdon's colossal statue of Napoleon for Boulogne-sur-Mer has just been successfully cast in bronze in one piece at the foundry in the faubourg du Roule by M. Getty.

### 1813

25 Sept. — Jean-Jacques Flatters de Crevelt, another of Houdon's students, receives second prize in sculpture (Léniaud 2001, 1:233).

### 1814

Alexander I visits Houdon's studio and commissions his bust in marble (*Mercure de France*, Apr. 1814; Réau 1964, 1:92).

Salon — Houdon participates for the last time, exhibiting a bust of the Russian emperor Alexander I.

### 1815

15 Sept. — Frederick William III, king of Prussia, visits Houdon's studio and especially admires a bust of Molière (*Moniteur universel*, 18 Sept., p. 1032)

### 1816

10 Feb. — Royal decree is given to decorate the bridge of Louis XVI with twelve colossal statues. Houdon is given the figure of Chevalier Pierre-Terrail Bayard but declines the commission in view of his great age. Antoine Moutoni takes it instead (BMV, F 946, no. 240; *Moniteur universel*, 18 Feb. 1816, 181).

### 1818

2 Apr. — Houdon sells to Anselme Lesourd and François Périac, a masonry contractor, the house, land, and outbuildings he owns at 76 faubourg du Roule. On 14 June 1822 he sells the house he owns at 74 faubourg du Roule (AN, MC, étude LXX, l. 900).

### 1823

22 Feb. — Death of Mme Houdon, at the Palais de l'Institut; her estate is dispersed by maître Agasse, notary in Paris, 12 Mar. 1823 (BMV, F 945, no. 5). Houdon is named emeritus professor at the Académie royale (Archives de l'Ecole nationale des beaux-arts, on deposit at AN, AJ 52441; Labat-Poussin 1998, 52).

### 1828

15 July — Death of Jean-Antoine Houdon, aged 88, at the Palais de l'Institut (BMV, F 945, no. 4; Réau 1964, 1:36).

15–17 Dec. — Posthumous sale of the contents of Houdon's studio at the request of his three daughters. The introduction to the catalogue is written by Raoul Rochette.

## Appendix

### *Etat des choses renfermées dans les caisses envoyées à son Altesse Monseigneur le Duc de Saxe Gotha*

(Forschungsbibliothek Gotha, Chart A 712, fols. 8r-14r)

1 Je m'étois proposé de mettre un ordre intelligible et abrégé,  
2 pour reconnoître chaque chose sur le champ, par le moyen  
3 des numeros mis sur chaque objet, et placés pareillement à  
4 chacun des articles. mais, voyant que la plupart s'en alloient  
5 en posant les objets dans la Caisse, je n'ai pas continué.

6 Comme Son Altesse fait cas des choefs d'oeuvre en tout  
7 genre, je lui envoie, sans être réparé *le Morphé* qui a été  
8 exposé au salon dernier, lequel peut servir d'exemple à tous  
9 les mouleurs. je l'envoie, tel, à son Altesse, pour juger par  
10 elle même: de la délicatesse des Contures des entre deux  
11 de chaque piece, du peu de defectuosité à réparer. il est  
12 rare de voir un moule aussy bien fait. la qualité du plâtre  
13 peut y contribuer beaucoup, ainsi que l'habileté du  
14 mouleur qui, consiste à bien juger la quantité des pieces  
15 necessaires ' et les placer de façon à pouvoir être enlevé  
16 sans rupture, et à n'en pas mettre plus qu'il ne faut. je crois  
17 que le nombre, se monte à peu près à deux cents: d'autres,  
18 en auroit pû mettre mille. il à fallu neammoins pour le  
19 mouler aussy bien qu'il est, couper le Modele en onze  
20 morceaux, faire un moule de chaque, couler ensuite dans  
21 tous ces moules, pour n'en faire qu'un, tel que, votre Altesse,  
22 le voit. je crois devoir prevenir, que l'on use de precaution  
23 quand on deballera: cela aura acquis une certaine valeur  
24 bien que ce ne soit que de plâtre, par la raison seule, du  
25 prix du transport. la grande caisse, contient principalement  
26 le Morphé, et d'autres choses dans les vuides qu'il occa-  
27 sione. après l'avoir rempli et fermé à [fol. 8v] demeure, on  
28 l'a retournée sans dessus dessous, pour inserer d'autres  
29 objets, dans le creux de la plinthe de cette figure. elle  
30 demande d'autant plus de menagements, que toutes les  
31 parties en sont creuses, même les âiles. on doit la remuer,

