ARTISTIC IDENTITY SET IN STONE:
ITALIAN SCULPTORS’ SIGNATURES, C. 1250-1550

by

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This dissertation examines some 300 signatures and inscriptions from sculptors working in the Late Middle Ages and Renaissance in Italy. The project discusses the signatures broadly in order to provide a context with which to study individual cases in detail. To that end, my analysis begins with a short breakdown of the signatures’ basic information: geographic distribution, date, artist, material. In separate chapters I then devote considerable attention to issues of textual content; placement and location; lettering style; audience and reception; and fundamental social factors, such as the status of sculptors and their works. Ultimately I bring together the information on signatures and related sources to describe some of the notable trends in signing practices during the Middle Ages and Renaissance and what the implications and significance of those trends may be. In particular, I discuss how the increasing standardization and simplicity of many sculptors’ signatures—especially in central Italy—illustrates a sense of collective and communal identity that counters some of the usual assumptions about Medieval collectivism versus Renaissance individualism. For sculptors of fifteenth-century Tuscany, for example, the common motif of signing with “opus + name” (“the work of…”) gave artists the ability to reference both antiquity—as this form of signature
survived on the classical *Dioscuri* statues in Rome—as well as their fellow craftsmen, creating for them a group identity that complemented their status as individual artists. Later, toward the end of the fifteenth century and into the sixteenth, the popularity of signing with the imperfect verb *faciebat* (“was making”), as Michelangelo did on his St Peter’s Pietà, offered similar possibilities for artists wishing to express their links to both classical antiquity and the best artists of their own time. Through my analysis of individual cases situated within a large body of data—presented in the dissertation’s appendix—I illustrate how Medieval and Renaissance sculptors conveyed identity via a range of signature types. My findings and data thus lay a foundation for future research into artists’ inscriptions.
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Introduction

Inscribed on a band across one of the most famous sculptures of all time is the only signature of an artist who, in his own day, was already revered enough to be called “divine”. The inscription on the St Peter’s Pietà boldly declares authorship, nationality, and the very act of creation itself: MICHAEL A(N)GELVS BONAROTVS FLORENT FACIEBA(T); “Michelangelo Buonarroti, Florentine, was making” (figs. 65 and 65b).1 Like all things Michelangelo, the signature has received considerable attention from scholars, starting with Vasari in the first edition of his Lives.2 Yet despite all that has been written on Michelangelo and his famous signature, our picture of where this inscription fits within the general realm of sculpted signatures, which often consisted of far more than merely an artist’s name, is distressingly incomplete. In the absence of a thorough and comprehensive examination of sculpted monuments we are left with a fragmented view of this topic, with knowledge only of discrete examples at particular moments in history. It is the goal of the present dissertation to address this topic more thoroughly and comprehensively than has been done previously.

Although my work is not intended to be a catalogue, I have gathered as many signatures as I could find in the hopes of providing a clearer picture of the phenomenon of sculptors’ signatures in the late Middle Ages and Renaissance, c. 1250 to 1550. My research indicates that sculptors were dynamic creative forces, often at the forefront of cultural and intellectual developments—such as the revival of ancient Roman lettering—typically attributed solely to contemporary scholars or wealthy patrons. Additionally, as

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1 Cat. 217
far back as the Middle Ages, they had the uncommon ability to attain a level of social status dependent not upon noble birth or economic standing but on the fame and skill of their works. Though it is not my intent to suggest an inversion of medieval and Renaissance ideologies, I use sculptors’ signatures to highlight the complex and relational nature of identity and individualism, and illustrate that both are part of a set of interactions that varies across time and place rather than concepts that emerge spontaneously as an outgrowth of Renaissance humanism.

Review of the Literature

To date there has been no comprehensive study of artists’ signatures as they appear on Italian Renaissance sculpture. Yet the topic of signatures in general, across media and through the centuries, has received increasing attention, most notably by German and Italian scholars. In the following section I will outline some of the more important studies from modern scholarship on signatures. I begin with studies of signatures in general, which often mean painted signatures, and then move to literature on sculptors’ signatures. Finally, I include mention of some important works not specifically on signatures in works of art but on related or similar topics, such as signatures in literature or studies of texts within images.

A seminal study is the 1974 issue of Revue de l’Art, entirely devoted to short essays on signatures and addressing topics ranging from their semiotic structure to the implications of non-traditional signature types. Among many important contributions are Vladimir Juřen’s discussion of the use of faciebat in signatures; Anne-Marie Lecoq’s

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study of signatures located on framing devices, real or depicted; an outline of signature types and categories by Jean-Claude Lebensztejn; and short studies on epigraphic and emblematic signatures. French scholars seem to have been particularly interested in the phenomenon of signatures during this period, as attested to by several later studies.

Shortly after the *Revue de l’Art* issue, one of the contributors, Anne-Marie Lecoq, examined the use of the verb *fingere* in Renaissance paintings. Another important and wide-ranging study from French scholars is an article devoted to the appearance, content, and location of painters’ signatures, by Omar Calabrese and Betty Gigante. And lastly, Claude Gandelman built upon earlier semiotic theory and research into signatures—including that in the *Revue de l’Art* issue—to explore the theoretical elements of how painted signatures function as signs within a semiotic framework.

More recently, scholars have continued to explore these issues, often through focused studies of single works or specific areas or periods. Louisa Matthew, for example, traced the development of artists’ signatures in Venetian Renaissance painting, and linked their rise and eventual fall in popularity to changing views of artistic practice and status. Venice received some more attention when Creighton Gilbert provided a short introduction to the phenomenon of artist signatures and focused primarily on the

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6 Jean-Claude Lebensztejn, “Esquisse d’une typologie” in ibid., 48-56.
7 “La signature épigraphique” in ibid., 24-26; and “La signature emblématique” in ibid., 31-32.
Serenissima. Rona Goffen, opening the field beyond the Veneto, expanded upon some of Matthew’s points in an article that addressed several specific instances of artists’ identity and signatures and opened the discussion to include examples from sculpture and the Middle Ages. Patricia Rubin used the signatures on works by Michelangelo, Fra Filippo Lippi, Donatello, and Titian to explore themes of artistic ambition and authorship. A recent article by Robert Gibbs highlights the signing practices of Bolognese painters, specifically manuscript scribes and illustrators. And Sarah McHam has recently illustrated how the signature of an artist can contribute to the meaning and significance of a painting’s content and imagery.

