

Clay and Marble. New Sculptures by Giusto Le Court in Vienna and Warsaw

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A terracotta bust of a bearded man was sold at a recently held auction of art organized by the Dorotheum auction house in Vienna.¹ The 28-centimeter-tall sculpture was presented as a model for a male bust by an unknown Italian sculptor dating to the end of the 17th century (fig. 1).² The bust is laid on a low polygonal base covered with a layer of red velvet. The sculpture represents the virile figure down to his breast as covered in an asymmetrically frayed gown. The figure's strong and masculine neck is frontally covered by a long beard fashioned in two sinuous locks curved to his left. The highly skillful and natural modelling of the figure's face as well as its vivid expression is reminiscent of a naturalist portrait of a ruler or a general. The eyes of the bust, particularly, are very specific – the arch of the upper eyelid is emphasized in contrast to the one of the lower eyelid, which seems to almost disappear into the cheek in a soft transition. A thick moustache falling over his mouth leaving it barely visible, gives the pensive figure additional psychological characterization. The figure's hair, cascading in wavy wisps, just like the beard, is curved to his left, almost as to suggest there is a slight breeze in it. The terracotta bust is partially covered in a coat of darker patina, but exceptionally well conserved.

The Vienna bust is of exceptionally high quality and it should be recognized as a work by the renowned sculptor Giusto Le Court (Ypres, 1627 – Venice, October 7th, 1679), also known as *Fiamengo* in Venice.³ The sculptor arrived in Venice

¹ <https://www.dorotheum.com/en/auctions/current-auctions/kataloge/list-lots-detail/auktion/13466-works-of-art/lotID/1043/lot/2459323-a-bozzetto-of-the-bust-of-a-man.html?currentPage=7> (25. 10. 2018.) The auction was held on October 25th in 2018, Lot. N. 1043. The value of the sculpture was estimated to vary between 1600 and 1800 euros, however, it was sold for 20 000 euros.

² <https://www.dorotheum.com/en/auctions/current-auctions/kataloge/list-lots-detail/auktion/13466-works-of-art/lotID/1043/lot/2459323-a-bozzetto-of-the-bust-of-a-man.html?currentPage=7> (8. 10. 2018.) The author of the note is Christine Masser.

³ Maichol Clemente, who is preparing a research paper on Le Court, reached the same conclusion. We use this opportunity to express our gratitude to Simone Guerriero and Maichol Clemente for the helpful discussions we had about the opus of Giusto Le Court.



1. Giusto Le Court, Saint Paul. Vienna, The Dorotheum Palace

in 1655 and, having worked in the area for a little over two decades, soon became known as the most reputable and famous sculptor at the time. He was even named “Bernini Adriatico” by his contemporaries.⁴ In the 1670s, Le Court was offered to work on, possibly, one of the biggest sculpting projects of his career. He made a group of sixteen large marble statues representing the twelve Apostles and the four Great Church Fathers for the presbytery of the basilica of Santa Maria della Salute, the shining symbol of baroque Venice.⁵ The statues representing Saint Mark and Saint Lorenzo Giustiniani and the monumental sculptural group representing *The Queen of Heaven Expelling the Plague from Venice* were placed on the main altar, designed by Baldassare Longhena, between 1670 and 1674. The Virgin, holding the Child, is standing on the clouds and the personification of Venice, represented by a luxuriously dressed woman, is kneeling before her. A putto is placed to the Virgin’s left, carrying a lit torch, with which he is repelling a grotesque figure of an old woman, symbolizing the plague. Le Court’s colossal figure of the Virgin and Child from Santa Maria della Salute is affirmed as the most famous sculptural achievement of baroque Venice (fig. 2). The outstanding beauty and solemnity of the sculptural composition is such that the statue was often imitated and referenced in the works of other Venetian sculptors from the end of the 17th and to the middle of the 18th century, such as Enrico Merengo, Giacomo Piazzetta and Alvise Tagliapietra.⁶

⁴ Monica DE VINCENTI, Bozzetti e modelli del „Bernini Adriatico“ Giusto Le Court e del suo „miglior allievo“ Enrico Merengo, *Arte Veneta*, 62, 2005, p. 58. About Giusto Le Court with the previous bibliography see: Simone GUERRIERO, „Di tua virtù che infonde spirito a i sassi“. Per la prima attività veneziana di Giusto Le Court, *Arte Veneta*, 55, 2001, pp. 48–71; Simone GUERRIERO, s. v. Corte, Jose de (Le Court, Giusto), *The Encyclopedia of Sculpture*, I, New York – London 2003, pp. 373–375; Francesco SORCE, Le Court, s. v. Juste, *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani*, 64, 2005, <http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/juste-le-court> (28. 10. 2018.). For a summary of 17th century Venetian sculpture see: Paola ROSSI, La scultura, *Storia di Venezia. Temi. I. L’arte* (ed. Rodolfo Pallucchini), Roma 1994, pp. 119–160; Paola ROSSI, Sculpture in Venice in the Seventeenth Century, *Venice Art & Architecture* (ed. Giandomenico Romanelli), Cambridge 2005, pp. 424–455.