32 transporter, et manier, par le bas de la plinthe. dans la cas  
33 ou il se trouveroit quelque chose de cassé, et les ruptures  
34 nettes, cest à dire, sans qu'il y ait rien de reduit en poudre,  
35 et que l'on eût envie de voir le tout reuny: sans avoir recours  
36 à un Sculpteur de profession, il suffiroit d'appliquer un  
37 peu de blanc de plomb, tel qu'il se trouve chez le marchand  
38 de couleur, [disposé pour peindre] le broyer avec un peu  
39 d'huile grasse, et en appliquer sur chacune des parties à  
40 rejoindre. il faut un peu d'attention, vu que cela demande  
41 du temps pour s'affermir, et soutenir les morceaux qui  
42 seroient en l'air. pour éviter la rupture, je crois qu'il con-  
43 viendroit d'ouvrir la caisse par dessus; ensuite oter la  
44 Scieure qui est à hauteur de la largeur de la premiere  
45 planche crainte d'offencer les parties qui seront ça et la  
46 sous la main. ensuite scier cette planche aux deux extrem-  
47 ités, jusq'u à une autre assise; et enlever les objets, Les  
48 quels vraisemblablement se decouvriront deux mêmes.

49 Un plâtre de mon *Ecorché* grand comme nature, placé  
50 dans la seconde grande caisse. il n'y a que le bras droit qui  
51 n'est pas joint au reste du corps, il est placé dans la grande,  
52 et exige du soin pour le decouvrir, vû que la main est  
53 ouverte, et que les doigts se trouvent isolés. cette figure  
54 pour être bien d'aplomb demande à être renversée un peu  
55 en arriere. si quelques Chirurgiens habiles trouvoit à redire  
56 sur cet ouvrage, je n'en seroit point surpris, malgré que  
57 tous ceux à qui je l'ai fait voir à Rome comme icy, m'ayent  
58 parus être très Satisfait. de certains que je forçai à y trou-  
59 ver à redire; persuadé que les hommes ne voyent pas les  
60 uns comme les autres, me disent, qu'ils desiroient telle  
61 chose dans telle et telle partie. mais après leur avoir dit,  
62 [fol. 9r] que j'avois fait cet ouvrage pour apprendre aux

63 artistes, d'où provient la correction du dessein, et com-  
64 ment on y peut parvenir. ils ne sçavoient plus que me dire,  
65 ni s'ils avoient eù raison de me critiquer. voila ce que pro-  
66 duit l'ignorance. les Chirurgiens, tels habiles qu'ils soient,  
67 ne sont point dessinateurs: et les dessinateurs, ne sont  
68 point Chirurgiens. l'habile Chirurgien selon moi, doit  
69 etudier la nature, telle defectueuse quelle puisse se ren-  
70 contrer, pour pouvoir remedier á chaque infirmité. mais  
71 nous, nous devons l'etudier autrement. cest la nature dans  
72 toute sa noblesse, sa parfaite santé, que nous recherchons;  
73 ou si non, nous ne sommes, que de chetifs imitateurs. je  
74 compare celui qui imite la Nature telle quelle se rencontre  
75 journellement, à un Singe bien organisé. mais celui qui  
76 sçait faire un choix, et qui y reussit, approche bien selon  
77 moi de ce qu'il y a de plus parfait, et s'eleve lame. voila  
78 mon ambition, et á quoi j'etente.

79 Dans une Boëte, sous la tête de cet Ecorché, est là Copie  
80 d'un petit *Cheval* de même nature, dont l'original est en  
81 Bronze du double de grandeur, dans la villa del signor Duca  
82 Mattei: s'il n'est pas antique il est ancien et selon moi fort  
83 beau. des Ecuyers y trouvent des defauts; pour moi, je ne  
84 m'y connois pas assez pour acquiescer aux eloges, ni aux  
85 blames. mais, si j'avois á faire une statue Equestre, je  
86 voudrois connoitre cet animal, aussi profondement que je  
87 me flate de connoitre l'homme. ce plâtre m'a été donnè.

88 Comme j'occupe maintenant, les Ateliers de la Ville,  
89 et qu'il s'y trouve encore le creux de la Statue de Louis  
90 Quinze: je vais peut-être selon le prix ou cela se montera,  
91 faire couler par ordre de Mr. le Prévost des Marchands, un  
92 platre de cette statue avant qu'on en detruise le moule. ce  
93 morceau, ornera beaucoup l'interieur de mon Atelier.

94 On trouvera une petite figure renfermée dans une  
95 Caisse, laquelle est inserée dans la grande, representant  
96 *Luperque prêtre*, qui après avoir sacrifié au Dieu Pan, courroit  
97 nud, et frapoit toutes les femmes de sa Courroi, pour les  
98 [fol. 9v] rendre fécondes. les femmes enceintes, recevoient  
99 aussy de ces coups, esperants d'accoucher heureusement.  
100 ce plâtre est celui sur lequel, j'ai été agrée. il á été exposé  
101 au Salon de 1769.

102 Un Medaillon du plus saillant possible, representant la  
103 tête del *Minerve*, copiée D'après l'antique, recorrigé par moi.

104 La tête d'*Alexandre* composé par moi faisant pendant  
105 á celle de *Minerve*. j'ai ces deux têtes chez moi, ebauchées  
106 en marbre. je ne conte les finir, que quand l'occasion de  
107 les placer se presentera.

