

DONATELLO,
the birth of Renaissance Plaquettes
and their representation in the Berlin sculpture collection

by Michael Riddick



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During the robust trend of museum procurements at the turn-of-the-twentieth century, Wilhelm von Bode (Fig. 01) was central in capitalizing on Europe's fascination with Italy's artistic heritage on behalf of Berlin. Competing regionally with stellar collections in Munich and Dresden and contending internationally with London and Paris, Bode transformed Berlin into an important academic and cultural hub on the subject of Renaissance sculpture.

While Bode's pioneering study of Renaissance plaquettes began during the novel genesis of the medium as an art historical category, he leaves us with the impression of having understood the value of acquiring these small reliefs, perhaps with the expectation that a regular exposure to them would yield a wider picture about their origins, purpose, context and role in the broader spectrum of Renaissance bronzes.

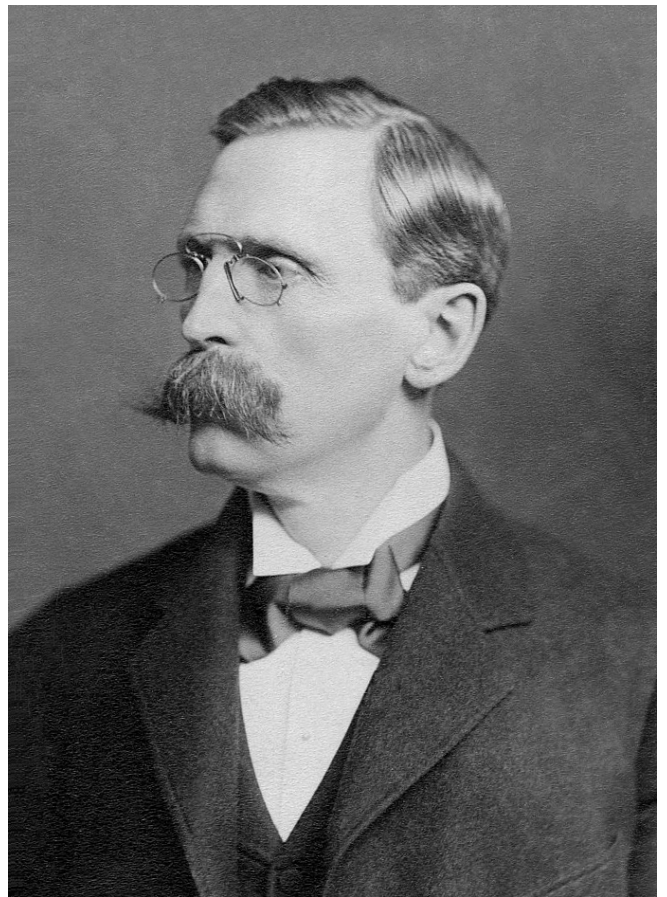


Fig. 01: Portrait photo of Wilhelm von Bode, 1901



Fig. 02: *Playing Putti*, ca. 1450-75, anonymous North Italian sculptor, bronze (Bode Museum)

Bode's efficacy in selecting important works found him in-service to other collectors and institutions, regularly encouraging the acquisition of plaquettes alongside more significant artworks.¹ Bode particularly had a penchant for detecting works connected with the manner of the artistic genius he most esteemed: Donatello.

The fierce pace of acquisition during Bode's tenure was complimented by an equally aggressive sharpening of connoisseurship. The emphasis on Donatello-themed acquisitions in Berlin became the catalyst for making Berlin a locus of study in the artistic career of Donatello. An example of Bode's sharpening insight is found in the case of

the *Orlandini Madonna* (Inv. 55), initially regarded by Bode as a work by Donatello, but omitted following the acquisition of the more masterfully executed *Pazzi Madonna* (Inv. 51).² This training-of-the-eye and escalation of analytic development was slow to be applied to the subject of plaquettes while noteworthy acquisitions assumed greater priority. As a result, many plaquettes were initially ascribed generically to Donatello or his school without any clear distinction on their differences or potentially varied authors.

In the case of a plaque of *Playing Putti* (Inv. 1024, Fig. 02), Bode forwarded an attribution to Donatello in 1884 based on its medium

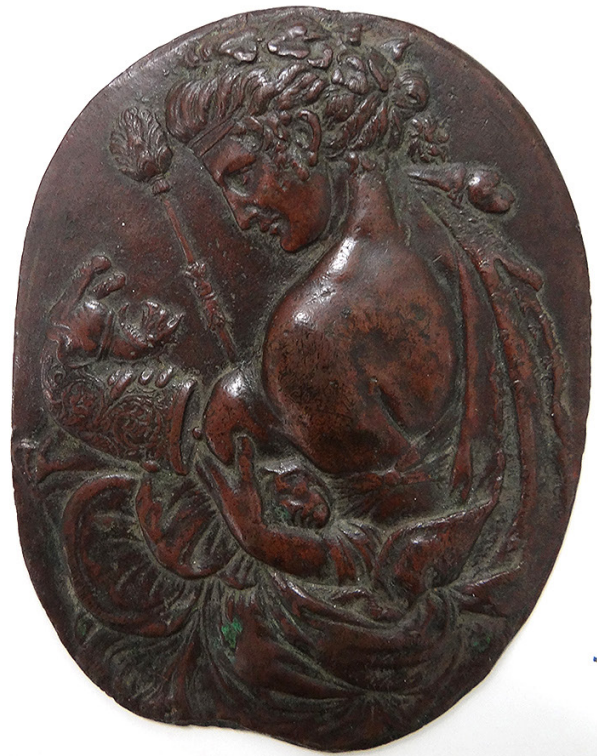


Fig. 03: *Satyr with a Cup and Thyrsus* and a *Bacchante Squeezing Her Breast and Holding a Rhyton*, late 15th cent., attributed to the Master of the Martelli Mirror, bronze (Bode Museum)