Signatures on specific works of sculpture have also received occasional attention. The most famous example is Michelangelo’s St Peter’s Pietà, which was written about within the artist’s own lifetime by Vasari, as noted previously. Modern scholars who have commented on this signature include Paul Barolsky, Kathleen Weil-Garris Brandt, Livio Pestilli, Lisa Pon, and Aileen Wang. Other monuments with noteworthy signatures have also received some attention. Michael Ayrton and Anita Moskowitz have

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12 Creighton Gilbert, “A preface to signatures (with some cases in Venice)” in Fashioning Identities in Renaissance Art, ed. Mary Rogers (Ashgate, 2000): 79-87
commented on the signatures on the pulpits by Nicola Pisano and his son, Giovanni;\textsuperscript{19}

Tommaso Gramigni did a close analysis of the inscription on Tino di Camaino’s tomb for bishop Antonio d’Orso;\textsuperscript{20} Philippe Fehl has written on Roman tomb signatures; scholars such as Kathleen Weil-Garris Brandt have examined the signatures of Baccio Bandinelli;\textsuperscript{21} and Filarete’s bronze doors for Old St Peter’s were the subject of an article by Catherine King.\textsuperscript{22}

The area of Medieval signatures, especially those of sculptors, has been given renewed attention by scholars in Germany and Italy. An early example is the article by Emil Ploss, which examined the phenomenon of so-called “speaking” inscriptions in the Middle Ages, of the format “so-and-so made me” (\textit{me fecit}).\textsuperscript{23} An article by Monica Vannucci, based on work done for her thesis, looked at a small but diverse group of signatures appearing Tuscany from the eleventh through thirteenth century.\textsuperscript{24} Peter Claussen broadened the geographic scope of his own investigation into Medieval signatures to include the rest of Italy; he argued for the appearance of four distinct phases in how artists were mentioned in signatures from c. 1100-1300, and claimed the signatures’ content was related to contemporary notions of artistic skill or status.\textsuperscript{25}

Claussen’s article was a significant advancement in our picture of Medieval signatures, and his work continues to be important for redefining our views of the Middle Ages.26 Another German scholar, Tobias Burg, though still working with an emphasis on Medieval signatures, has expanded his examination to include signatures through the seventeenth century and across media.27 A conference at the Humboldt University of Berlin in the fall of 2008 illustrated the increasing attention devoted to signatures in the field of art history.28

By far the most important recent contributions to the study of signatures have been made by Albert Dietl, who has published several articles and a book devoted to the signatures of Italian sculptors in the Middle Ages.29 His work, which includes an analysis of some 800 signatures from Italy in the Middle Ages and 400 from the rest of Europe, is groundbreaking in its scope and content, as well as in the ways inscriptions are used to explore the social and cultural world of the period’s artists.30 Perhaps inspired by Dietl’s extraordinary work, scholars at Pisa’s Scuola Normale are at work on a project to

30 The influence of his work, specifically with regard to literary topoi, can be seen in such articles as Elena Vaiani, “Il topos della ‘dotta mano’ dagli autori classici alla letteratura artistica attraverso le sottoscrizioni medievali”, in L’artista medievale, ed. Maria Monica Donato (Pisa: Classe di Lettere e Filosofia, 2003): 345-64.
catalogue all the extant signatures of Medieval artists in Italy.\textsuperscript{31}

Scholarship from areas outside the specific topic of artists’ signatures has also informed my work, either for theoretical, methodological, or historical approaches and perspectives. This includes works on signatures as legal or notarial phenomena;\textsuperscript{32} examination of signatures in literature;\textsuperscript{33} and broader studies of writing and inscriptions in Renaissance works of art, both painting and sculpture.\textsuperscript{34}

As I hope to have shown with the preceding summary, there is a significant body of literature on or related to sculpted signatures in Early Modern Italy. The work by Medieval art historians is especially notable, although it still leaves a great deal of work to be done on sculptors’ signatures from the Italian Renaissance.

**Brief Chapter Outline**

Chapter one is an examination of the content and location of sculptors’ signatures. In it I discuss the various elements that constitute sculptors’ signatures in the Middle Ages and Renaissance, such as names, verbs of creation, cities of origin, and so on. Following the consideration of these elements, I then discuss the differing ways sculptors could place

\textsuperscript{31} The project has been moving slowly, although work does continue. See Maria Monica Donato, ed., *Le opere e i nomi: prospettive sulla firma medievale: in margine ai lavori per il Corpus delle opere firmate del Medioevo italiano* (Pisa: Scuola normale superiore di Pisa, Centro di ricerche informatiche per i beni culturali, 2000). They also recently published a volume of essays on the artist in the Middle Ages: *L’artista medievale*, ed. Maria Monica Donato (Pisa: Classe di Lettere e Filosofia, 2003).


their signatures on works of art, that is, on framing elements, within the picture space, or in ways that blur the line between artifice and reality.

Chapter two discusses epigraphic lettering trends from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance, and then focuses on these developments as they pertain to signatures. The primary development is the shift from Gothic lettering to Roman lettering, which is seen in both general epigraphy and specifically in signatures. Interestingly, it is in signatures that some of the earliest appearances of Roman revival letters can be found.

Chapter three considers issues of signature audience and reception. The problem of who could actually read inscriptions is crucial, and so I spend time examining the research done on the literacy of people in Medieval and Renaissance Italy. I also include discussion of who artists’ intended audience might have been, and consider some instances of contemporary figures who discuss signatures.

Chapter four is a discussion of artists’ social status in Italy, with a specific focus on the social status of sculptors. I attempt to illustrate the many variables that affected how a sculptor was perceived by his peers, which I consider to be an important consideration in the context of examining their signatures.

The final chapter is a broad examination of sculptors’ signatures in the Renaissance, with a focus on the ways they depart from and appropriate earlier traditions. In this chapter I bring together the specific areas discussed in each of the preceding chapters and provide a comprehensive reading of what I consider to be some of the most important elements of Medieval and Renaissance signatures.
Sculptors’ Signatures: The Data

In the following section I will outline and summarize the data used in this study. First, I explain how I have gathered the signatures that comprise my data. Then I move to a discussion of this information: the signatures themselves (Tables 1 and 2), the sculptors who were responsible for the signatures (Table 3), and the works of art on which the signatures appear (Tables 4 and 5). As with all studies, I have had to make a number of choices to limit my scope, and whenever possible I have attempted to provide justification for my decisions. Because much of my work has been to gather information and compile lists I have found it useful to provide quantitative data, in addition to my analytic and historical research. Few things from history lend themselves to easy quantification, and so the following information is presented with the caveat that it be approached with caution.35 It should be taken as a quantitative analysis of the data I have gathered, rather than a complete statistical picture of signatures from the period. At the very least, examining the data in this way provides a starting point for further and more detailed lines of inquiry and gives a picture of the signatures used in my study. Subsequent chapters will examine the data more closely, taking into account the array of contextual issues that accompany each signature, sculptor, and work of art.

35 Albert Dietl, “Iscrizioni e mobilità. Sulla mobilità degli artisti italiani nel medioevo”, in L'artista medievale, ed. Maria Monica Donato (Pisa: Classe di Lettere e Filosofia, 2003): 239-50, 240-41, notes the problem of approaching this sort of data statistically, though he recognizes the utility of examining it for its descriptive potential.
The Signatures

For the purposes of this study I have collected some 300 statements of or references to authorship associated with sculptors working in the later Middle Ages and Renaissance, roughly 1250 to 1550. Although this number is notably smaller than the 800 or so Italian examples collected by Dietl for his study of medieval inscriptions, I believe my sample is comparably valuable since this study covers a shorter chronological span and a narrower definition of signatures and materials. In general, the writings in my study constitute what are typically referred to as “signatures”—statements of authorship by a sculptor—although in a few instances it is not always clear that the artist himself was the one recording the information. An example of this occurs with some of the painted sculptures that are included in my study; in some instances these may include a sculptor’s name in the signature that was potentially added by the painter long after it left the sculptor’s studio. The term “artists’ inscriptions”—a literal translation of the German term *Künstlerinschriften* used by Albert Dietl—is somewhat more appropriate, although the focus of my study is not primarily concerned with the vast array of artists’ writings that also fall under this rubric, such as gravestones, laudatory plaques or inscriptions, consecration plaques, foundation stones, and so on. Thus in general I favor the term “signature”, with the caveat that its meaning in the context of this study is not the exact same as its more common, modern meaning.