⁵ Andrea BACCHI, „Le cose più belle e principali nelle chiese di Venezia sono opere sue“: Giusto Le Court a Santa Maria della Salute (e altrove), *Nuovi Studi*, 12, 2006, pp. 149–152. About the basilica of Santa Maria della Salute with the previous bibliography see: Anthony HOPKINS, *Baldassare Longhena and Venetian Baroque Architecture*, New Haven – London 2012, pp. 57–89.

⁶ There are some variations of the sculpture representing Our Lady of the Rosary in the opus of Le Court’s most prominent student, Enrico Merengo (Rheine, 1638/9–Venice 1723), referencing *Fiamengo’s* statue in Santa Maria della Salute. The most important sculpture in this context is the statue in the Dominican church of Split, but some looser interpretations in the parish churches in Bassano del Grappa, Caerano di San Marco and San Nicolo al Lido are excellent examples as well – Matej KLEMENČIČ, Enrico Merengo, *La scultura a Venezia dal Sansovino a Canova* (ed. Andrea Bacchi), Milano 2000, pp. 760–762. Giacomo Piazzetta (Pederobba, around 1640–Venice, 1705) also reproduces the composition from Santa Maria della Salute in his wooden sculptures of the Virgin and Child in the church of San Lazzaro in Treviso and in the Diocesan Museum in Feltre – Simone GUERRIERO, Per Giacomo Piazzetta scultore in legno, *L’impegno e la conoscenza. Studi di storia dell’arte in onore di Egidio Martini*, (edd. Filippo Pedrocco – Alberto Craievich), Verona 2009,



2. Giusto Le Court, Queen of Heaven (Virgin with Child). Venice, Santa Maria della Salute

The source of the sculpture's resounding popularity can be found in the fact that it is a work of the famous Giusto Le Court. However, the composition was popularly referenced and reproduced also because it represents the Virgin along with the personification of Venice, which was a frequent pairing. Therefore, it is not odd that Le Court, himself, most probably reduced the figure of the *Queen of Heaven* to the form of a bust, in order to meet the demands by wealthy individu-

pp. 184–189. A miniature variation on the Virgin and Child attributed to Piazzetta's workshop is conserved in the vicarage of the town of Kraljevica, near Rijeka. See: Damir TULIĆ, Per un catalogo delle opere veneziane di Giacomo Piazzetta, scultore in legno e marmo, *Zbornik za umjetnostno zgodovino*, n. v. XLVI, 2010, p. 120. In the 18th century, or, to be more precise, in 1734, Le Court's sculpture is replicated by Alvise Tagliapietra (Venice, 1670–1747) in his monumental statue of Our Lady of the Rosary, originally, for the church of San Biagio e Cataldo in Giudecca, but which we can today find in the parish church in Solesino. The aforementioned sculptor repeats Le Court's template around 1740 in his statue of Our Lady of Mount Carmel in the Parish church of Rovinj – Simone GUERRIERO, Profilo di Alvise Tagliapietra, *Arte Veneta*, 47, 1995, p. 47; Damir TULIĆ, Decorazione scultorea dell'altare della Madonna del Carmelo, in Predrag Marković – Ivan Matejčić – Damir Tulić, *Kiparstvo 2. Od XIV. do XVIII. stoljeća. Umjetnička baština istarske crkve / Scultura 2. Dal XIV al XVIII secolo. Il patrimonio artistico della chiesa istriana*, Pula/Pola 2017, pp. 331–335: cat. 104.

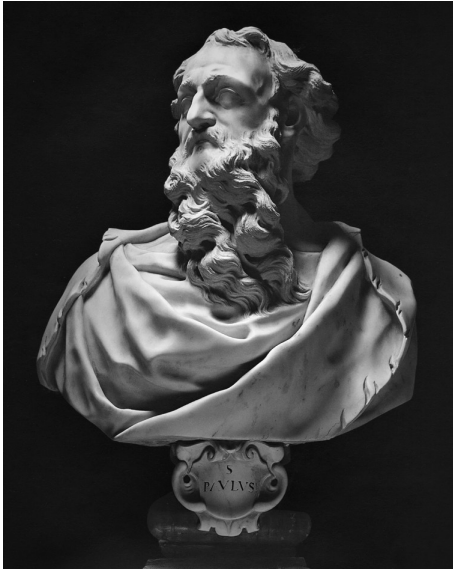


3. Giusto Le Court, Saint Paul. Venice, Santa Maria della Salute

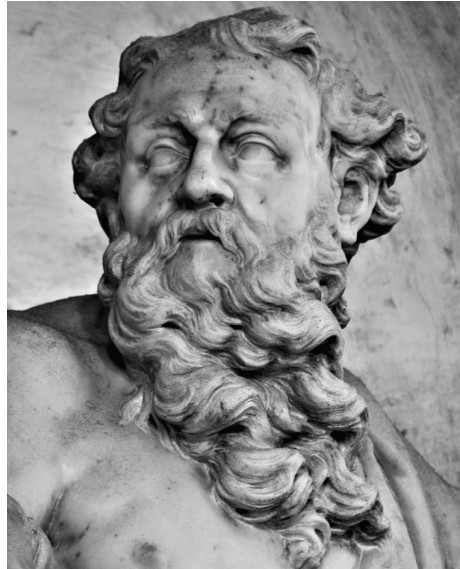
als and collectors.⁷ This is exemplified by an extraordinarily well sculpted marble bust of the Virgin in the chapel of the nobleman Bernardo Nave in Cittadella, as well as a similar sculpture from the collection of Giovanni Pratesi in Florence.⁸ The glorious statue from Salute was varied and referenced even by *Fiamengo* himself, such as in the monumental sculpture of Our Lady of the Rosary for the Dominican church of San Nicolò in Treviso, which was commissioned in 1675, but not finished until 1679. This sculpture was the model for Le Court's bust of the Virgin in the church of San Domenico in Chioggia, which was most probably originally made

⁷ Simone GUERRIERO, *La Vergine con il Bambino di Giusto Le Court alla Salute, la sua fortuna e un busto inedito*, in: Simone Guerriero – Maicol Clemente, *Giusto Le Court due opere ritrovate*, Figline Valdarno 2015, pp. 19, 21.