and iconography.³ However, Émile Molinier's subsequent assessment, two years later, assigned it to the school of Donatello.⁴ Bode's contemporaries, Paul Schubring⁵ and Osvald Sirén,⁶ maintained the attribution to Donatello while others like Leo Planiscig linked the relief with works in Venice.⁷ Ernst Bange subsequently observed the plaque borrowed its figures of putti from two fragments belonging to the *Throne of Saturn*,⁸ a classical marble once located at the Church of San Vitale in Ravenna and documented in the Venetian sculpture collections since the 14th century.⁹ In later decades John Pope-Hennessy

further elaborated upon its probable Venetian origins¹⁰ and the relief has now sensibly been removed from an association with Donatello and is most recently assigned to an anonymous North Italian artist active during the third quarter of the 15th century.^{11 12}

The developing scholarship surrounding the cognate plaquettes of a *Satyr with a Cup and Thyrsus* (Inv. 942)¹³ and a *Bacchante Squeezing Her Breast and Holding a Rhyton* (Inv. 943) (Fig. 03),¹⁴ adapted from the reverse of the *Martelli Mirror*,¹⁵ is another example of developing

connoisseurship. Initially heralded by Bode as a Donatello masterpiece,¹⁶ the mirror and its corollary plaquettes have since entertained a variety of attributions. Bode's assignment of the *Martelli Mirror* to Donatello was maintained by him in spite of Eugene Müntz's contemporary disregard for the attribution.^{17 18} However, Bode's initial ascription to Donatello was mildly followed by others¹⁹ while plaquette scholars like Planiscig posited an alternative maker in 1924²⁰ and Eric Maclagan, that same year, considered it too late for Donatello though influenced by him.²¹ By the mid-20th century the attribution held less weight when Pope-Hennessy's argument for a Mantuan origin was forwarded, resulting in its present attribution to an anonymous "Master of the Martelli Mirror," thought active in Mantua during the last quarter of the 15th century.²²

A majority of Berlin's Donatello-themed plaquettes were first acquired by Bode in 1880 from a lot of more than a hundred plaquettes purchased from the Florentine art dealer Stefano Bardini (Fig. 04). Others were acquired in the years leading up to Bode's seminal 1904 catalog of plaquettes and Italian bronzes.²³ As a foremost dealer in his era, Bardini surely whetted Bode's taste for Italian sculpture and possibly also encouraged his interest in plaquettes as Bardini himself was adequately conversant with them on account of his collecting-and-dealing in the medium.²⁴ The initial group acquired by Berlin in 1880 were the first to receive scholarly treatment,

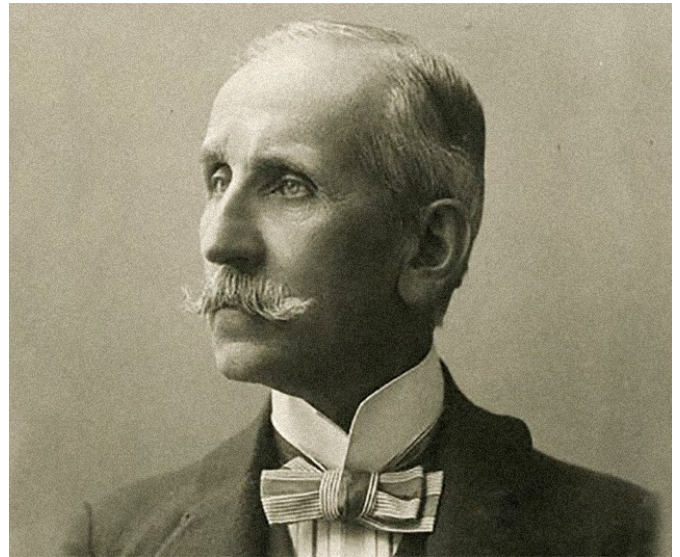


Fig. 04: Portrait photo of Stefano Bardini



Fig. 05: *Virgin and Child*, ca. 1430, ambit of Donatello, lead (Bode Museum)



Fig. 06: *Virgin and Child*, ca. 1435-40, ambit of Donatello with paintings attributed to Paolo Schiavo, stucco and wood (Victoria & Albert Museum)

several of which enjoyed publication prior to Émile Molinier's *Les Plaquettes*, a voluminous 1886 survey marking the genre as a viable art historical category.