To collect the signatures for this study I used a variety of sources and methods in an effort to accumulate a representative sample. General books on sculpture, such as


37 Which is to say the modern notion that a signature is limited to a person’s name, written by that person, in a distinctive way so as to serve for identification or verification purposes.
Pope-Hennessy’s three volumes on Italian sculpture, provided examples early in my research. The work of other scholars who study signatures, such as Albert Dietl and Peter Claussen, was also extremely valuable in this regard. I then moved to books focusing on specific areas or cities and to artist monographs. The work of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century scholars, who often proved far more diligent in recording signatures and inscriptions than their modern counterparts, was useful for much of this research. In addition to books I spent time searching through the Frick Collection’s photoarchive, via their online catalog and by hand, and was provided generous assistance by their staff. This research was supplemented by my own observations while in Italy, as well as by examples provided by friends and colleagues. Apart from a very few cases of a phantom signature mentioned in a certain source whose existence I could not verify, either through other sources or my own observation, I have not edited the list or discarded signatures after discovering them. To make the information manageable and to avoid endlessly collecting data I have stopped (for the moment) at around 300 examples. I readily recognize that this list is not complete, nor can I make any firm claims about how representative a sample it is. It is certainly stronger in some areas, such as central Italy, than others, such as the south. But I am confident that it provides a broad picture of signing practices in Italy during the Renaissance.

Counting the signatures is somewhat problematic. In most cases, a work is signed with a single statement of authorship by a single sculptor, making counting easy. In a few instances a work is signed multiple times, and there is the question of whether numerous references to authorship within a single work should be counted as one signature or as many. Furthermore, sometimes more than one artist signs a work. In these instances I
have approached each case individually and made judgments according to what seems to logically constitute a separate inscription. Thus the four appearances of Filarete’s name on his bronze doors for Old St Peter’s are counted four times, primarily because they appear in separate instances: as a statement of creation: ANTONIVS PETRI DE FLORENTIA FECIT; in a group self-portrait with his workshop: ANTONIVS ET DISCIPVLI MEI (with his assistants); on the border of a relief signed OPVS ANTONII DEFLORENTIA; and in a portrait medal below another relief: OPV / S / ANTO / NII. Conversely, I have counted the signature of Antonio della Porta and Pace Gagini on the tomb of Raoul de Lannoy and Jeanne de Poix once, even though it names two artists, since I consider the phrase as a single unit, with the second part unable to stand alone: ANTONIVS DE PORTA / TAMAGNINVS MEDIOLANENSIS FACIEBAT // ET PAXIVS NEPOS SVVS. When ambiguous cases, such as the above mentioned example arise the exact details are provided in my text and appendices.

The focus of my study is the end of the Middle Ages through the Renaissance, although in order to provide illustrative comparisons and make use of the great contributions made by Medieval scholars like Albert Dietl and Peter Claussen,38 I have included around 56 signatures from the period c. 1250 to 1350. They represent a set of data that is critical to my study’s examination of broader historical trends, such as those observed in lettering, for which the fourteenth century can be a pivotal time.

The primary temporal focus of my study, represented by the richest body of material, is c. 1350 to c. 1550. Of the 300 total signatures I have gathered, 244 (81.3%) are from that 200-year period. Although all start and end dates are arbitrary to a certain degree, the dates of 1350 and 1550 were chosen for several reasons. For one, 1350 marks the end of the period covered in Albert Dietl’s extraordinary four-volume *magnum opus* on signatures, published in 2009. Second, the well-documented calamities of the mid-fourteenth century—the banking crisis, the Black Death—make the period a good juncture in history. The end date of 1550 marks the appearance of Vasari’s first edition of his *Vite*, and thus a milestone in the history of writing and thinking about art and artists. This end date is also useful because shortly after the mid-sixteenth century the first academies of art begin to appear in Italy, which suggest a system of artistic training and formation that is moving away from the apprenticeship model known in previous centuries. The combination of these factors provide the temporal scope of my project.

Table 1 provides a summary of information on the signatures and the date ranges.

### Table 1. The Signatures by date bracket

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date Bracket</th>
<th>Signatures</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>c. 1250 - 1350</td>
<td>56 (18.7%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. 1350 - 1550</td>
<td>244 (81.3%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total, c. 1250 - 1550</td>
<td>300 (100%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 2. The Signatures by century

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date Range (all <em>circa</em>)</th>
<th>Signatures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1250 – 1299</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1300 – 1399</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1400 – 1499</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1500 – 1549</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The artists

One of the problems to be addressed is defining what exactly is meant by the term “sculptor”, and which figures to include in the study. In the period under review, roughly the thirteenth to sixteenth centuries, contemporary documents typically referred to artisans according to the materials and techniques of their profession; thus they were called orefici (goldworkers), lignaiuoli (woodworkers), magister lapidum, maestro di legname, maestro di ferro, and maestro di pietra (masters of gold, wood, iron, and stone). Materials and techniques would further group craftsmen through the guild structure, a system that varied from place to place. In Venice there were separate guilds for stone carving, wood carving, and bronze casting; in Florence wood and stone carving were grouped together (Arte di pietra e legname) and bronze working was separate. Despite this organization, working across media was a relatively common phenomenon. For the purposes of the present study the term “sculptor” will be used in its broadest sense, covering all those who worked in the various arts of both carving and casting, though due to issues of survivability the focus will be on those artists who worked in the more durable media of stone and metal and on works intended for public settings.