108 Le portrait d *Homere*, sera facile á reconnoitre, si le  
109 numero 4... y est encore. autrement, on le reconnoitra á  
110 la quantité des cheveux; Lesquels sont ceints d'une espece  
111 de cordon. il n'est fait que jusqu'au la fosette du Col. il ne m'a  
112 couté, que la valeur du plâtre dont il est fait. j'at levé les  
113 plus grosses defectuosités que le moule y avoit laissé.

114 Celui de *Demosthenes* ce celebre orateur grec, qui est  
115 du même prix, si le numero 5... n'y est plus, on peut le  
116 reconnoitre aisement. il est en Buste, mais sans Epaules:  
117 il á la tête tournée de gauche á droite, Les cheveux courts,  
118 arrangés par simetrie, et sans legereté. il á je ne sçais quoi,  
119 qui lui passe de derriere en devant, sur le bas de Col, du  
120 coté droit.

121 *Caracalla* qui n'á pas plus couté, doit avoir le numero  
122 6.. au reste il est facile de le connoitre á ses sourcils fron-  
123 cés, ses petits cheveux bouclés, sa barbe crepue, et son  
124 manteau á la Romaine, tenu par un bouton sur l'Epaule  
125 droite. la tête de cet Empereur, etoit mal organisée, mais  
126 le dessein exterieure me plait Singulierement. L'original  
127 qui est de toute beauté, se trouve dans le palais pharnese  
128 á Rome.

129 *Le pied de la venus de Medicis*, tel que je l'ai pû avoir á  
130 Rome, je pense qu'il ne sera pas indifferent, relativement  
131 aux reflexions que nous fimes eù egard á nos chaussures  
132 qui gâtent nos pieds: et plus particulierement celles des  
133 femmes. cest une beauté que d'avoir un petit pied. de l'avoir  
134 [fol. 10r] trop petit, est un defaut, comme de l'avoir trop  
135 grand. nos parisiennes trouvent le pied de la venus bien  
136 gros, relativement au leur mais le leur aux yeux des per-  
137 sannes, doit paroître de même, puisquelles se le gâtent au  
138 point quelles ne peuvent pas s'en servir.

139 je ne trouve rien de si ridicule, que les chaussures de  
140 nos dames, et le Rouge apliqué sur les jouës; comme si cela  
141 etoit une mouche. j'ai été tenté mille fois, de faire l'eloge de  
142 la Cour de Gotha á cet egard. mais la crainte de paroître con-  
143 traire aux sentiments de nos dames, m'a fait garder le silence.

144 Les femmes, qui se gâtent les pieds et la taille ainsi  
145 que la figure, non plus que celles qui portent de grands  
146 fardeaux, ne sont pas plus propres á nous servir de mo-  
147 dele, l'une que l'autre. l'une parcequ'elle est trop effeminée,  
148 gatée par la peinture quelle s'applique depuis la pointe des  
149 cheveux jusqu'au la gorge. Le front est epilé, de maniere á  
150 former sept pointes; les Sourcils sont taillés, cirés, peignés.  
151 Les joues, grand Dieu, vous le sçavez. le blanc, le Rouge,  
152 tout y entre. Les oreilles sont gatées par la Coëffure de nuit;

153 le jour, par les enormes Boucles d'oreille. depuis que Quan-  
 154 tité d'oreilles, se trouvent fenduës depuis le trou, jusqu'ua  
 155 son extremité inferieure, par le poids des boucles; on á  
 156 trouvé moyen de les suspendre, et de les appuyer sans  
 157 quelles passent au travers de l'oreille. il faut avouer que  
 158 paris est charmant pour l'industrie. j'ai plusieurs de mes  
 159 amis, qui n'ayant point de cheveux, s'en sont fait implanter  
 160 l'un aprês l'autre; sans tissu et sans trame dans la tête. le  
 161 col, est souvent gaté par les colliers trop serrés. La taille,  
 162 par les maudits corps. Les genoux, dessus ou dessous, par  
 163 les jarretieres quelque fois memes tous les deux, parceque  
 164 l'un, contribue á l'autre. Les pieds, par la Chaussure. et l'on  
 165 se plaint journellement des corps aux pieds, et des duril-  
 166 lons qui ne proviennent que de la.

167 La derniere est une femme qui par de penibles travaux  
 168 perd de son caractere feminin. mais moi, homme, et même  
 169 femme, j'aimerois [fol. 10v] mieux á cela près de la condi-  
 170 tion, etre sortis des flancs de cette derniere. j'esperois  
 171 avoir une santé plus robuste. je veux donc donner á votre  
 172 Altesse, un Exemple d'un pied generalement beau, c'est  
 173 un pied ni trop petit, ny trop grand. cest la forme d'un pied  
 174 qui n'a jamais porté chaussure. j'y trouve quelque chose á  
 175 desirer. mais je n'ose le dire. peut être seroit il moins bien,  
 176 s'il etoit comme je le desire.