Several of Bode's acquisitions are indicative of the earliest examples of small metal reliefs as an emerging artform in the *Quattrocento*, particularly as functional objects of devotion. Two acquired from Bardini include a plaque of the *Virgin*



Fig. 07: *Virgin and Child before a Niche*, ca. 1435-50, ambit of Donatello, bronze (Pushkin Museum, Moscow; formerly in the Bode Museum)

and Child (Inv. 1028, Fig. 05),²⁵ regrettably lost since 1945, and a pax relief of the *Virgin and Child before a Niche* (Inv. 1034, Fig. 07),²⁶ also considered lost but recently rediscovered in Moscow at the Pushkin Museum.²⁷

Donatello's Florentine experimentation with small bronze reliefs parallels Filarete's early experimentation with the medium in Rome. Examples of Filarete's *Triumph of Caesar over King*



Fig. 08: *Virgin and Child Between Two Candelabra*, ca. 1430-40, ambit of Donatello, possibly by Giovanni da Pisa (?), bronze (Bode Museum)



Fig. 09: *Virgin and Child*, ca. 1450, attributed to Giovanni da Pisa, terracotta (Bode Museum)

*Juba*²⁸ or his pax depicting St. Stefano of Linari,²⁹ are both considered datable to the 1430s, a period in which Donatello and his collaborators may have similarly begun producing independent reliefs, indicating the inspiration for the small-relief format in metal was not necessarily the genius of a single sculptor but rather the result of the cultural climate and demands placed upon sculptors of that period.³⁰ Donatello's early Florentine production is especially religious in theme, fulfilling the spiritual and social need for private devotional objects.

Bode initially suggested Donatello as the possible author of the first *Virgin and Child* (Fig. 05)³¹ while Molinier again deferred to an attribution of Donatello's school.³² Scholars largely agree the plaque follows a lost small-scale prototype conceived by Donatello ca. 1425-27.³³ A stucco example, molded from a plaque cast, whose polychromy is attributed to Paolo Schiavo ca. 1435-40 (Fig. 06),³⁴ suggests the relief represents one of the earliest conceived devotional plaquettes of the Renaissance, datable ca. 1425-35.



Fig. 10: *Christ in the Tomb Supported by Angels*, ca. 1450, ambit of Donatello, possibly by Bartolomeo Bellano or circle (?), terracotta or stucco pax (left, Benedictine and Diocesan Museum at Nonantola Abbey), bronze with traces of gilding (right, Bode Museum)

In like manner, the *Virgin and Child before a Niche* (Fig. 07), considered ca. 1430, has variously been attributed to Donatello³⁵ or an artist belonging to his immediate circle.³⁶ It is considered by some to have been uniquely conceived in its small scale, while others consider it to be a reduced version of a larger lost prototype. Douglas Lewis notes it employs Donatello's invention of the *rilievo schiacciato* technique (sculpting in low-relief) instituting a new serial application of sculpture in metal, an alternative to the stucco, terracotta and cartapesta reproductions of the period.³⁷

More recently, on stylistic grounds, the present author has proposed a later dating for the relief, ca. 1440-54, as the work of Michele di Giovanni da Fiesole under influence or assistance from Donatello's collaborators: Michelozzo and Maso di Bartolomeo.³⁸

A well diffused third relief concerning the same subject involves a plaquette of the *Virgin and Child Between Two Candelabra* (Inv. 1031, Fig. 09). Bode appears to have first attributed this relief to Donatello's collaborator, Bartolomeo



Fig. 11: *The Dead Christ with Two Angels*, 15th cent., by Bartolomeo Bellano, bronze (National Gallery of Art, DC)

Bellano, based on the manner of the child Christ.³⁹ However, Bode's 1904 catalog inexplicably ascribes it instead to Giovanni da Pisa.⁴⁰ Bode's change-of-mind may have come through the museum's acquisition of a *Virgin and Child* terracotta (Inv. 2949, Fig. 10) in 1902 whose relief sets the group between two candelabra featuring a similar tender embrace between mother and child. At the time of the terracotta's acquisition Bode noted its similarity with the High Altarpiece of the Ovetari Chapel in the church of the Eremitani in Padua which has long been attributed to Giovanni da Pisa since the 16th century.⁴¹

Of Bode's contemporaries, Molinier suggested the plaquette was the product of an unidentified Paduan workshop influenced by Donatello,⁴² while Planiscig suggested it was the output of Donatello's Paduan workshop.⁴³ Seymour de Ricci posited a pupil of Donatello⁴⁴ and Charles Fortnum seems to have inexplicably given it to Cristoforo de Geremia at an early date.⁴⁵ MacLagan diverged from a Paduan association, instead drawing a comparison to copies of Donatello's presumably lost Sienese relief of the *Madonna Piccolomini* from the late 1450s.^{46 47} Two maiolica works made in Gubbio, ca. 1430-40, reproduce the plaquette's motif and suggest an earlier origin.⁴⁸

Due to its rarity, less discussed is an effigy of *Christ in the Tomb Supported by Angels* (Inv. 2576, Fig. 11), acquired in Florence in 1900. Bode ascribed it to the Paduan school of Donatello.⁴⁹ A unique cast of this plaquette, at the Civic Museum of Brescia, features an example of the previously discussed *Virgin and Child* plaquette on its reverse (Fig. 05), apparently a late production in which the discerning foundry-workshop combined two Donatelloesque reliefs into a singular two-sided devotional plaquette.⁵⁰

The *Christ in the Tomb* motif loosely imitates Donatello's *Dead Christ* for the High Altar of the Basilica of St. Anthony in Padua, but the angels have more in common with the austere attendant angels depicted on a relief of the *Virgin and Child*

with *Four Angels* attributed to Luca Della Robbia from the 1420s-40s⁵¹ (Inv. 136) or the various attendant angels depicted in the panel reliefs of the bronze doors for the New Sacristy of the Florence Cathedral made collaboratively between 1446-75 by Luca Della Robbia, Michelozzo and Maso di Bartolomeo.