⁸ GUERRIERO 2015, cit. n. 7, pp. 19–26. The bust of the Virgin from the Pratesi collection is 46 centimeters tall. It is important to note that the bust of the Virgin from the Ca' Nave chapel matches a bust of Christ, placed on the same altar. The same figure of the Savior matches Le Court's Virgin in the church of San Domenico in Chioggia, while the third example of the bust of Christ is part of a private collection.



4. Giusto Le Court, Saint Paul. Cittadella, chapel of Ca' Nave



5. Giusto Le Court, Saint Paul, detail. Venice, Santa Maria della Salute

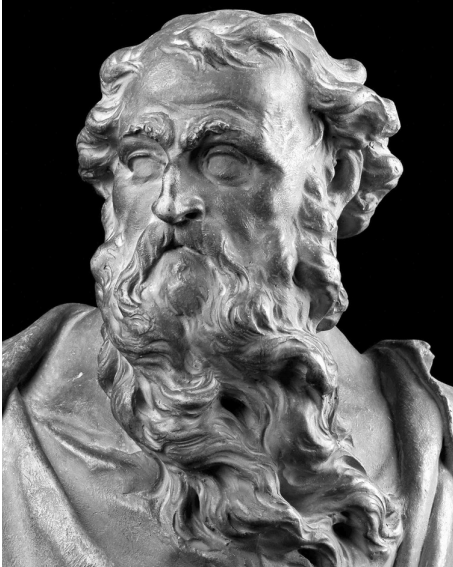
for the Venetian palace of the Zanardi family. It was also the model for the bust of the Virgin from the Armstrong Library of the Baylor University in Waco, Texas.⁹

The terracotta bust from Vienna is related to *Fiamengo's* opus in the basilica of Santa Maria della Salute, as well (fig. 3). Seven terracotta models by Le Court have been discovered and published. The earliest of these is most probably the model of a head for the colossal figure of *Strength*, which the sculptor made in 1658 for the Monument to Tommaso Alvise Mocenigo in the Venetian church of San Lazzaro.¹⁰ The terracotta model is currently a part of the Giovanni Pratesi collection in Florence. Another terracotta model was made between 1665 and 1669 for the statue representing the personification of Intelligence on the Monument of Doge Giovanni Pesaro in the Venetian church of Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari, its present location being Galleria Tadini in Lovere.¹¹ A terracotta study for a head of one of the

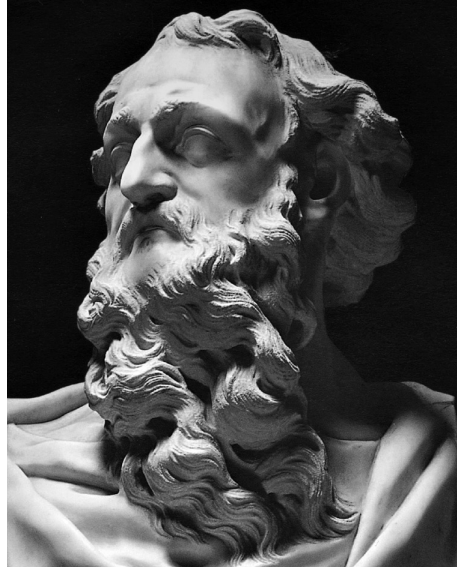
⁹ GUERRIERO 2015, cit. n. 7, pp. 28–30.

¹⁰ Maichol CLEMENTE, Giusto Le Court e i suoi „bellissimi modelli di creta“. Un aggiunta al catalogo, in: Simone Guerriero – Maichol Clemente, *Giusto Le Court due opere ritrovate*, Figline Valdarno 2015, pp. 49–58. The dimensions of the terracotta are 37 x 27 x 21 cm.

¹¹ Massimo DE GRASSI, Un modellino di Giusto Le Court per il monumento Pesaro ai Frari, *Arte Veneta*, 53, 1998, pp. 124–127; Massimo De Grassi, Giusto Le Court, L'Ingegno, *Andrea Brustolon 1662–1732 „Il Michelangelo del legno“* (Belluno, Palazzo Crepadona 28. 3.–12. 7. 2009, edd. Anna Maria Spiazzi – Massimo De Grassi – Giovanna Galasso), Milano 2009, p. 312: cat. 5. The dimensions of the sculpture are 43 x 21 x 31 cm.