177 Pour donner, á votre Altesse, une idée de lexcés de nos  
 178 coëffures, je lui envoie 4... mediocres Estampes qui courent  
 179 les Rües, et dont la moins mauvaise á mon avis, est celle  
 180 qui represente une demoiselle allant á l'Opera, et qui  
 181 accroche en passant dans la Rüe, Le Reverbere. cest autant  
 182 de Caricatures; mais Si cela est outré, les vrayes coëffures  
 183 ne sont pas moins ridicules. je pardonnerois de donner  
 184 aux cheveux, tous les plis et replis possibles, pourvu que  
 185 cela fut á l'avantage de la personne. cest une chose qui peut  
 186 souffrir tous nos caprices mais il n'en est pas de même, de  
 187 la taille fine et deliée, que je reproche au critique de n'avoir  
 188 pas outré. Les enfants qui proviennent de ces tailles, peuvent  
 189 s'en ressentir. Les femmes, n'ont d'autres dessein que de  
 190 plaire á leurs maris, qui ne connoissent point la belle  
 191 nature, ils veulent quand leurs femmes viennent au monde  
 192 telles quelles doivent être, Les rendre par leurs corps  
 193 comme des fourmies, presque separées par la moitié. de  
 194 certains, s'imaginent n'avoir pas les pieds gatés, parcequ'ils  
 195 n'ont point, disent ils, les doigts chevauchés l'un sur l'autre.  
 196 s'ils avoient le pouce de la main apuié et collé le long du  
 197 premier doigt; et que les autres se trouvassent de même

198 sans avoir la liberté de leurs mouvements, ils ne croiroient  
 199 point avoir la main bien faite. il en est du pied, comme de  
 200 la main. le pouce est toujours ecarté des autres doigts, c'est  
 201 lordre de la nature libre: les autres doigts ainsi que le pouce,  
 202 servent par Leur Ecart, á rappeler notre aplomb au besoin.  
 203 Les femmes n'auroient pas tant de merite á savoir marcher,  
 204 si elles alloient pieds nuds ou chaussures plates. je les trouve  
 205 aussy adroites que les danseurs de Corde. il est naturel  
 206 de danser sur la Corde, mais cela n'est pas ordinaire. les  
 207 femmes ont contractés ces habitudes dès Le Bas âge.

208 [fol. 11r] Bien des personnes qui trouvoient du ridicule á  
 209 ma chaussure ont changés d'avis, sur une legere explication.  
 210 plusieurs même d'entre elles, se font faire des Souliers á ma  
 211 mode. je demandai un jour á M<sup>r</sup> Diderot á l'egard des  
 212 Dames, ce qu'il pensoit des tailles fines. ce que j'en pense,  
 213 me dit il, vous ignorez donc la difference que je fais entre  
 214 les françaises, et les Italiennes. Les Italiennes, sont faites  
 215 pour faire des Enfants, et les notres pour être... il me le dit  
 216 tout franc. votre Altesse, doit le reconnoitre. cest un homme  
 217 bouillant, tout de flamme. pour jouir, dit il, voila la difference  
 218 que je fais.

219 M'etant proposè d'expliquer ceque cest q'un Basrelief,  
 220 j'en envoie . 5. sous le numero . 9... s'il y est encore. On  
 221 nomme basrelief Generalement toute Sculpture appliqué  
 222 sur un fond, et qui n'est pas parfaitement isolée. il est  
 223 plusieurs Sortes de Basrelief. basrelief de demi Bosse, tel  
 224 que les têtes de Minerve et d'Alexandre. Bosse signifie une  
 225 chose eminente. Rond de Bosse, est une chose visible sur  
 226 tous sens. tels sont le *Morphé*, La tête *de venus*, celle  
 227 *d'homere*, *L'Ecorché*, le *pied de la Venus* &c. le basrelief est  
 228 generalement moins Saillant que la demie bosse. le Bas-  
 229 relief extremement bas, est ce que l'on peut voir, dans les  
 230 4... basreliefs qui representent les 4... *parties du Monde*.  
 231 celui oval et de forme oblongue, represente *Louis XIV* sous  
 232 *la figure d'apollon* sur un Char parcourant les airs. ces bas-  
 233 reliefs dit on faisoient partie de la Vaiselle de ce Roy. il n'en  
 234 reste plus que des cuivres, appartenants á un de mes amis,  
 235 M<sup>r</sup> Duvivier Graveur des Medailles du Roy; et des plâtres,  
 236 tels que, votre Altesse, peut les voir. cela me paroît autant  
 237 de chefs d'oeuvres dans le genre d'orfèverrie. ils fûrent  
 238 executés par Le Celebre Balin orfevre du Roy.