Undiscussed is a terracotta or stucco example of the complete relief as a pax at the Benedictine and Diocesan Museum at Nonantola Abbey, inclusive of its fully-formed triangular arch and an extended base featuring winged cherubim carved in low-relief along the frieze of the tomb (Fig. 12). The plaquette casts may preserve models originally intended for serial casts made in lesser quality materials, probably intended as private altars or devotional paxes for provincial churches and patrons.

Donatello's collaborators were certainly reproducing the motif of *Christ in the Tomb*, indicated by a bronze plaque of the subject signed by Bartolomeo Bellano (Fig. 13),⁵² which evinces Donatello's influence via the character of Christ's face following after Donatello's wooden crucifix, ca. 1440-45, at Santa Maria dei Servi in Padua. The less articulate Berlin plaquette of *Christ in the Tomb* shares some of the physiognomic and facial character of a unique plaquette of the *Resurrected Christ* at the Louvre, insecurely attributed to



Fig. 12: *Bust of a Platonic Youth*, Donatello or follower, bronze (Museo Nazionale del Bargello)

another of Donatello's collaborators, Bertoldo di Giovanni, though more likely the work of Bellano.⁵³

DONATELLO AND GLYPTIC ART

Generally overlooked is Donatello's contribution to the bronze reproduction of classical gems in Florence whose genesis closely parallels the bronze reproduction of Pietro Barbo's gem collection at the Palazzo di San Marco foundry (present-day Palazzo Venezia) in Rome during the early 1450s.⁵⁴



Fig. 13: *Eros Driving a Biga* and *Bacchus Discovering Ariadne on Naxos*, ca. 1450s, ambit of Donatello, possibly by Bertoldo di Giovanni (?), bronze (Bode Museum)

The bronze *Bust of a Platonic Youth* (Fig. 14),⁵⁵ possibly made in Padua ca. 1453-54, follows an antique model or later invents a classical cameo of *Eros Driving a Biga*, worn as a medallion by the idealized youth and alluding to Plato's *Allegory of the Soul*. While Lewis' proposed date and authorship of the bust by Donatello remains debated, he reasoned its author's incorporation of the medallion on the *Platonic Youth* served as subsequent inspiration for a reduced oval plaque of the same subject, executed in Florence ca. 1455 by a member of his circle.⁵⁶ A rare, though now lost, example of this plaque was acquired by Bode for Berlin (Inv. 945, Fig. 15) from Bardini in 1880. A cognate plaque of *Bacchus Discovering Ariadne on Naxos* (Inv. 2804, Fig. 16), acquired in 1904, also now lost, shares the same size as the *Eros* plaque and

was likely executed by the same hand.⁵⁷ These two plaquettes are unique for the period with their free interpretation of classical glyptics at an enlarged scale.

The *Eros*, lacking a definite antique source, points to the author of the *Platonic Youth*'s originality through the employ of a classical theme reflective of the subject's characteristic virtue. A similar creative impulse can be observed on Donatello's low-relief *Triumph of Pride*, rendered on Goliath's helmet at the feet of his bronze *David* made ca. 1430-40 (Fig. 17). Donatello herewith freely reimagines an antique triumph, possibly under guidance from the influence of his humanist patrons.



A classical sardonyx cameo now in Naples (Fig. 18),⁵⁸ once belonging to Pietro Barbo and later to Lorenzo de' Medici (after 1471), may have served as a reference for Donatello's inventive relief on Goliath's helmet.⁵⁹ ⁶⁰ By the mid-1450s Donatello's workshop was acquainted with the motif as it appears reproduced in larger form as one of the *tondi* attributed to Donatello's assistants responsible for the friezes of the inner courtyard at the Palazzo Medici (Fig. 19).⁶¹



Donatello's principal role in the Medici's commission for the *tondi* could have moved him to share antique models with his collaborators active in executing them. Apart from drawings and plaster casts, the glyptic plaquettes emanating from Barbo's Roman foundry are probable candidates for such models.⁶² Barbo's inventory confirms his possession of the *Triumph* cameo⁶³ while the documented plaquette casts of it, one of which was formerly in Berlin (Inv. 944),⁶⁴ are certain to have been cast in his Roman foundry.⁶⁵ Furthering this suggestion is the reproduction of another classical cameo depicting a *Dionysiac Centaur*,⁶⁶ also once in Barbo's collection and reproduced as plaquettes, an example of which



Fig. 14: Detail of a *Triumph of Pride* on Goliath's helmet on *David*, ca. 1440s, by Donatello, bronze (top, Museo Nazionale del Bargello); *Dionysius on a chariot pulled by Psyche*, ca. mid-to-late 1st cent. BC, attributed to Sostratos, sardonyx agate cameo (middle, Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli); *Dionysius on a chariot pulled by Psyche*, ca. 1450s, workshop of Donatello, marble (bottom, Palazzo Medici-Riccardi courtyard, Florence)