The number of artists represented for the entire list of signatures is 139, although in a handful of cases the problem of identifying the artist mentioned in a vague or partial

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41 King 1995, 99.
signature means that there is a small factor of error in that number. It is unclear, for example, who exactly is meant by the “OPVS A(N)DREAE” on a fifteenth-century relief of the *Virgin and Child*. Without documentation scholars have had to rely on stylistic attribution, and it seems there has been no consensus on this little-studied object.\(^{42}\)

For the first set of data, c. 1250-1350, there are 35 artists; for the second date range, the primary focus of this study, c. 1350-1550, there are signatures from 109 sculptors. Two artists from the fourteenth century are represented by signatures in both sets: Nino Pisano (fl. 1334-60s) and Giovanni da Campione (fl. 1340-60s). All sculptors included in this study lived and worked in the area corresponding to modern Italy. In the vast majority of cases these sculptors were born and trained in the Italian peninsula. A few were from areas outside of modern Italy’s borders, such as Giovanni Dalmata (c. 1440; d. after 1509) from Dalmatia (modern Croatia) and members of the Rodari family, who appear to be from the area just north of Italy in modern Switzerland; in one case the artist’s origin is not clear (he signed himself as simply TADDEVS without any other identifying information).\(^{43}\) Although the Italian peninsula and accompanying islands represented a rich variety of city-states, nations, and territories, for the present I have simply divided the sculptors into where they originated in relation to the borders of modern Italy. In subsequent chapters and closer investigations I will address issues of geography with a proper contextual eye, as well as related factors such as where certain sculptors received their training or spent their productive years. Table 2 presents

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\(^{42}\) This relief, located in the Ospedale di S Giacomo in Rome, was attributed by W.R. Valentiner to Andrea dell’Aquila, a sculptor who had worked in Donatello’s milieu. See W.R. Valentiner, “Andrea Dell’Aquila, Painter and Sculptor” (*Art Bulletin* 19, 1937): 503-36, esp. fig. 1 and p. 529.

\(^{43}\) The full signature, on the Cathedral of Sessa Aurunca (works dating 1259-83) reads: QVI FAMA FVLXIT OPVS HOC IN MARMORE SCVLPSIT / NOMINE TADDEVS CVI MISERERE DEVS. Per Dietl 1987, 107.
information on the artists from each date range along with their origins as they relate to Italy.

Table 3. The Artists

(NB: Totals for c. 1250-1550 do not equal the sum of both lists, since two artists appear in both sets of data due to having signed works both before and after 1350.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artists</th>
<th>c. 1250 - 1350</th>
<th>c. 1350 - 1550</th>
<th>Total, c. 1250 - 1550</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Native to Italy</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside Italy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Origin unclear</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Sculptures

The number of works signed by artists is slightly smaller than the number of signatures I have gathered. In some instances artists signed a work more than once, such as the previously-mentioned four signatures Filarete left on his bronze doors for Old St Peter’s. In other cases more than one artist signed different elements of what might be considered a single monument. The tomb of Gian Galeazzo Visconti (1497), for instance, is signed on the architrave by Gian Cristoforo Romano, IOANNES CHRISTOPHORVS ROMANVS FACIEBAT; within that work, a Madonna and Child by Benedetto Briosco is also signed: BENEDITVS DE BRIOSCO DE MLNO FECIT. In that instance I counted each signature (thus two signatures) but counted the entire monument once,
despite the presence of two works by (at least) two artists. My reasoning for this tomb is that it was initially intended as a single work and still survives as such.44

As the preceding example makes evident, counting the number of works signed is somewhat problematic, and raises questions about what counts as a distinct work of art. The issues are similar to those faced when trying to determine what to count as a discrete signature, and are compounded by the fact that many sculptures in their present condition have been removed from their original context. In some cases the original context is known, but in many others the information has been lost. Again, the numbers presented should not be read too exactly given the problems of applying quantitative and statistical methods to a period that predates such approaches.45 I have arrived at the figure of around 283 works of art. Around 230 works are from the period c. 1350-1550, and the remaining 53 are from c. 1250-1350.

The majority of the works selected for this study were large-scale and intended for public or semi-public display. In addition to their intended display to a wide audience, most of the works (some 270, or just over 95%) were executed in permanent materials, primarily stone (220) or bronze (46), meant to last into posterity. I have also included a handful of works in less durable materials or of a smaller scale. These include around 25 small bronzes, such as medals, plaquettes, and figurines; nine wood sculptures; and four works executed in terracotta. Although the focus of my study is on large works in stone and bronze intended for long-term survival, these smaller and less permanent works provide interesting examples as comparisons and therefore enrich the data. Furthermore, slippage between the visual arts meant that sculptors often worked in a variety of media.

45 Dietl 2003, 240-41.
and a variety of sizes, a fact that supports an inclusionary rather than exclusionary compilation.

Table 4. Materials represented

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Material</th>
<th>c. 1250 - 1350</th>
<th>c. 1350 - 1550</th>
<th>Total, c. 1250 - 1550</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stone</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bronze</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Precious metals</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terracotta</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTALS</td>
<td><strong>53</strong></td>
<td><strong>230</strong></td>
<td><strong>283</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Despite the presumed permanence of materials such as marble and bronze, losses do occur. Old sculptures are dismantled to make way for new ones, the ravages of war or natural disasters destroys artifacts, and in the case of bronze it is occasionally melted down and reused for something else (not infrequently, cannon). Fortunately, problems related to survival are less acute for stone and metal sculpture than for works in more ephemeral materials, such as those on paper. I have thus opted not to devote much attention to this issue, although it will be addressed where necessary. Of the 283 works examined in my study, five are lost or destroyed and about another five are partially destroyed, or have inscriptions that are partially or wholly lost or destroyed. Fortunately, in many of these cases previous researchers have provided some information on the works’ signatures. Although we cannot be certain of the sources’ accuracy, an examination of the authors’ transcriptions within the context of known contemporary signatures, provided by the lists I have compiled, allows for judgments of plausible
accuracy. For example, the MAGISTER DEODATVS / FECIT HOC OPVS that allegedly once adorned a reliquary shrine by Deodatus Cosmatus in Santa Maria in Campitelli, Rome,\textsuperscript{46} is a credible signature, given a nearly identical signature from the same artist that survives: MAGR / DEODAT // FECIT / HOC OP.\textsuperscript{47} Information on lost or partially lost works and signatures is provided both in the text as well as in the appendices.

**Geographic distribution**

In addition to focusing primarily on larger, more permanent sculptures, I have also limited the majority of my data to works in the area corresponding to modern-day Italy. Of the 300 signatures gathered, 273 are from areas within the bounds of Italy (including Sicily and Sardinia) or were originally located in this region. Of the remaining 27 signatures, 17 are in areas outside of modern Italy, although in some cases these were cities under the control of a ruler on the Italian peninsula (e.g., Trogir, in Croatia, which was part of the Venetian Empire from 1420-1797), and in other cases the signatures are on works executed in Italy but shipped abroad (e.g., Giovanni da Nola’s tomb for Raimondo Folche de Cardona, in S Nicolás, Bellpuig, Spain). Ten signatures are on works whose original locations—either where they were executed or where they were intended to be displayed—are unknown or not entirely clear.

\textsuperscript{46} Cat. 087. Joannis Ciampini, *Vetera Monimenta*, Rome, 1690, 181, tab. XLIV, fig. 3; also noted in Brendan Cassidy, “Orcagna’s Tabernacle in Florence: Design and Function” (*Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 55, 1992): 180-211, fig. 14 and 201 n94.

\textsuperscript{47} Cat. 086. On the *Altar of Mary Magdalene*, c. 1297, now in S Giovanni in Laterano, Rome. The fact that authors—even up to the present—tend to expand abbreviations and fill in letters without any indication of having done so can present problems for later researchers. With simple signatures, such as those by Deodatus, the potential for error is less serious; with longer inscriptions, or inscriptions where the use of abbreviations or omissions may carry meaning, this becomes a more significant issue, highlighting the importance of transcription standards.
Of the 273 signatures whose original locations in Italy are known the largest number (73) are from the region of modern-day Tuscany. The Veneto has the next highest number of signatures, with 52 examples, followed by Lazio, with 40 signatures. The following table gives a breakdown of the signatures’ geographic distribution.