6. Giusto Le Court, Saint Paul, detail. Vienna, The Dorotheum Palace



7. Giusto Le Court, Saint Paul. Cittadella, chapel of Ca' Nave

four *Moors* on the Monument of Doge Pesaro mentioned above is conserved at the Bode Museum in Berlin.¹² Le Court's recently published terracotta bust of a Sybil from a private collection probably also dates to the 1660s.¹³ The bust is a variation of the marble busts of three Sybils from the Museo Nazionale di Villa Pisani in Stra.

Le Court's career is concluded by the end of the 1670s. A small half-length terracotta sculpture representing a nobleman with his hand on his chest from the Musei Civici in Padua dates to the final decade of Le Court's career.¹⁴ The sculpture has been identified as a preparatory model for the beautiful marble statue of a Venetian aristocrat, Verità Zenobio, now in a private collection in Milan.¹⁵ There are two of Le

¹² Damir TULIĆ, Giusto Le Court e il Monumento Pesaro ai Frari: un bozzetto per i „quattro bellissimi Affricani“, *Arte Veneta*, 69, 2012, pp. 147–150. The dimensions of the head are: 18 x 15,5 x 13,2 cm.

¹³ Andrea BACCHI, Buste de Sibylle, Buste de Mercure, *Recontres à Venise. Étrangers et Vénétiens dans l'art du XVIIe siècle*, (Ajaccio, Palais Fesch – Musée des Beaux-Arts, 29. 6.–1. 10. 2018, edd. Linda Borean – Stefania Mason), Cinisello Balsamo 2018, p. 158: cat. 27. Andrea Bacchi has recently recognised a 35-cm-tall clay model of Venus and Cupid from the Giovanni Pratesi Collection in Florence, as a work by Giusto Le Court.

¹⁴ Simone GUERRIERO, Busto di nobiluomo, *Dal Medioevo al Canova. Sculture dei Musei Civici di Padova dal Trecento all'Ottocento* (edd. Davide Banzato – Monica De Vincenti – Franca Pellegrini), Venezia 2000, pp. 139–140: cat. 59. The height of the terracotta is 18 cm.

¹⁵ BACCHI 2006, cit. n. 5, p. 154.

Court's terracotta models in the collection of Ca' Rezzonico in Venice, the first one being a model for a stone statue of the goddess Ceres for the garden of the Villa Sandi in Crocetta del Montello.¹⁶ The second example is a model for one of the eight caryatide angels flanking the byzantine icon of *Messopanditissa* on the main altar of the basilica of Santa Maria della Salute in Venice.¹⁷ The similarities between the terracotta from Vienna and Le Court's models are rather obvious; the soft and smooth modelling of the face is comparable to the one of the Berlin Moor and the loosely shaped beard is reminiscent of the locks of hair on the bust from Musei Civici in Padua. The drapery on the bust matches the tunic of the caryatide angel from Ca' Rezzonico.

The recently discovered terracotta by the great *Fiamengo* can certainly be perceived as the model for the marble bust of Saint Paul from the Chapel of Christ the Savior in Cittadella near Padua (fig. 4). The busts depicting the Apostles are placed on the consoles on the walls of the small rectangular building. A niche holding the statue of Christ is placed on the counter-facade, flanked by the bust of Saint Peter on its lower left and by the bust of Saint Paul on its lower right. The altar is isolated from the wall and its corners are decorated with the busts of Christ and the Virgin. The chapel was built by the Venetian aristocrat and benefactor Bernardo Nave as part of his villa.¹⁸ The architect Antonio Gaspari, by whom a few varying projects for the chapel and its altar have been preserved, finished building this small sanctuary in 1689.¹⁹ Thus, we can confidently conclude that Bernardo Nave acquired this exceptional cycle of busts in the second half of the 1670s, certainly prior to *Fiamengo's* unexpected death. The client's wish was, most probably, to acquire the reduced versions of the Apostles from the famous cycle of Le Court's monumental sculptures from the presbytery of Santa Maria della Salute for his personal devotion or a private collection.²⁰ Le Court now transformed the full-

¹⁶ DE VINCENTI 2005, cit. n. 4, pp. 58-59; Monica DE VINCENTI, Catalogo "del fondo di bottega" di Giovanni Maria Morlaiter, *Bolletino del Musei Civici Veneziani*, s. III, VI (*Bozzetti e modelli di Giovanni Maria Morlaiter nelle collezioni dei Musei Civici di Venezia*), 2011, pp. 68-69. The author, although not with great confidence, attributes the damaged *Torso of Aphrodite* (42 x 15, 5 x 12 cm) cat. 89 to Le Court, which also belongs to the collection of Ca' Rezzonico. The dimensions of the figure of Ceres are 34,5 x 14,5 x 10 cm.

¹⁷ DE VINCENTI 2005, cit. n. 4, pp. 59-61. The height of the terracotta angel is 34 cm.

¹⁸ Adriano MARIUZ – Giuseppe PAVANELLO, La chiesetta di Bernardo Nave a Cittadella, *Arte Veneta*, 50, 1997, pp. 68-85; Giulia ERICANI, Le arti in gara. La chiesetta di Ca' Nave a Cittadella, *FMR*, 22/160, 2003, pp. 81-104.

¹⁹ Massimo FAVILLA – Ruggero RUGOLO, Un'idea per l'altare di Bernardo Nave a Cittadella dalla Raccolta Gaspari del Museo Correr, *Scritti in ricordo di Filippo Pedrocchi*, *Bolletino del Musei Civici Veneziani*, III, 9-10, 2014/2015, pp. 76-79.