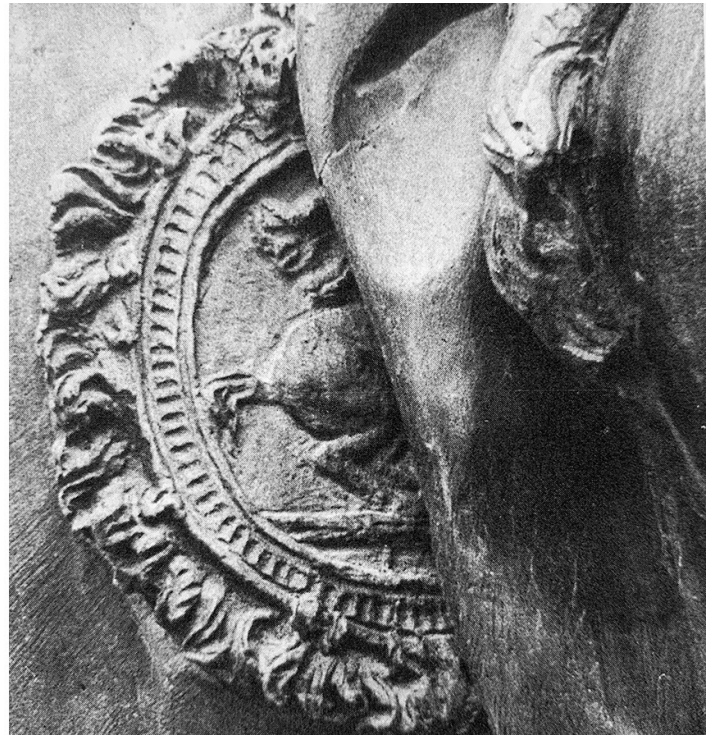


Fig. 15: *Dionysiac Centaur*, ca. 1450s, after a classical cameo, bronze (left, Bode Museum); detail of *Judith and Holofernes*, ca. 1455-60, by Donatello, bronze (right, Palazzo Vecchio, Florence)

is in Berlin (Inv. 961, Fig. 20). The motif appears also as one of the *tondi* in the Palazzo courtyard and is further incorporated on Donatello's Florentine statue of *Judith and Holofernes*, shown half obscured as a pectoral ornament on the cape of Holofernes, cleverly emphasizing his savage character (Fig. 21).

While Barbo's foundry in Rome was absorbed with the serial facture of his glyptic collection in bronze, Donatello's workshop was instead occupied with a free, uniquely enlarged and eloquent interpretation of the subjects these glyptics provided. Although Bode commented on the association of these plaquettes with

the Palazzo Medici *tondi* he did not connect them with the output of Donatello's workshop, opting instead to generically categorize the *Eros* and *Bacchus* as a Paduan production after the antique.⁶⁷ Yet these two larger sized plaquettes are unique in their scale for the period and are suggestively a Florentine production rendered in close proximity with the execution of the *tondi*.⁶⁸

Donatello may not have directly involved himself in the serial production of plaquettes themed after the antique, though his incorporation of classical glyptics on sculpted works during his late Florentine period serve as a stimulus for their summary reproduction as independent reliefs by

his collaborators. Donatello's unique contribution is the stylistic and interpretive humanist approach he gave to them which aimed to meet the appetite of his Florentine benefactors.

While Berlin's collection of Donatello-themed plaquettes have been overshadowed by greater works from the artist, the core group of plaquettes assembled by Bode and connected with the master serve as an important representation for the origins and development of small metal reliefs produced during the early Renaissance. Bode's exhaustive catalog of Berlin's plaquette collection remains a benchmark in the advancement of understanding the medium as a genre, refining also our understanding of Donatello's influence upon his collaborators and later followers, both stylistically and with a spirit of inventiveness.