239 Basrelief extrémement bas, tel que la tête de Minerve,  
 240 mise sous verre avec Bordure; pour d'orner un certain  
 241 relief, et montrer une [Bordure] suivant mon gout. j'avois  
 242 pris la Mesure du Medaillon, de Madame La Duchesse,

243 pour en faire un qui convint un peu mieux, que celle que  
244 j'ai laissé sans être terminé. mais je l'ai perdu en route. si  
245 la bordure que j'envoie n'alloit pas bien, on pourroit oter  
246 ou remettre du plâtre au portrait; de façon qu'étant reunis,  
247 ils semblent faits l'un pour l'autre. ces bordures vû mon  
248 Economie, ne m'ont couté que 170<sup>#</sup> 2<sup>S</sup> . . . j'ai imaginé de  
249 faire cette tête avec si peu de saillie, pour [fol. 11v] sur-  
250 monter une Difficulté, qui n'est pas peu de Chose. il faut  
251 avec aussy peu de relief, faire sentir que l'objet représenté,  
252 est rond, et pour se le persuader; il faut (soit que la lumiere,  
253 soit naturelle ou artificielle,) placer l'ouvrage un peu plus  
254 ou moins haut, plus ou moins de Coté, comme j'ai eu  
255 l'honneur de le *faire observer à son Altesse*, à l'égard des por-  
256 traits, que j'ai eû l'avantage de faire à Gotha. il faut pareille-  
257 ment s'écarter à une Distance convenable. la Sculpture  
258 bien Eclairée, est bien differente de celle qui ne l'est pas.  
259 Le fameux Apollon du Vatican, ne m'en impose pas, Eclairé  
260 en dessous, je le regarde comme une Statue. mais Eclairé  
261 autrement, j'oublie la matiere dont il est fait, et ne vois en  
262 lui q'un Dieu. telle est l'impression qu'il m'a fait, et qu'il doit  
263 faire à tous Connoisseurs, particulièrement quand il se  
264 trouve recevoir la lumiere, dans le point de perfection. la  
265 nature entiere à une heure plus favorable pour être vüe. je  
266 n'oubliurai jamais le Château de Gotha, d'ou je decouvris  
267 une grande partie de Ciel et de terre, ce qui m'autorise à  
268 avancer cela. La petite tête de Minerve, ainsi que le Morfé  
269 et les ouvrages de M<sup>r</sup>. Doëll, sont de Talque, le plâtre le  
270 plus beau et le plus fin que nous ayons.

271 Les basreliefs Ronds ou ovales, qui ne passent point  
272 une certaine grandeur, se nomment Medaillons. autrement,  
273 basreliefs saillants ou non Saillants, de telle ou telle  
274 grandeur. demie Bosse ou demi Relief. Les copies de M<sup>r</sup>.  
275 Doëll, envoyées à son Altesse, feront voir les progrès que  
276 fait son Eleve, et quel est l'usage qu'il fait de son temps. il  
277 n'est pas possible de faire plus de progrès: je supplie, son  
278 Altesse, de ne lui point faire connoitre tout le bien que je  
279 dis et espere de lui; car, les jeunes gens croient Scavoir dès  
280 l'instant qu'ils commencent. il est à desirer que, votre  
281 Altesse, exige de lui pour preuve de sa capacité, qu'il gagne  
282 une Medaille au Concours. il ne demande pas mieux, je  
283 l'ai même trouvé occupé à cela. je lui ai fait retirer sa figure,  
284 et lui dis, qu'il n'étoit pas assez fort, qu'il ne falloit pas  
285 fatiguer les yeux des juges, que cela ne donnoit pas une  
286 bonne opinion. qu'il falloit se rendre capable, et prendre  
287 bien ses mesures pour entrer en lice, et l'emporter sur les

288 autres. je n'exige de lui que ce que j'ai fait, sans vouloir me  
289 donner pour exemple. ensuite, il fera plus. je ne suis pas  
290 le premier, qui aurai fait plus habile que soi. il m'a dit, qu'il  
291 n'avoit travaillé qu'assis à Gotha: mais icy, quand je le ver-  
292 ray ce sera pour la premiere fois.

293 Les Copies de l'hercule et de l'Ecorché qu'il à fait sont  
294 des Basreliefs d'après la Bosse, ou figures isolées.

295 Le nom de *Pandore* que l'on donne à Rome à la *Vestale*  
296 que j'ai faite d'après le Marbre qui est au Capitol plus grand  
297 que [fol. 12r] nature, ne me paroît pas Convenable, vû que  
298 le Vase qu'elle tient, ne ressemble point à la Boîte des Des-  
299 tins. j'ignore à quoi peut servir le trou situé au fond du  
300 vase; peut être est il Moderne. elle est haute de 20. à 22 . .  
301 pouces, droite, elle tient son Vase à deux mains.