Table 5. Geographic distribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>c. 1250 – 1350</th>
<th>c. 1350 – 1550</th>
<th>Total, c. 1250 - 1550</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuscany</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veneto</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lazio</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lombardy</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emilia-Romagna</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sicily</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Umbria</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campania (N)*</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calabria (N)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apulia (N)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abruzzo (N)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liguria</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trentino</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Le Marche</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friuli-Venezia Giulia</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sardinia</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITALY TOTALS</td>
<td><strong>52</strong></td>
<td><strong>221</strong></td>
<td><strong>273</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dalmatia</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malta</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OUTSIDE ITALY</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown/unclear</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OVERALL TOTALS</td>
<td><strong>53</strong></td>
<td><strong>247</strong></td>
<td><strong>300</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* (N) Denotes this was in the area corresponding to what was then the Kingdom of Naples
A note on transcriptions in the text

For the transcriptions of signatures in the body of my dissertation I have followed common epigraphic practices made standard in such works as the *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* and the Inschriftenkommissionen der deutschsprachigen Akademien der Wissenschaften, with occasional modification or simplification for clarity in the text (fully detailed transcriptions can be found in the appendices). I have made efforts to transcribe all signatures as fully and completely as possible. These transcriptions have been obtained through my own observations and photographs, through the transcriptions and photographs provided by others, or through a combination of methods and sources.

All signatures are transcribed in MAJUSCULES (capital letters), the only exception being signatures that appear in direct quotes from other authors who do not use majuscules (e.g., some older authors transcribed inscriptions or signatures in *Italic* text). For letter choices I have opted to use the forms as they appear in their original state. Thus all instances of the modern letter J have been transcribed in their original form as I; e.g., IOANNES instead of JOANNES. Similarly, the modern letter U has been transcribed in its original V form; thus OPVS instead of OPUS.

In general, superscript elements or non-textual additions, such as interpuncts between words (e.g., OPVS • DONATELLI), are not included in transcriptions in the body of the dissertation unless it is specifically relevant to the discussion. Superscript letters, such as the superscript F in Antico’s signature on the *Dioscuri* (which identifies him as having done restorations on the statues), are transcribed as standard capitals; i.e., ANTICVS MANTVANVS RF, as opposed to R⁻.

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48 Per Dietl Vol. 2, pg. 507.
Letters that appear in (parentheses) indicate expanded abbreviations or omissions; e.g., OP(VS) indicates the expansion of OP to its full form, *opus*. Letters that appear in [brackets] indicate lost or unclear elements that have been reconstructed or hypothesized; e.g., [MAGISTER PAVLVS D]E GVALDO FECIT refers to a damaged inscription that has been reconstructed by a modern scholar; only the E GVALDO FECIT survives.\textsuperscript{49}

A single slash / between words indicates a line separation; a double slash // indicates separation by a significant structural or visual element. Thus MAGR / DEODAT // FECIT / HOC OP indicates that the lines MAGR and DEODAT are separate from the lines FECIT / HOC OP; in this instance a circular window element separates the signature (fig. 25).

Roman numerals are transcribed in their original form (e.g., MCCCXXX), and thus the use of Arabic numerals (e.g., 1484) indicates that the artist did so, as well.

In cases where I have not seen the signatures in person or in photos I have had to rely on the transcriptions provided by others; such information is noted in the appendices where necessary.

\textsuperscript{49} Cat. 204. For this reconstruction and the attribution to “Magister Paulus” see Simona Cesari, *Magister Paulus: uno scultore tra XIV e XV secolo* (Rome: Edilazio, 2001), p. 29 and fig. 1. For the original tablet and inscription see A. Sarti, J. Settele, and D. Dufresne, *Les Cryptes Vaticanes* (Rome, 1903), 43.
Chapter I. Sculpted Signatures: An overview of placement and content

Introduction

When a Medieval or Renaissance sculptor chose to sign his work he had a range of options and limitations to contend with. Issues of content—what the actual words of the signature should be—and location—where and how to place the signature—are the most readily apparent elements of a sculptor’s inscription. In some cases these were no doubt influenced or determined by factors outside the artist’s control, such as the arrangement of the work, established traditions of workshop or social norms, the demands of the patron, spatial considerations, and the limitations of the media, be it stone, metal, terracotta, or wood. All these elements, as well as others, contributed to the ways in which sculptors inscribed statements of authorship on their works.

Certain general trends and developments can be observed when examining sculpted signatures diachronically, from the end of the Middle Ages to the High Renaissance, although at any given point in time there is variation from case to case. As might be expected, the content of signatures from the thirteenth through sixteenth centuries tends to conform to different conventions depending on the specific circumstances of their production. Scholars such as Peter Claussen and Albert Dietl have examined changes in the content of Medieval signatures, categorizing textual elements into distinct chronological periods on the one hand and highlighting the importance of literary precedents and *topoi* on the other, respectively. The results of their research

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50 I use masculine pronouns throughout this dissertation, as all the sculptors with known signatures in this period were men.
51 Peter Cornelius Claussen, “Früher Künstlerstolz: Mittelalterliche Signaturen als quelle Der Kunstsoziologie,” in *Bauwerk und Bildwerk im Hochmittelalter: Anschauliche Beiträge zur Kultur- und*
need not be mutually exclusive, and both of their conclusions and methodologies remain relevant for sculptors’ signatures in the Early and High Renaissance; like their Medieval predecessors, Renaissance signatures often conform to current phases, and all are dependent on a web of literary precedents. Insofar as location is concerned, there is less development over this 300-year period; a few sculptors do insert their signatures in new and radical ways, but in general many of the options used by thirteenth-century sculptors are the same as those used by sixteenth-century sculptors. This last point is a marked divergence from painted signatures; compared to their two-dimensional counterparts, sculpted signatures never develop as wide a range of illusionistic possibilities.52

In the following chapter, I will address the issues of location and content for sculpted signatures and artists’ inscriptions. Location will be used broadly, and will include both real and conceptual issues, which is to say the physical location of the inscription as well as its location in real or imagined/created space. Content will be considered similarly broadly, to include the various textual elements as well as the occasional non-textual elements, such as artists’ emblems or self-portraits. Finally, I will consider some of the ways sculpted and painted signatures diverged, with occasional reference to claims of authorship in other media when appropriate.53


Part I. Location

Sculpted signatures appear in a variety of locations on the works they adorn. As is the case with their painted counterparts, the placement of these signatures can be an important factor when considering their significance and reception. Several scholars have made notable contributions to the study of lettering in paintings, and their findings are often relevant for sculpted works as well. Dario Covi, addressing the historical tradition of lettering in paintings, broadly split painted inscriptions into two types: “superimposed”, in which horizontal lines of text appear to float near the subject of the text; and “composed”, which place inscriptions on various objects or distinct spaces, such as scrolls, books, or bands of color.54 Several articles in the 1974 issue of *Revue de l’Art* examine the placement of painted signatures: Anne-Marie Lecoq’s “Cadre et rebord” considers the appearances of signatures on real or fictive frames and borders; “La signature imprévue” looks at “unexpected” signatures craftily inserted or even hidden in the pictorial field; and “Esquisse d’une typologie”, by Jean-Claude Lebensztejn, considers varying degrees of signatures’ insertion or non-insertion in the painted space, using a semiotic framework based on Charles S. Pierce’s classification of signs.55 Omar Calabrese and Betty Gigante, in an article focusing on painted signatures, use a classification system similar to that of Lebensztejn, based on how incorporated signatures were into the image.56 They list the following four possibilities: signatures separated from the image, such as on a frame or rear, or a painted frame; signatures in the image

54 Covi 1986, 1-3.
56 Calabrese and Gigante 1989, 28-33.
field, but not incorporated; signatures completely incorporated in the image field; and signatures whose placement in the painted area is ambiguous.