Endnotes

- 1 Jeremy Warren (2014): 'Cross, disappointed and somewhat spiteful': Bell and plaquettes. *Medieval and Renaissance Sculpture in the Ashmolean Museum*, Vol. 3, *Plaquettes*. Ashmolean Museum Publications, London, UK, pp. 755-59.
- 2 Neville Rowley (2016, 15 Feb): *Madonna und Kind (die Orlandini Madonna) / Virgin and Child (called the Orlandini Madonna)*. SMB-digital Online collections database.
- 3 Wilhelm von Bode (1884): Die italienischen Skulpturen der Renaissance in den Königlichen Museen zu Berlin. III. Bildwerke des Donatello und seiner Schule. *Jahrbuch der Königlich preussischen Kunstsammlungen*, V, pp. 30, 42.
- 4 Émile Molinier (1886): *Les Bronzes de la Renaissance. Les plaquettes*. Vol. I, Paris, France; No. 77, pp. 45-46.
- 5 Paul Schubring (1907): Donatello. Des Meisters Werke. 277 *Abbildungen*, Stuttgart and Leipzig, Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, p. 94.
- 6 Osvald Sirén (1909): *Florentinsk Renässansskultur och andra Konsthistoriska ämnen*, Stockholm, Wahlström & Widstrand, 1909, p. 132.
- 7 Leo Planiscig (1921): *Venezianische Bildhauer der Renaissance*, Vienna, Anton Schroll, pp. 327-328.
- 8 Ernst Bange (1922): *Die Italienischen Bronzen der Renaissance und des Barock, Zweiter Teil: Reliefs und Plaketten*, Berlin and Leipzig, pp. 39-40, no. 296.
- 9 Oliviero Forzetta (1935): "richiedi i quattro putti scolpiti che sono stati portati da San Vitale" Cf. *Cristina de Benedictis, Per la storia del collezionismo italiano*. Fonti e documenti, Firenze 1991, p. 148.
- 10 John Pope-Hennessy (1965): *Renaissance Bronzes from the Samuel H. Kress Collection. Reliefs, plaquettes, statuettes, utensils and mortars*. Phaidon Press, London, p. 95.
- 11 Volker Krahn (2003): *Bronzetti veneziani. Die venezianischen Kleinbronzen der Renaissance aus dem Bode-Museum Berlin*, Cologne, Dumont, pp. 32-35, no. 1.
- 12 N. Rowley (2016, 24 Feb): *Spielende Amoretten / Playing Putti*. SMB-digital Online collections database.
- 13 W. Bode (1904): *Königliche Museen zu Berlin, Beschreibung der Bildwerke der Christlichen Epochen, Vol. II, Die Italienischen Bronzen*. Berlin, Germany, p. 39, no. 293.
- 14 W. Bode (1904), *op. cit.* (note 13), p. 39, no. 294.
- 15 Victoria & Albert Museum, Inv. 8717:1, 2-1863.
- 16 W. Bode (1892-1904): *Denkmäler der Renaissance-Sculptur Toscanas, Vol. I*, Munich, pp. 26-28.
- 17 Eugene Müntz (1885): *Donatello*. Librairie de l'art, Paris, France, p. 92.
- 18 Giancarlo Gentilini, Paola Barocchi, et al. (eds.) (1985): *Omaggio a Donatello. 1386-1986. Donatello e la storia del Museo*, exh. cat. (Florence, Museo Nazionale del Bargello, 19 December 1985-30 May 1986).
- 19 For example: C.D. Fortnum (ca. 1870s-89): *Fortnum Notebook Catalog, Bronzes*, no. 3.15; O. Sirén (1914): *American Journal of Archaeology*, ser. 2, xviii, p. 444; E. Bange (1922), *op. cit.* (note 8), p. 39, nos. 293-94; Francis Bell (ca. 1930): *Ashmolean Museum 'Catalogue of Plaquettes'* typescript, no. 9; and Seymour de Ricci (1931): *The Gustave Dreyfus Collection: Renaissance Bronzes*. Oxford, UK, p. 7, no. 5.
- 20 L. Planiscig (1924): *Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien: Die Bronzeplastiken, Statuetten, Reliefs, Geräte und Plaketten*. Vienna, pp. 240-41, nos. 390-91.
- 21 Eric Maclagan (1924): *Catalogue of Italian Plaquettes*. Victoria and Albert Museum, London, p. 17.
- 22 J. Pope-Hennessy (1964): *Catalogue of Italian Sculpture in the Victoria and Albert Museum*. London, pp. 325-29 and J. Pope-Hennessy (1965), *op. cit.* (note 10), pp. 37-38, nos. 115-16. For a recent assessment on the Martelli Mirror and its derivative plaquettes, see J. Warren (2014): *Medieval and Renaissance Sculpture in the Ashmolean Museum*, Vol. 3: *Plaquettes*. Ashmolean Museum Publications, UK, pp. 831-35, nos. 288-91 or Francesco Rossi (2006): *Placchette e rilievi di bronzo nell'età del Mantegna*. Skira, Mantova e Milano, pp. 67-69, nos. 48-50. The Bode Museum has a modern cast of the mirror's relief in their collection (Inv. 20/61), acquired in 1961.
- 23 W. Bode (1904), *op. cit.* (note 13).
- 24 Stefano Bardini's passion for plaquettes is evinced by an intact group remaining at the Bardini Museum in Florence as well as his two large vitrine displays whose contents were auctioned by Christie's on 27 May 1902, again offered via the American Art Association in NYC on 23-24 April 1918 and again shortly before his death at the Anderson Galleries in NYC on 18 February 1921. Unsold lots passed to the dealer and collector, Piero Vito Tozzi whose coeval interest in them likely came by way of Piero's marriage to Bardini's daughter, Emma, in 1923.
- 25 Although lost, the Gipsformerei preserves a plaster impression of the relief which served as the master prototype for a quantity of mid-20th century aftercasts featuring the number 1501 integrally cast into its reverse and referring to the Gipsformerei catalog number assigned in: *PLAKETTEN, MEDAILLEN Italien, Frankreich, Deutschland (Heft 8)*, published between 1957-63.
- 26 Another example of the *Virgin and Child before a Niche* is in the Berlin collection (Inv. 7321) and is a later appropriation of the relief cast integrally with an early 16th century pax frame. Bode was acquainted with an identical example from the collection of Richard von Kaufmann whose catalog he wrote a forward for in 1917. See W. Bode, et al (1917): *Die Sammlung Richard von Kaufmann*. Berlin, pp. 9, 51, no. 165.
- 27 N. Rowley (2015): *Donatello Forgotten and Rediscovered. On Five Works of Art Formerly in the Berlin Museums. Jahrbuch Preussischer Kulturbesitz*, 51, pp. 141-63, fig. 04.
- 28 Known by examples at the Louvre (Inv. MR3392), National Gallery of Art (Washington, DC; Inv. 1999.102.1) and one offered by the Tomasso Brothers