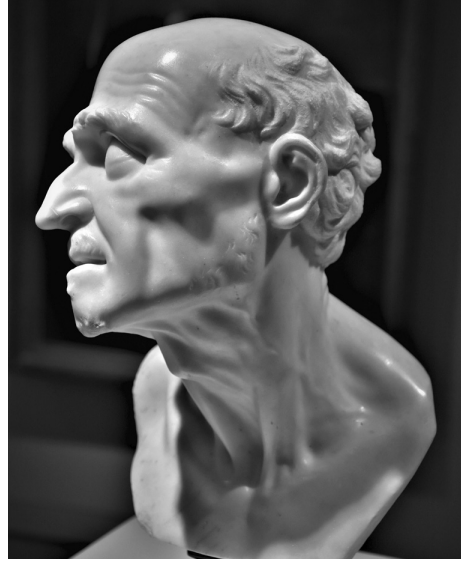
²⁰ MARIUZ – PAVANELLO 1997, cit. n. 18, p. 78; Bacchi 2006, cit. n. 5, p. 153-154; GUERRIERO 2015, cit. n. 7, pp. 25-26.



8. Giusto Le Court, Saint Bartholomew. Warsaw, Muzeum Narodowe w Warszawie/
The National Museum of Warsaw



9. Giusto Le Court, Saint Bartholomew.
Warsaw, Muzeum Narodowe w Warszawie/
The National Museum of Warsaw



10. Giusto Le Court, Saint Bartholomew.
Warsaw, Muzeum Narodowe w Warszawie/
The National Museum of Warsaw

length statues into the extremely popular and numerous busts that made a great mark on the Venetian tradition of collecting of the 17th century.²¹ However, while reducing the size of his statues, the great master did not make an exact replica of the *Salute Apostles*, but tried to find a way to transform the heroic marble *colossi* into masterfully modelled busts made for close-up viewing of the sharp-eyed collectors. Therefore, the master emphasized the psychological expressive aspect of the characters even more, inspired by the paintings of the Flemish masters Peter Paul Rubens and, especially, Antoon van Dyck.²² Le Court paid close attention to the subtle details, primarily when embossing the face and the skin. The eyebrows, the wrinkles around the eyes, the veins and tendons of the neck were all sculpted in a naturalist manner. The anatomic details of the Apostles are additionally highlighted by light effects on the bust's surface – the unpolished surface of the hair, beard and eyebrows absorbs the light whilst the curvy draperies and the figures' pulsing skin reflect it. The drapery covering the chests of the Apostles from Ca'

²¹ Simone GUERRIERO, *Il collezionismo di sculture moderne*, in: Linda Borean – Stefania Mason, *Il collezionismo d'arte a Venezia. Il Seicento*, Venezia 2007, pp. 42–61.

²² Simone GUERRIERO, *Le alterne fortune dei marmi: busti, teste di carattere e altre „sculture moderne“ nelle collezioni veneziane tra Sei e Settecento*, *La scultura veneta del Seicento e del Settecento. Novi studi* (ed. Giuseppe Pavanello), Venezia 2002, p. 98.



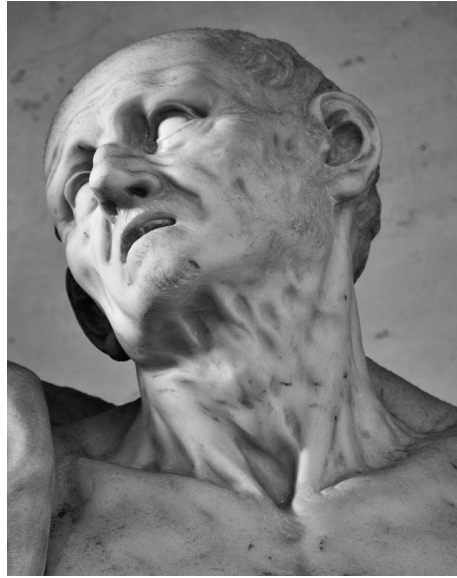
11. Giusto Le Court, Saint Bartholomew. Venice, Santa Maria della Salute

Nave was adapted to the bust form, but the master fashioned it quite differently from the one on the prototypes from the Venetian church.

The terracotta from Vienna represents the reduced version of the monumental statue of Saint Paul from Santa Maria della Salute. While the overall appearance is almost identical between the two, the turn of the head and the drapery were conceived differently (fig. 5). For instance, the Venetian Saint Paul has his head turned sharply to the left, toward the main altar with the statue of the *Queen of Heaven*. His breast is completely nude with his cape covering only his left shoulder. The terracotta bust of Saint Paul faces the front and the cape with the frayed edges covers his breast completely and is identical to the one from the chapel of Bernardo Nave. Even the masterful modelling of Saint Paul's beard in clay is comparable to the meticulous graving of his hairs on the marble bust (figg. 6, 7). On the other hand, his moustache, blending with his beard and covering his mouth, are identically executed to the one on the Apostle's statue from Santa Maria della Salute. As a result of this interweaving of motifs we can conclude that the great sculptor was, indeed, looking for ways to vary small details in order to avoid repeating them in