302 La tête d'un *amour couronné* de Myrthe, composé  
303 par moi.

304 Le *Couple* amoureux ou baiser reciproque, cest un  
305 Groupe de deux têtes, de la grosseur de demi nature. ces  
306 têtes sont reunies de maniere qu'elles posent sur un seul  
307 pied. La tête de *Meduse*, appliqué sur un fond Rond de . . 6 . .  
308 pouces de Diametre. cette idée est prise d'après l'antique,  
309 sur la poitrine d'un Guerrier qui est en Buste au Capitol,  
310 mais elle n'y est que heurtée. presque tous les Artistes se  
311 la sont procurée. elle à été employée dans maintes occa-  
312 sions, particulièrement en Architecture, et en decorations.

313 Dans la moyenne Caisse, comme dans la grande, s'est  
314 trouvé plus de vuide que je n'imaginis. j'ai autant aimé y  
315 mettre de mes plâtres, que de la Sçuire de Bois. cest  
316 pourquoi le saint *Bruno* qui à été exposé au Salon il y á . 3 .  
317 ans, s'y trouve, ainsi q'une petite pretrésse de Diane, de  
318 Basrelief.

319 Un *buste antique*, dont je ne Scais pas le nom, que je  
320 trouve fort beau, contenu dans la Caisse de l'Ecorché, il est  
321 drapé sur la poitrine, à les Cheveux extrêmement Courts. si  
322 son Altesse vouloit le reconnoitre par le moyen des Souffres,  
323 Medailles ou Gravures, je lui donnerois pour indice, que  
324 j'ai vû a Rome dans le palais de france notre Academie, un  
325 plâtre de cette tête executée en buste jusqu'à la Ceinture,  
326 jointe à une autre representant une femme qui lui donne  
327 la main. cest vraisemblablement Louis XIV qui eu fit faire  
328 le Creux en même temps que ceux qui sont à nos acade-  
329 mies de Rome et de Paris. ils doivent représenter un  
330 Mariage à l'usage des anciens. j'ignore ou en est le Marbre.

331 Une tête d'Etude, qu'on peut nommer *Vestale*, elle à  
332 un voile sur la tête à été composée et faite à Rome. elle

333 est dans mon Attelier; ebauchée en Marbre, ainsi que la  
334 tête suivante.

335 Une tête d'étude *du S<sup>t</sup> Jean* que je devois executer en  
336 face du S<sup>t</sup> Bruno, que j'ai fait en Marbre dans L'eglise des  
337 Chartreux de Rome. cette tête à etè vüe par le public d'un  
338 oeil favorable à l'avant dernier Salon. La maniere dont je l'ai  
339 faite, m'a etè [fol. 12v] avantageuse. ayant etè faire des Sta-  
340 tions d'Artiste, à l'eglise de S<sup>t</sup> Pierre de Rome, je trouvai  
341 une Espece d'hermite vivant parmi le peuple, pieds nuds,  
342 vetü d'une Espece de Robe de Capucïn, et ayant une tête  
343 qui me convenoit assez. cet homme singulier, demande  
344 l'aümone dans les Rües, et du trop de ce qu'il lui faut pour  
345 vivre, il fait la Charité. il se rend à certaines heures et cer-  
346 tains jours de la Semaine à S<sup>t</sup> Pierre, pour instruire quan-  
347 tité d'Enfants des deux Sexes. je l'accostai au sortir de la,  
348 et lui proposai de me servir de Modele pour *la tête* Seule-  
349 ment. il n'y eüt ni or, ni argent, ni même prieres, qui  
350 pussent le flechir. il me dit, qu'il n'etois pas digne de servir  
351 de Modele de saint. je projettai de m'en Servir, sans lui  
352 avoir d'Obligation. je le considerai bien et l'inculquai dans  
353 ma tête; le mieux qu'il me fut possible. je m'en vins à  
354 l'Academie qui est fort éloignée de S<sup>t</sup> Pierre, et je façonnai  
355 une masse de terre, deja preparée à ce Dessein. je retour-  
356 nai le lendemain et Surlendemain, pour Le Revoir, et ter-  
357 minai ma tête en effet sans lui avoir d'obligation. je la  
358 montraï à mon superieur et à mes Confreres qui la trouv-  
359 erent très bien. mais il est certains Esprits, qui quoique  
360 Contents, desirent ce qu'ils ne voyent pas. un ou d'eux  
361 d'entre eux, me disent, quelle seroit encore mieux, s'il y  
362 avoit plus de feu dâme, en un mot plus d'action. mais ne  
363 croyant pas mieux faire, je balançai beaucoup sur ce que  
364 je ferois. je desirois Satisfaire tout le monde, mais je craig-  
365 nois aussy de defaire ce que j'avoue actuellement avoir  
366 jamais fait de mieux. Les Compliments que j'en ai reçus  
367 publiquement au Salon, me confirment dans mon Opin-  
368 ion. pour n'avoir point de reproches à me faire, je la fis  
369 mouler; [et] sur la terre, je fis ce que l'on desiroit. Les deux  
370 têtes placées l'une auprès de l'autre, furent trouvées gen-  
371 eralement bien, mais le plus grand nombre fut pour la pre-  
372 miere. peu s'en fallut, que pour vouloir trop bien faire, je  
373 ne gâta une bonne tête, si j'en eus pris le parti de la con-  
374 server par le moyen du Moule. La pluspart de mes ouvrages  
375 ne sont pas unies, cela vient de ce que je ne juge pas à pro-  
376 pos de vernir une Chose qui n'est pas dans la Derniere  
377 [fol. 13r] perfection. j'ai dit à M<sup>r</sup> Doëll, que de rendre ses