Endnotes

- (see Tomasso XXV, *A Celebration of Notable Sales*, 2018, London, pp. 70-72, no. 31). It should be noted that while all scholars have suggested a ca. 1433 dating for the relief, Robert Glass has contrarily suggested an interesting theory dating it to 1442-43. See Robert Glass (2011): *Filarete at the Papal Court: sculpture, ceremony and the antique in early Renaissance Rome*. PhD thesis. Princeton University. p. 520, fig. 82.
- 29 Located at the commune of Barberino Val d'Elsa outside of Florence, Italy.
- 30 Marika Leino (2013): *Fashion, Devotion and Contemplation. The Status and Functions of Italian Renaissance Plaquettes*. Peter Lang, Bern, Switzerland, pp. 17-19.
- 31 W. Bode (1884), *op. cit.* (note 3), p. 39.
- 32 E. Molinier (1886), *op. cit.* (note 4), Vol. I, pp. 34-35, no. 65.
- 33 For a discussion of this see N. Rowley (2016, 24 Feb): *Madonna in Halbfigur / Virgin and Child* (Inv. 1028). SMB-Digital Online Collections Database. For a discussion of the dating see Francesco Caglioti (2010): *Da Jacopo della Quercia a Donatello. Le arti a Siena nel primo Rinascimento*, exh. cat. (Siena, Santa Maria della Scala, Opera della Metropolitana, Pinacoteca Nazionale, 2010, 26 March-11 July), Milan, Federico Motta Editore, p. 382.
- 34 Victoria & Albert Museum, Inv. A.45-1926.
- 35 See E. Bange (1922), *op. cit.* (note 8), p. 39, no. 292; E. Maclagan (1924), *op. cit.* (note 21), pp. 16-17; Ulrich Middeldorf (1944): *Medals and Plaquettes from the Sigmund Morgenroth Collection*, Chicago, p. 41, nos. 295-96; and Charles Avery (1989): *Donatello's Madonnas revisited*, in *Donatello-Studien*, Munich, pp. 227-28.
- 36 See G. Gentilini, P. Barocchi, *et al.* (1985): *op. cit.* (note 18), pp. 430-31, no. 17; J. Pope-Hennessy (1993): *Donatello Sculptor*, NY, London, Paris, pp. 252-53; and Douglas Lewis (2006) ed. F. Rossi: *Placchette e rilievi di bronzo nell'età del Mantegna*, Mantova e Milano, Skira, pp. 3-15.
- 37 Lewis describes the *Virgin and Child before a Niche* as "perhaps the first true plaque." (see D. Lewis [2006], *op. cit.* [note 36], translation provided via English manuscript, February 2016).
- 38 Michael Riddick (2020): *Michele di Giovanni da Fiesole and the origins of the Florentine plaque*. Renbronze.com (accessed September 2020).
- 39 W. Bode (1891): *Lo Scultore Bartolomeo Bellano da Padova*. *Archivio storico dell'Arte IV*, pp. 397-416.
- 40 W. Bode (1904), *op. cit.* (note 13), p. 55, no. 671. A loose association of this plaque with Giovanni has persisted in recent years by way of Francesco Rossi who notes its subtle references to his manner (see F. Rossi [2006]: *Placchette e rilievi di bronzo nell'età del Mantegna*, Mantova e Milano, Skira; pp. 38-39, no. 1).
- 41 W. Bode (1902): *Die italienische Plastik*, 3rd edition, Berlin, p. 123. On the hesitations of the attribution of the Ovetari Altarpiece between Giovanni da Pisa and Niccolò Pizzolo, see Mattia Vinco, "Pizzolo Niccolò...", in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 84, 2015 online. See also Anne Markham Schulz, "Francesco Squarcione and His School, With an Addendum on the Ovetari Altarpiece", *Ricche minere*, 4 (2017), 8, pp. 23-53.
- 42 E. Molinier (1886), *op. cit.* (note 4), Vol. II, pp. 27-30, nos. 367-71.
- 43 L. Planiscig (1919): *Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien: Die Estensische Kunstsammlung, I: Skulpturen und Plastiken des Mittelalters und der Renaissance*, Vienna, p. 174, no. 339.
- 44 S. Ricci (1931), *op. cit.* (note 19), p. 172, no. 233.
- 45 C. D. Fortnum (1876): *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Bronzes of European Origin in the South Kensington Museum*, London, p. 36.
- 46 E. Maclagan (1924), *op. cit.* (note 21), p. 18.
- 47 F. Caglioti (2010), *op. cit.* (note 33), pp. 348-53, no. D.21.
- 48 Louvre Inv. OA 1474 and Sotheby's 6 Dec 2011, Lot 1.
- 49 W. Bode (1904), *op. cit.* (note 13), p. 56, no. 679.
- 50 F. Rossi (1974), *Placchette. Sec. XV-XIX*. Neri Pozza Editore, Vicenza, pp. 10-11, no. 15a-b.
- 51 F. Rossi (2006), *op. cit.* (note 36), p. 38, no. 2.
- 52 National Gallery of Art (Washington DC), Inv. 1957.14.139.
- 53 Louvre Inv. OA7411. Undiscussed in literature but attributed to Bertoldo when inventoried upon receipt from the Brauer donation in 1922 (Philippe Malgouyres, private communication, Jan 2019). The present author suggests a more probable affinity with the manner of Bartolomeo Bellano. See Michael Riddick (2019): *An overlooked 'Christ the Redeemer' in the ambit of Bartolomeo Bellano*. Renbronze.com (accessed September 2020).
- 54 For an explanation of this hypothesis, predominantly accepted by scholars of plaquettes, see Pietro Cannata (1982): *Rilievi e Placchette del XV al XVIII secolo*, Roma, Museo di Palazzo Venezia, Rome.
- 55 Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Inv. Bronzi No. 8.
- 56 D. Lewis (2001). *Rehabilitating a Fallen Athlete: Evidence for a Date of 1453-54 in the Veneto for the Bust of a Platonic Youth by Donatello*. *Studies in the History of Art*, No. 62. National Gallery of Art. Yale University Press.
- 57 Of similar import is an enlarged plaque of the famed *Diomede and the Palladium* gem, also represented by an example in Berlin (Berlin Inv. 953), received as a gift of James Simon in 1889 and an enlarged plaque of *Apollo and Marsyas* (Berlin Inv. 956), after the "Seal of Nero" gem in Naples (Archeological Museum), acquired in Italy in 1887. Their vertical format distinguishes them slightly from the large freehand *Eros* and *Bacchus* plaquettes, although their scale and manner can be related. However, scholars have generally suggested they belong to