12. Giusto Le Court, Saint Bartholomew.
Cittadella, chapel of Ca' Nave

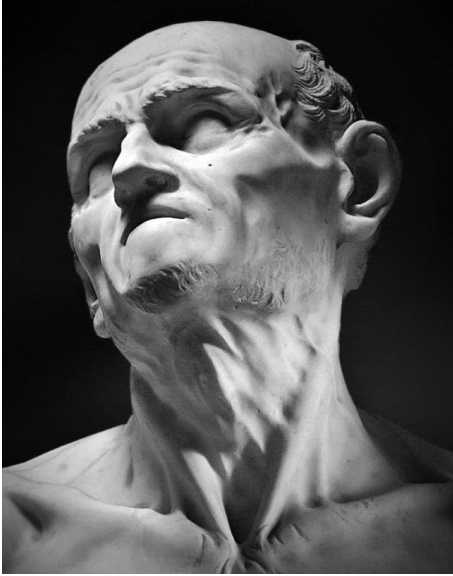


13. Giusto Le Court, Saint Bartholomew,
detail. Venice, Santa Maria della Salute

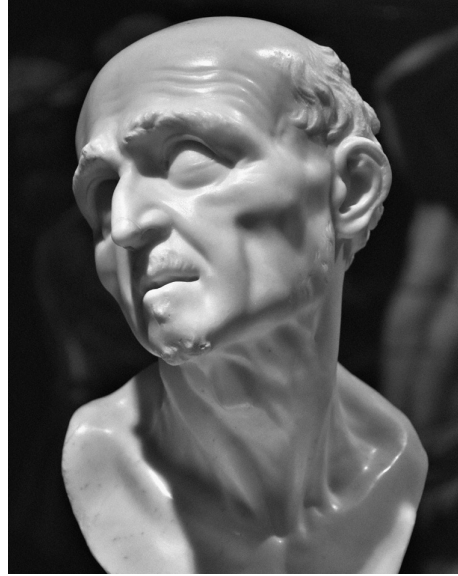
the terracotta model and the marble sculpture. Therefore, it is appropriate to assume that different clay models had been made for the statue of Saint Paul in Salute and, possibly, for his bust as well. The terracotta attributed to Le Court is, undoubtedly, the master's preparatory model for the bust of Saint Paul meant for Bernardo Nave, most probably made in the second half of the 1670s. The fame attached to *Fiamengo's* terracottas is also affirmed in a letter dating to February 17th in 1680 written to Livio Odescalchi, a Roman collector and the nephew of Pope Innocent XI by Quintiliano Rezzonico from Venice.²³ Rezzonico sent the letter to Odescalchi to inform him that Enrico Merengo, Le Court's successor, is ready to sell some of Le Court's magnificent terracottas. For now it is impossible to confirm whether the terracotta bust of Saint Paul was among those Merengo was looking to sell.

By now we have had various examples of Le Court sculpting smaller busts of the Virgin, recreating the figure of the well-known *Queen of Heaven* from Salute for private commissions. Moreover, Le Court once again sculpted the twelve Apostles

²³ Marco PIZZO, „Far Galleria“. Collezionismo e mercato artistico tra Venezia e Roma nelle lettere di Quintiliano Rezzonico a Livio Odescalchi (1676–1709), *Bollettino del Museo Civico di Padova*, LXXXIX, 2000, p. 52: n. 23 – „Penso forse che un germano di Giusto di Corte, il quale è restato erede del morto, voglia vendere alcuni bellissimoi modelli di creta fatti dal medesimo Giusto; quando si desse il caso Vostra Eccellenza mi dica se haverà genio d'applicarvi“.



14. Giusto Le Court, Saint Bartholomew, detail. Cittadella, chapel of Ca' Nave



15. Giusto Le Court, Saint Bartholomew. Warsaw, Muzeum Narodowe w Warszawie/ The National Museum of Warsaw

from the presbytery of the aforementioned church in their reduced bust form for Bernardo Nave. The busts aside, an unpublished sculpture from The National Museum of Warsaw bears witness to the popularity and success of Le Court's statues from Santa Maria della Salute. The sculpture from Warsaw is a 32-centimeter-tall marble head, which was, up until now, considered to be a work by an unknown Roman sculptor from the second half of the 17th century representing Saint Jerome (fig. 8).²⁴ The male head sculpted from Carrara marble with great skill is placed on a rectangular base made out of black marble. The muscular neck with emphasized tendrils and veins and a strong Adam's apple is executed in a naturalist manner. The figure has his head turned to the left and his eyes turned upwards. The figure's cheekbones are highlighted as well as his mouth, which is slightly opened in ecstasy. Underneath the thick eyebrows we can see the figure's big eyes with the upper arch of the lid emphasized and the lower lid softly transitioning into the cheek. A strong aquiline nose naturally blends with the noticeably wrinkled forehead. The figure is bald, with little hair embossed above his ears and on the back of his head. The sculpture was acquired by Prince Antoni Lubomirski around 1850 in Paris,

²⁴ Inventory number: Rz.D.97 MNW

after which it was owned by Eugeniusz Sokołowski until 1925, when The National Museum in Warsaw procured it.²⁵