378 ouvrages luisants, cetoit cacher sous un verni ses defauts  
379 aux yeux des gens non Connoisseurs. de plus, les chairs,  
380 ainsi que quantité d'autres choses, ne sont point lises, polies,  
381 et luisantes. quand cela arrive, cest par une transpiration  
382 de grâce, qui repand une huile sur la Phisionomie, qui n'est  
383 pas un agrement. cette tête, se trouve aussy dans la Caisse  
384 de l'Ecorchè. le pied qui la supporte, est à part. il suffira  
385 de poser l'un sur l'autre, et de mettre du plâtre par der-  
386 riere, avec un Morceau de fer implanté dans le pied, avant  
387 d'y ajouter le plâtre. et l'autre extremité du fer, appuiee sur  
388 le derriere du bas de la tête.

389 *La tête de La Venus*, tel que nous l'avons icy maintenant  
390 elle n'est pas comparable à celle que, votre altesse, à achetè  
391 à quelques distances de Gotha. mais l'ayant reparè du mieux  
392 qu'il m'a etè possible, elle à acquis un Degrè de blancheur  
393 assez egal. Madame La Duchesse, desirant un plâtre de  
394 cette tête, plus blanc, que ceux qui sont à Gotha, je lui envoye  
395 celui cy, avec le seul merite de la Blancheur. je n'ai pü, faute  
396 de temps, reparer les cheveux comme ils devoient l'être.

397 Une petite Caisse d'environ .6. pouces de long, con-  
398 tenant *deux petits oiseaux* de terre cuite, que je desire pre-  
399 senter, à Madame la Duchesse. j'ai eprouvè en les faisant,  
400 qu'il etoit difficile avec une matiere opaque d'une seule  
401 Couleur, d'imiter la legereté des plumes et du duvet, que  
402 cette nature nous presente. je souhaite, que votre Altesse  
403 y trouve quelques verités.

404 *La tête d'une femme de frescati*, Ville distante de .6.  
405 Lieües de Rome, elle á etè exposè à l'avant dernier salon,  
406 et peut donner une idée des Coëffures d'Italie; non des  
407 premieres dames de Rome, qui adoptent les notres, et qui  
408 pour la plus part, en outrent le Ridicule. j'aime cette espece  
409 de Coëffures, qui reporte tous les Cheveux en arriere, et  
410 retenue ensuite par des Epingles d'or, d'Argent, et autre  
411 matiere. leur Coeffures de jour et de nuit, n'empêche point  
412 les oreilles de croitre, selon le Cours de la nature. cette tête,  
413 et celle de mon Ecorchè, ont les oreilles, comme on doit les  
414 avoir generalement.

415 Une 3.eme [erased: Deuxieme] caisse, d'environ trois  
416 pieds contenant *deux Bordures*, l'une destinée pour le por-  
417 trait, de Madame la Duchesse, ou celui que, votre Altesse  
418 jugera à propos. L'autre contient Le Medaillon de Minerve.

419 [fol. 13v] Une tête en pastel, destinée à presenter, à votre  
420 Altesse, une peinture fixée par M<sup>r</sup> Lorient Grand Mecani-  
421 tien. Elle desiroit Sçavoir, si l'on pouvoit passer la main  
422 dessus, sans offencer et endommager; Elle peut se satis-



423 faire sur le portrait représentant M<sup>de</sup> Boucher, tenant une  
424 Brochure á la main, Epouse de M<sup>r</sup> Boucher, cy devant  
425 premier Peintre du Roy. votre Altesse, peut faire toutes les  
426 Epreuves quelle jugera á propos, attendu que ce pastel,  
427 ainsi que ceux que j'y ai joint qui ne sont point fixés, sont  
428 de peu de valeur. ces pastels ainsi que les desseins que j'ai  
429 pris la liberté d'y joindre, sont egalemeut faits, par celle  
430 qui veut bien faire ma Compagnie elle á le merite, d'imiter  
431 la maniere de tous les maitres d'après les quels, la plus-  
432 part de ces desseins la sont faits. elle veut bien malgré  
433 ses occupations ordinaires, veiller sur ma maison. cette  
434 compagne, est une de mes Soeurs.