While the methods of examining painted signatures are useful for a study of sculpted signatures, the latter merit a slightly different approach due to qualities inherent to sculpture. For one, framing elements in sculpture often form part of the work, such as with pulpits or doors; they still might be marginal spaces, and they are outside the image space proper, but they may function differently from the frames of paintings, and as such deserve to be considered on their own terms. There is also less possibility for illusionistic inclusion or trompe l’oeil effects in sculpture, although inclusion certainly is possible (and is seen in Renaissance sculpture). Again, the qualities that separate the two arts justify an approach that is informed by research on painted lettering yet accounts for the differences between painting and sculpture, all the while recognizing that the two often exist along a continuum rather than at opposing poles.

Research on epigraphy in general can offer insight, although it too must be used critically. Because the content of signatures can be shortened and manipulated in ways not always possible for longer inscriptions, and because they do not always have the same demands for legibility, they can be placed with significantly greater freedom and variation than many other types of inscriptions.57 Indeed, in a few examples artists signed works with signatures that would have been largely hidden from public view, an interesting phenomena that raises questions of who the intended audience might have been.58 Most sculptors, however, chose to place their signatures in locations that afforded a degree of visibility and legibility to the work’s audience. Furthermore, many of their

58 I will address issues of reception and audience in Chapter III.
methods reflect an awareness of or a relationship to the methods of contemporary painters. As such, the following discussion of location will attempt to utilize findings from studies of both epigraphy and painted inscriptions. For simplicity and flexibility I have divided placement into two broad categories: 1) signatures located outside the image space, which includes works without figurative imagery; and 2) signatures located within the image space. The second category is then broken down to explore the degrees to which sculptors—like painters—could incorporate their signatures into the depicted space.

1.1 Signatures outside the image (or on works without figurative imagery)

Most sculpted signatures, especially those from the later Middle Ages, do not appear in the space devoted to figural or pictorial elements; rather, they appear in separate areas designated for inscriptions or in locations that were simply convenient because they offered a blank space upon which to write something. Because so much sculpture in stone and metal from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries was part of a large scale ensemble, such as a cathedral façade or a funerary monument, sculptors typically had a variety of locations to leave their signatures. Furthermore, the availability of space offered by things like architectural or framing elements provided the necessary room for some of the period’s longer authorial declarations.

In sculptural furnishings or ensembles like tombs and pulpits the borders of images (or their architectural or framing elements) are among the most common locations

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59 I recognize that applying ideas on what constitutes the “pictorial space” may be anachronistic, especially for artists and viewers living and working before the writings of Alberti. Despite these problems, the division into loosely defined categories is useful for the purposes of broad description and discussion, so long as the potential problems and limitations are kept in mind.
for artists to sign; the continuous band of space gave sculptors room to include information beyond a name and a date. Nicola and Giovanni Pisano both chose to sign their pulpits this way: Nicola’s Pisa Baptistery pulpit (1260) is signed along a border running below the reliefs,60 and Giovanni used the same location to even greater and lengthier effect for his pulpit in Sant’Andrea in Pistoia (1301; fig. 46).61 The signature on his Pisa Duomo pulpit (1311; figs. 47 and 47b) is located in the same space—below the narrative reliefs—but is even longer, running the length of the entire pulpit; furthermore, it is supplemented by another inscription that runs along the base of the pulpit, which continues to sing the sculptor’s praises and defends him from his detractors (see the Appendix for the full transcription and translation).62

Similar framing and border elements on tombs and doors also provided space for inscriptions. Gano di Fazio signed the border of the sarcophagus on his monument for Tommaso d’Andrea in the Collegiata of Casole’Elsa (ca. 1303-04).63 Giovanni Antonio Amadeo signed the tomb of Medea Colleoni (c. 1475; Colleoni Chapel, Bergamo, but originally in the church of Basella) in a similar location, with IOVANES ANTONIVS DEAMADEIS FECIT HOC OPVS running along the base of the monument.64 The three sets of bronze doors on Florence’s Baptistry, by Andrea Pisano (installed 1336; fig. 8)

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60 Cat. 247.
61 Cat. 156.
62 Giovanni Pisano’s pulpit in Pisa’s Duomo presents some difficulties due to its being damaged in a fire in 1595. It was restored some three centuries later, but the current configuration that resulted from that restoration is likely incorrect. See P. Bacci, La Ricostruzione del pergamo di Giovanni Pisano nel Duomo di Pisa, Milan, n.d. [1926]; Kreytenberg, “L’ambone del Duomo di Pisa. Aspetti storici e artistici,” in L’Ambone del Duomo di Pisa, ed. C. Valenziano, Pisa, 1993, 17-41; and, for a brief but well written introduction to the problem, Francis Ames-Lewis, Tuscan marble carving, 1250-1350: sculpture and civic pride (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1997), 45-66.
63 Cat. 118.
and Lorenzo Ghiberti (first set 1403-24; figs. 59 and 59b; second set 1427-52; fig. 60), all contain sculpted signatures in border spaces that are outside of or otherwise frame the images. Yet the specific locations used by the two sculptors differ; Andrea signed his doors at their very top, while Ghiberti placed his signatures at eye level. Ghiberti’s statements of authorship are thus more direct and almost confrontational, as they insert themselves into the viewer’s visual field; to stand before the doors is to be confronted with Ghiberti’s signature, regardless of whether it is being sought out. It suggests a degree of confidence compared to the earlier sculptor that is perhaps mirrored in the content of their signatures: Andrea’s is rather factual, stating simply “Andrea, [son] of Ugolino di Nino, of Pisa, made me, in the year of the Lord 1330”, while Ghiberti’s second set proudly mentions the artist’s skill: “Made by the miraculous art of Lorenzo Cione di Ghiberti”.