The quality of the head from Warsaw is indicated by its stylistic features as well as the high-skilled sculpting. Its similarities to the heads depicting *Autumn* and *Spring* from Musée Magnin in Dijon or some of the later busts from Ca' Nave confirm that it is a work by Giusto Le Court.²⁶ Therefore, it is only necessary to observe the specific way in which Le Court executes his figures' eyes, which always softly blend with the cheeks, which is visible on the Warsaw sculpture as well. However, the Polish sculpture, similar to the example preceding it, is based mainly on *Fiamengo's* cycle of sculptures from Santa Maria della Salute in Venice from the 1670s. The statue of the Apostle Bartholomew, placed into the niche on the right side of the triumphal arch of the presbytery, reveals that the Warsaw head should be identified with this Saint (fig. 9).²⁷ Moreover, other than the Saint's full-length sculptural representation in a larger-than-life size from Salute, and the reduced busts in Bernardo Nave's chapel, the theme is now reduced to the form of a head (fig. 10). In comparing all three faces of the same Saint, it is easy to notice the manner in which Le Court adapted the appearance and the sculpting of the figures to various sculptural shapes and sizes (figg. 12, 13, 14, 15). The large head as well as the thick, muscular neck of the colossal statue from Salute, became thinner and more detailed on the bust from Ca' Nave. The veins on the neck are more accentuated on the bust, and the beard is more luxuriant, executed with great at-

²⁵ We use this opportunity to express our gratitude to the professor Antonio Ziembi, the chief-curator of the Medieval and Early Modern Art collection of the Muzeum Narodowe w Warszawie / The National Museum of Warsaw for his kindness and useful information about the provenance of the sculpture.

²⁶ Simone GUERRIERO, Per Giusto Le Court "fiamengho d'Ipre scultor famoso" e la sua fortuna collezionistica, *Studi in onore di Stefano Tumidei* (edd. Andrea Bacchi – Luca Massimo Barbero), Verona 2016, pp. 307–315. The height of the Head of *Spring* is 39 cm, and the height of *Autumn* is 37,6 cm. The height of both the bust of Saint John and Saint Phillip from Ca' Nave is 60 cm. For the latter see: BACCHI 2018, cit. n. 13, pp. 160–163; cat. 28.

²⁷ When discussing the physique of Saint Bartholomew it is important to stress that it could have been a variation on earlier painting models as well. It has already been indicated that le Court used Rubens' and Van Dyck's paintings as templates for his sculptures. Cf. GUERRIERO 2001, cit. n. 4, pp. 67–67; GUERRIERO 2002, cit. n. 22, p. 98; Tulić 2012, cit. n. 12, p. 150; GUERRIERO 2015, cit. n. 7, p. 21. On this occasion it is important to stress the figure of Saint Bartholomew by Rubens from the cycle of torso-length paintings of the Apostles (Apostolado Lerma) made in the 1610s, today conserved in the Museo del Prado in Madrid. The Apostle painted by Rubens is depicted in an almost full profile, turned to the right with his eyes upwards. His muscular neck with tendrils and veins is highly accentuated, along with his strong cheekbones, aquiline nose and wrinkly forehead and bald head. The painting was, along with the rest of the cycle, turned into a print by Peter Isselburg and Nicolaas Rykmans in the 1620s – Hans Vlieghe, *Saints, I, Corpus Rubenianum Ludwig Burchard*, VIII, Brussels 1972, pp. 35–36, 43.



16. Giusto Le Court,
Head of a Putto. Madrid,
Museo Nacional del Prado

tention to detail by making numerous incisions. The cheekbones on the bust are more emphasized as well, while the thick eyebrows from the statue from Salute are almost entirely ignored on the bust format. The Warsaw Saint Bartholomew is even less robust than the bust form, and the marble surface is even more naturally and softly sculpted. The smaller scale gave *Fiamengo* the opportunity to execute the Saint's slightly opened mouth and barely visible teeth even more subtly than the previous prototypes. The Saint's facial hair and the eyebrows, which are almost invisible on the statue and the bust, are even more accentuated and polished on the head format, which accomplishes a naturalness between the smooth surface of the skin, which reflects the light, and the rougher surfaces of the hair, eyebrows and beard, which absorb it. Smaller variations on the theme of the figures from Salute, Ca' Nave and Warsaw affirm Le Court's extraordinary skill of varying details and adapting his works to collectors' and art connoisseurs' commissions. There is a steel ring on the back side of the Warsaw head, which indicates that the sculpture was originally attached to a wall or a niche, similarly to Le Court's bust

of the Virgin from the Pratesi collection.²⁸ The repercussions of *Fiamengo's* cycle of the sculptures of the Apostles from Salute and Ca' Nave can be noticed in the series of figures of the Apostles commissioned for a private collection in the Palazzo Dondi dell' Orologio in Padua.²⁹ Twelve marble reliefs with the profile heads of the Apostles from the beginning of the 18th century by Giovanni Bonazza are part of the private collection.³⁰

A small and, seemingly, unimportant detail related to the head from Warsaw should also be reviewed – the base made from polished black marble. The rectangular base is topped by a convex, pillowy pedestal, which, again, comes to a rectangular shape on the top where the sculpture is laid. This kind of pedestal is shared among Le Court's busts from Ca' Nave, the bust of the Virgin from Texas and the bust of Diana from Palacio Real de la Granja de San Ildefonso near the city of Segovia. However, the most interesting base is the one for Le Court's *Head of Putto* from the Museo Nacional del Prado in Madrid (fig 16).³¹ The shape of the base from Madrid, as well as the material and the dimensions is identical to the one underneath the head of Saint Bartholomew in Warsaw.