Endnotes

- the later Renaissance trend of enlarging glyptic busts of Roman emperors in plaquette-form (see D. Lewis [2001], *op. cit.* [note 56], see footnote 32). Also considerable is the wider diffusion of these later two plaquettes versus the much scarcer *Eros* and *Bacchus* reliefs, each known by less than a handful of examples.
- 58 Sardonyx agate cameo of *Dionysus Travelling in a Chariot Pulled by Psychai*, attributed to Sostratos. National Archeological Museum of Naples, Inv. 25840.
- 59 H. W. Janson (1957): Donatello and the Antique, in *Donatello e il suo tempo, atti dell'VIII convegno internazionale di studi sul Rinascimento*, Florence.
- 60 F. Caglioti (2000), *Donatello e i Medici: Storia del David e Della Giuditta*. Firenze: L.S. Olschki.
- 61 G. Gentilini, P. Barocchi, et al. (eds.), *op. cit.* (note 18).
- 62 Well circulated Roman plaquette casts of Pietro Barbo's *Diomedes and the Palladium* gem, whose subject also appears on a tondo at the Palazzo Medici, is another example of Donatello's workshop potentially employing plaquettes as models for the *tondi*.
- 63 See Pietro Barbo's inventory of 1457, reproduced in P. Cannata (1982), *op. cit.* (note 54).
- 64 Acquired in 1887 and lost since 1945.
- 65 The limited number of surviving examples of the *Triumph with the Torments and the Resolution of Love* plaquette suggests a singular source for their production while XRF analysis of an example at the National Gallery of Art (Washington DC) advocates an origin in Pietro Barbo's foundry. See D. Lewis (2017), No. 25, entry for NGA Inv. 1957.14.150 (unpublished manuscript, accessed Aug 2017, with thanks to Anne Halpern, Department of Curatorial Records and Files): *Systematic Catalogue of the Collections, Renaissance Plaquettes*. National Gallery of Art, Washington DC. Trustees of the National Gallery of Art.
- 66 The original 2nd century Hadrianic cameo resides in the Naples Archeological Museum.
- 67 W. Bode (1904), *op. cit.* (note 13), pp. 36-37, nos. 501, 505.
- 68 Lewis provides a strong case for their dating and location. See D. Lewis (2001), *op. cit.* (note 56). See also Giuseppe and Fiorenza-Vannel Toderi (1996). *Placchette Secoli XV-XVIII*, Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence. Studio per Edizioni Scelte, Firenze, Italy; pp. 17-18, no. 1. It is worth noting the subject of the *Bacchus* plaquette is also represented as a tondo in the Palazzo Medici courtyard frieze. Several antique cameos of the subject were known in the Renaissance, including two formerly with the Medici: a fragmentary example once belonging to Lorenzo de' Medici (now in the Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Naples) and another now in the Museo Archeologico, Florence. A further Classical example, the *Gemma Mantovana*, is in the Yarborough collection (UK), from which a quantity of plaquettes were cast (see Berlin Inv. 1594 for an example). These plaquettes were probably cast in Rome in Pietro Barbo's foundry, though theories suggesting a Florentine or Mantuan production for this plaquette remain debated. See J. Warren (2014): *op. cit.* (note 22), p. 900, no. 355; and Francesco Rossi (2011): *La Collezione Mario Scaglia. Placchette, Vols. I-III*. Lubrina Editore, Bergamo; no. I.16, variant A, pp. 47-48, 517, fig. d.