Sometimes artists signed the more ostensively structural elements of their sculptures. Arnolfo di Cambio did so on the corner blocks that serve as bases for two of the spires on his ciborium (1284) in San Paolo fuori le Mura in Rome; viewed from the nave, the one on the left states HOC OPVS FECIT ARNOLFVS while the one on the right reads CVM SVO SOCIO PETRO (fig. 18). In the 1260s the Cosmati artist Vassallettus signed the base of a candelabrum in the Anagni Duomo in similar fashion with VASSALLETO / ME FECIT (fig. 89). Larger architectural elements, like floors or walls, were also adorned with signatures. Tino di Camaino’s signature for his tomb monument of Bishop Antonio d’Orso in Florence Cathedral is located on the wall by the

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66 Cat. 201. LAVRENTII CIONIS DE GHIBERTIS • MIRA ARTE FABRICATVM. Transcribed and translated in Sperling 1985, 66.
tomb (fig. 81). In Ravenna, Pietro Lombardo’s signature on Dante’s tomb (originally 1483, but much of the current design is later; fig. 77) appears on a large framing panel that forms part of the wall. In this instance the narrow space provided by the panel necessitated dividing a relatively short signature (Opus Petri Lombardi) into five separate lines: OP’ / PETRI / LOM / BAR / DI.67

Inscription-bearing tablets, whose primary purpose was to carry words, also served as spaces for signatures.68 In some instances the artist’s signature is included in a tablet that contained other inscriptional material; Arnolfo di Cambio added his signature—HOC OPVS FECIT ARNOLFVS—to a tablet containing a much longer inscription that celebrates the subject of the tomb for the French cardinal Guilliaume de Bray (d 1282), in San Domenico, Orvieto (fig. 17). The early fifteenth-century tomb of Cardinal Pietro Stefaneschi (d. 1417) in Santa Maria in Trastevere is signed similarly, with MAGISTER PAVLVS FECIT HOC HOPVS located immediately below a dedicatory inscription, all in the same tablet (fig. 61). In other cases artists devoted a separate tablet for the purpose of carrying their signatures. Andrea Sansovino did this for the two tombs he executed in Santa Maria del Popolo, for Cardinals Ascanio Sforza and Girolamo Basso della Rovere (c. 1505 and c. 1507); both have prominently located inscription fields directly below the effigies and the identical signatures ANDREAS / SANSOVINVS / FACIEBAT (figs. 10 and 11).

Single or free-standing figures or figure groups can also carry inscriptions outside of the image space. Most commonly the signatures appear at the figure’s base. Donatello

67 Cat. 266. In addition to a sixth line containing a simple decorative tree branch element.
68 Sparrow 1969, 13, claims that the “inscription-bearing tablet” became an important feature of sculpted monuments during the Renaissance, although this view is questioned (as are some of Sparrow’s other claims) by Dario Covi in his review of Sparrow’s book, “A Study of Inscriptions” (The Burlington Magazine 113, 1971): 158-60.
signed a number of works this way, such as his *Jeremiah* and *Habakkuk* (both c. 1427-35) for the Florence Campanile; each is inscribed OPVS DONATELLI on its front plinth (figs. 27 and 28). This location remained popular throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Andrea Sansovino signed the bases of many of his works, such as on his *Madonna and Child with St Anne* (1510-12) in Sant’Agostino, Rome: ANDREAS DEMONTE SANSOVINO FACIEBAT (fig. 12). His pupil Jacopo Sansovino did likewise, including his name on the bases of many of his figures, as seen on his *St John the Baptist* in the Frari, Venice (c. 1535-40): IACOVVS SANSOVINVS FLORENTINVS FACIEBAT. He even included signatures of this sort multiple times within what would typically be considered a single composition; the figures of *Peace*, *Mercury*, *Pallas*, and *Apollo*, for instance, all for the loggetta of S Marco, Venice (c. 1537-44), are all signed IACOVVS SANSOVINVS FLORENTINVS F. at their bases (figs. 54 and 55). In many of these instances the bases of figures provided the ideal characteristics of blank space and better visibility for viewers who would have been looking at the works from below.

Although signatures outside the image space are often placed in what have been termed “marginal” locations—frames, borders, bases—which they are rarely hidden or concealed, or placed in such a way as to seriously hinder viewing for anyone who cares to look. In the case of nearly all sculpted inscriptions, it is important to remember that issues of visibility and legibility are extraordinarily problematic given the shifting fortunes and locations of so many sculptural works from the later Middle Ages and

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69 Woods-Marsden 1998, 66, notes this with regard to Ghiberti’s self-portraits on the Baptistry doors, which she believes “exhibit some degree of the self-marginalization that was appropriate to the craftsman’s contemporary social standing.” Yet the artist portraits—which include Ghiberti’s son on the second set of doors—keep some good company, as prophets and sibyls also populate these “marginal” areas.
Renaissance.\textsuperscript{70} All of the famous pulpits of Nicola and Giovanni Pisano, for example, have been moved from their original locations; most tomb sculptures from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries have also undergone significant changes, either in arrangement or location. Yet as difficult as it often is to reconstruct how visible sculptors’ signatures may have been, in most cases the artists appear to have intended their inscriptions to be legible, a point I will develop further in a subsequent chapter. Borders and framing devices may be marginal spaces, but they are still locations visible to the public, especially given that in many cases the signatures appear at or slightly above eye level. Furthermore, the expanse of blank space provided by such locations often afforded room for a degree of creativity in one’s signature, and also had the potential to make it more distinct (and thus noticeable) from the pictorial or figurative areas of a work.

1.2 Signatures in the image space

Unlike painting, sculpture does not offer as broad a range of illusionistic or trompe l’oeil approaches for the insertion of textual elements.\textsuperscript{71} The materiality of stone or metal means there is less of an ability to play with the viewer’s perception. As such, signatures located in the image or figure space of sculpture tend to be done more

\textsuperscript{70} On which, see especially Francis Ames-Lewis, \textit{Tuscan marble carving, 1250-1350: sculpture and civic pride} (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1997), 45-66.

straightforwardly, although occasionally sculptors still play with the concept of whether
the inscription exists in the depicted space or independent of it.\footnote{See Dario Covi, “Lettering in Fifteenth Century Florentine Painting” (Art Bulletin 45, 1963):1-17, for a thorough discussion on writing in images from the Renaissance.}

The most straightforward means of inserting text into an image is to simply place
it in the depicted space without any efforts at illusionistic inclusion. Essentially, the
figures or subjects are labeled, in a way similar to how images are sometimes labeled in
earlier mosaics, manuscripts, and paintings, such as in the catacomb fresco \textit{Vibia
which features a self-portrait of him and his workshop, is labeled in such a manner, with
words seemingly floating by the figures and in the image space (figs. 32 and 32b).\footnote{See Woods-Marsden 1998, esp. 54-55.}

Filarete’s case is an extreme example, but this method of signing also appears in other
works in somewhat less ostentatious fashion. Portrait medals are occasionally signed this
way; Alberti’s includes the simple monogram L.BAP next to his self-portrait in profile (c.
1435; fig. 57). Matteo Civitali, in his \textit{Allegory of Faith} from c. 1480, put a cryptically
brief “O M C L” at the image’s lower left, which is interpreted as “Opus Matthaei