The small Warsaw head poses the question of the existence of other, yet unpublished, heads by Le Court, sculpted in reference to the Apostles from Salute. Additionally, it indicates there may be many more, to this day unknown replicas and reduced versions of Le Court's famous sculptures, which the master may have made for reputable collectors and private collections.

Translated from the Croatian by Lucija Burić

Illustration References: Dorotheum (1, 6); Warsaw, Muzeum Narodowe w Warszawie/ The National Museum of Warsaw (8); Madrid, Museo Nacional del Prado (16); authors' archive (2, 3, 5, 9–11, 13, 15)

²⁸ GUERRIERO 2015, cit. n. 7, p. 19.

²⁹ GUERRIERO 2002, cit. n. 22, pp. 97–98.

³⁰ GUERRIERO 2002, cit. n. 22, p. 97.

³¹ Maichol CLEMENTE, *Giusto Le Court, Enrico Merengo e la Diana della collezione di Livio Odeschalchi, Saggi e Memorie di storia dell'arte*, 38, 2014, pp. 48–49. The height of the head is 35 cm.

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Glina in marmor. Nova kiparska dela Giusta Le Courta na Dunaju in v Varšavi

POVZETEK

Na avkciji umetnin pri Dorotheumu na Dunaju je bila pred kratkim prodana 28 cm visoka terakotna busta, opisana kot model poprsja bradatega moškega, delo neznanega avtorja s konca 17. stoletja. V dunajski terakotni busti lahko z gotovostjo prepoznamo delo slavnega kiparja Giusta Le Courta (Ypres, 1627–Benetke, 7. oktober 1679). Mojster je v Benetke prišel leta 1655 in v nekaj več kot dveh desetletjih delovanja v Laguni postal najuglednejši in najbolj znan kipar, ki so ga sodobniki imenovali kar „Bernini Adriatico“ - jadranski Bernini. V osmem desetletju 17. stoletja je Le Court sodeloval v morda največjem kiparskem projektu v svoji karieri. V prezbiteriju bazilike Santa Maria della Salute, simbolu baročnih Benetk, je izdelal cikel šestnajstih velikih marmornih kipov apostolov in cerkvenih očetov ter slovito kiparsko skupino *Kraljica Neba izganja kugo iz Benetk*. Le Court je zaradi velike popularnosti tega dela kip zreduciral tudi v obliko poprsja, kakršne so nato kupovali ugledni zbiralci za svoje zbirke in zasebno pobožnost. Bernardo Nave je za svojo kapelo v sklopu družinske vile v Cittadelli pri Padovi nabavil celo dvanajst bust apostolov ter Marijo in Kristusa po vzoru kipov v Salute. Dunajska terakota predstavlja model za poprsje sv. Pavla za kapelo v sklopu Ca' Nave, njen prototip pa je kip tega apostola v Santa Maria della Salute. Izredno spretno oblikovanje valovite brade in mehko modeliranje inkarnata spominjata na nekatere izmed sedmih doslej znanih Le Courtovih terakot, na primer na glavo enega od štirih Morov iz Berlina, angela iz Ca' Rezzonico in na figure plemiča iz Musei Civici v Padovi. S ciklom apostolov iz Salute je povezana tudi marmorna 32 cm visoka glava, ki je razstavljena v Narodnem muzeju v Varšavi. Doslej je bila evidentirana kot glava sv. Hieronima in kot delo neznanega rimskega kiparja iz 17. stoletja, vendar jo moramo povezati s kipom sv. Jerneja iz Salute, oziroma s poprsjem tega apostola iz Ca' Nave. Tudi njen avtor je Giusto Le Court, predstavlja pa v format glave reducirana beneški kip oziroma poprsje iz Cittadelle. Le Court je zelo spretno prilagodil monumentalni format glave apostola Jerneja v majhen format, namenjen zasebni zbirki ali osebni pobožnosti naročnika. Poljska marmorna glava se lahko po mehki klesanja obraza in po vrsti subtilnih detajlov obraza primerja z Le Courtovimi deli manjšega formata, kot so glave Pomladi in Jeseni iz Musée Menegin v Dijonu ali obrazi na bustah apostolov iz Ca' Nave. Tudi majhen podstavek iz črnega marmorja, na katerega je postavljena glava sv. Jerneja, je identičen z dvema drugima podstavkoma Le Courtovih del, poprsja Marije iz zbirke Pratesi v Firencah in glave *putta* iz madridskega Prada. Jernejeva glava iz Varšave odpira vprašanja o možnosti obstoja drugih glav, ki bi jih lahko izdelal Le Court kot redukcije slavnih apostolov iz Salute, in o siceršnjih replikah lastnih del v manjšem merilu, ki so bile namenjene zbiralcem in do zdaj še niso znane.



[TULIĆ – PINTARIĆ 1] Giusto Le Court, Saint Paul. Vienna, The Dorotheum Palace



[TULIĆ – PINTARIĆ 8] Giusto Le Court, Saint Bartholomew. Warsaw, Muzeum Narodowe w Warszawie/ The National Museum of Warsaw