435 Deux pastels mis sous verre, dont l'un est une vestale,  
436 et l'autre deux Nayades.

437 Une Estampe representant le triomphe de P... des-  
438 siné d'après l'antique. j'en ai vü le camée en soufre, votre  
439 Altesse, doit l'avoir dans sa Collection. mais le dessein  
440 et l'Estampe ont été augmenté de plusieurs Episodes. c'est  
441 M<sup>r</sup> le Comte de Caylus, qui le fit graver; il y á neuf á dix ans.  
442 j'ai eü la 5<sup>eme</sup> Epreuve, avant que l'explication fut au bas. ce  
443 qui prouve la certitude des premieres Epreuves. je ne pretend  
444 point, lui donner plus de valeur quelle n'en á, tout ce que je  
445 sçais, cest qu'il y en á très peu d'Exemplaires. j'ai inseré un  
446 Recueil de vases tournés, dont l'auteur, ainsi que celui qui á  
447 gravé l'estampe de cidessus, m'ont faits presents.

448 *La petite tête de S<sup>t</sup>. Bruno*, fondateur de lordre des Char-  
449 treux, elle est en Buste, et moins incorrecte que celle qui  
450 est sur le saint. cest pourquoi, je l'ai introduite. elle n'est  
451 que de plâtre, revetue d'une couleur de terre cuite á leau  
452 et un peu de Gomme d'Arabie.

453 Un morceau de bois caré, de . . 8 . . pouces de long, des-  
454 tiné á enter *le bras de l'Ecorché*.

455 Autre petite Caisse, qui doit être dans la plus grande,  
456 contenant des medailles que j'ai reçu de M<sup>r</sup>. *Duvivier*. pour  
457 les envoyer, á son Altesse, je les ai fait mettre sous verre,  
458 pour la somme de 24<sup>#</sup> . . . mon intention, en joignant ce cy,  
459 est de donner une idée, de ce qui se fait á Paris, en ce genre  
460 et faire connoitre le merite de l'auteur. lui ayant fait voir  
461 celle dont on ma honoré, il m'a dit, que l'on ne [fol. 14r]  
462 frappoit pas avec autant de neteté icy. cette Caisse, contient  
463 deux Cadres remplies des Epreuves premieres, en etain,  
464 de differentes Medailles. L'un, du fameux Duvivier pere,  
465 Graveur Celebre dans ce genre; L'autre de M<sup>r</sup> son fils, qui  
466 se distingue beaucoup, et soutient l'honneur de son nom.  
467 il m'en á fait present, pour que j'aye l'honneur de vous les

468 offrir; ne doutant pas, quelles n'entrent parmi vos differents  
469 morceaux de Curiosité. ce ne sont pas des suites de  
470 medailles, mais, cest une Collection peut être des plus  
471 belles, pour l'art et le gout.

472 vous remarquerez principalement dans le premier, La  
473 Medaille du sacre *de Louis XV* et un *S<sup>t</sup> Michel qui foudroye*  
474 *les Anges*, gravée pour l'establissement d'un ordre de S<sup>t</sup>  
475 Michel, par le Prince de Baviere, en . . 1722 . . Les têtes de  
476 M<sup>r</sup> Le Marechal de Villars, et de M<sup>r</sup> le Duc de Bourbon  
477 avec leurs Revers, qui sont très distingués. et la figure  
478 Equestre de Louis XV.. posée á Bordeaux, en 1723 . . il y á  
479 aussy, differentes autres Medailles, de l'histoire du Roy de  
480 . 18. lignes de diamettre, de differentes dattes, et dont le  
481 gout ma paru etonnant.

482 Le second Cadre, renferme la grande Medaille de la  
483 figure Equestre de Louis XV. . faite pour la ville de paris;  
484 et un revers particulier pour les six corps des Marchands.  
485 plus, une tête du Roy habillé, faite il y á 5 ans, dont la  
486 ressemblance étoit frappante, avec deux Revers singuliers  
487 pour la delicatesse du travail, et la regularité des Batiments.  
488 la tête *d'Henri. . IV. .* dont les Eloges multipliées, ont excité  
489 M<sup>r</sup> de la Rochelle, á proposer cette Medaille pour exciter á  
490 le louer encore mieux, ce qui á reussy á Merveille. la Medaille  
491 fondée par M<sup>r</sup> le Duc de villars á Marseille, ou est son Buste,  
492 á pour revers, un genie tenant des Couronnes pour recom-  
493 penser l'Agriculture, le Commerce, et la navigation. une  
494 autre fondé par la ville de Lyon pour le meme objet. differ-  
495 ents sujets de l'histoire de Louis XV. . et un jetton octogone,  
496 suivant la nouvelle mode, representant M<sup>r</sup> l'Archêvesque  
497 de Reims, avec son revers ouvrage pretieux. je souhaite que  
498 ces Collections, soient du gout de, votre Altesse, et qu'elles  
499 lui plaisent assez pour entrer dans son Cabinet.

## Select Bibliography

### ABBREVIATIONS

AAF *Archives de l'art français*

BSHAF *Bulletin de la Société de l'histoire de l'art français*

GBA *Gazette des beaux-arts*

NAAF *Nouvelles archives de l'art français*

RAAM *Revue de l'art ancien et moderne*

SIRIO *Sbornik imperatorskogo Russkogo istoricheskogo obshchestva*

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