One benefit of placing signatures in the pictorial field in this manner is the
potential for legibility, since the inscription can be presented relatively straightforwardly.
In at least one instance an artist even took viewing angle into account and altered the
planned location of his inserted signature for even greater visibility, lending support to
the notion that many of these inscriptions were intended to be read. Paolo Romano’s angel in the tympanum of San Giacomo degli Spagnouli, Rome, from the mid-fifteenth century, contains traces—a P and an A—of an aborted signature in addition to a full signature. Slightly above and to the right of this PA is the actual, completed signature, OPVS PAVLI (fig. 69). It appears the artist realized the projecting cornice below the angel obscured his signature from view for those standing close to the church’s façade. Indeed, this is just the case with the inscription of the angel opposite Paolo’s, a work of Mino da Fiesole’s signed OPVS MINI, the signature of which is partially obscured from view when standing close to the church façade due to its lower placement.76

Despite the potential clarity of “floating” or “superimposed” signatures, in many other instances sculptors chose to insert their signatures via means that suggest the wording is part of the image space, or is at least incorporated into it. This might be done by signing an object; on his Obadiah [Abdias] of 1422 for Florence’s Campanile, Nanni di Bartolo inscribed his signature, IOHANNES / ROSSVS / PROPHETAM / ME SCVLPSIT / ABDIAM, on a scroll held by the prophet (fig. 72). Alternately, sculptors would incorporate a signature into an article of clothing or related accessory. Ghiberti signed the clock of his St John the Baptist (1412-15; for Orsanmichele) with OPVS LAVRENTII FLORENTINI, inserting the letters into circles that form a design on the cloak’s hem (fig. 58). Michelangelo famously did so as well, boldly placing his name on a strap that runs between the breasts of the Virgin on his St Peter’s Pietà: MICHAEL A(N)GELVS BONAROTVS FLORENT FACIEBA(T) (figs. 65 and 65b). Other objects

76 Cat. 225. Shelley E. Zuraw, “Mino da Fiesole's First Roman Sojourn,” in Verrocchio and Late Quattrocento Italian Sculpture, ed. Steven Bule et al (Florence: Editrice Le Lettere, 1992), 303-19, esp. 305-06, believes this to be the work of Mino da Fiesole. There is mention in Vasari of a competition or rivalry between Paolo Romano and a different Mino, Mino del Reame.
that are part of the composition could also serve as spaces for signatures. Donatello’s 
*Judith and Holofernes* (c. 1455) is signed on the pillow that supports the two figures (fig. 
31); Tullio Lombardo’s relief of *The Miracle of the Reattached Leg* (c. 1500-05; fig. 85) 
is signed on a wide pedestal that supports the central figure.

In cases where the artist has included the signature in the composition there is also 
a question of whether the inscription or lettering “breaks” the illusion, and the degree to 
which it does so, or whether it is incorporated into the image. As mentioned previously, 
by virtue of its materiality—i.e., color, surface, three-dimensionality—sculpture’s 
potential for illusionism is always somewhat compromised. And yet a work of sculpture 
is still often a depiction of someone or something, and a signature can either work within 
the world of the depicted subject or exist independently of it. Throughout the fifteenth 
century and the first half of the sixteenth, sculptors who signed inside the depicted space 
of a free-standing figure tended to do so by including the lettering in the illusion. Nanni 
di Bartolo’s signature on the *Obadiah* works within the fictive world by virtue of its 
location on an object normally used to contain lettering—a scroll. Ghiberti’s signature on 
his *St John the Baptist* (c. 1412-15) is located on the hem of the figure’s robes, and is thus 
well integrated within the image. Donatello’s OPVS DONATELLI / FLO on his *Judith 
and Holofernes*, located on a pillow, is a rare example of an early Renaissance inscription 
that appears to question the depicted illusion, if only slightly. Its placement on the pillow 
seems far less incorporated than the examples of either Nanni di Bartolo or Ghiberti’s 
figures.

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77 Wood sculpture, which often aimed for greater verisimilitude through painted surfaces and the use of real 
clothing or hair, functioned differently, with regard to the potential for illusionism. See, e.g., Francis 
Signatures included in the image space might also have added significance due to their placement on certain objects or specific location as it relates to the imagery. The location of Nanni di Bartolo’s signature on his Obadiah is an interesting case. The sculptor placed a “speaking” inscription—“Giovanni il Rosso sculpted me, the Prophet Obadiah”—on a scroll held by the prophet. Scrolls, in the Middle Ages and into the Renaissance, often signified speech. It is entirely possibly that the association of Old Testament prophets with scrolls (from which the association of speech is derived) may have been Nanni di Bartolo’s primary motivation in signing on a scroll, although it is worth considering the potential play on the speech act implied by both the scroll and the writing it contains. The signature of Nicola dell’Arca on his terracotta Lamentation group in S Maria della Vita in Bologna (c. 1460s?) is another example of how placement can be loaded with significance. Here the artist has placed his signature, OPVS NICOLAI DE APVLIA, on a scroll unfurled across the pillow supporting Christ’s head (fig. 74). The signature is interesting both for its potential relationship to Donatello’s pillow signature on the Judith and Holofernes as well as for its extraordinary proximity to Christ’s head and face. Even more fascinating is how part of the curled up edge of the scroll touches Christ’s left shoulder. Thus the signed scroll, by virtue of its contact with Christ, can be thought of as a touch or contact relic, and Nicola has therefore inserted his name into very sacred space on a very sacred object. In doing so he seems to be seeking divine

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78 On “speech inscriptions” see Dario Covi, The Inscription in Fifteenth Century Florentine Painting (New York: Garland, 1986), 70ff; Covi 1986, 69-100; also Matthew 1998, 617.
79 The most famous touch relic of Western Christianity is the sudarium or Veronica image, the cloth upon which Christ’s features were impressed. Literature on the topic, and the associated image of the mandylion, is vast, but see especially the essays in Herbert L. Kessler and Gerhard Wolf (eds.), The Holy Face and the Paradox of Representation, Villa Spelman Colloquia, vol. 6 (Bologna: Nuova Alfa Editoriale, 1998). On contact relics more generally, see Peter Brown, The Cult of the Saints (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1981), esp. 86-89.
blessing in perpetuity, for the scroll with his name on it will touch the body of Christ for as long as the figure survives.

Discussion

A diachronic examination of these signatures’ locations shows significant consistency in most respects. In large sculptural ensembles, such as tombs or church furnishings, inscription-bearing tablets and borders or frames are used as places for signatures throughout the later Middle Ages and Renaissance. Signatures in these contexts appear as independent inscriptions and as parts of longer texts, and examples of both can be found throughout the period. In free-standing works, the bases of figures are a common location to sign, starting in the thirteenth century and continuing to the sixteenth.

Despite this surprising degree of continuity, two developments do occur in the fifteenth century. In relief sculpture the pictorial field becomes a place to include an inscription, either as part of the composition or independent of it. It is tempting to see this as part of developing beliefs of the artist as an auteur, willing to proudly insert himself into the main areas of his work, although such assumptions are problematic and may rely excessively on modern myths regarding the “emergence” of the “artist” in the Renaissance. Yet the same change—sculptors inserting their names into the depicted space—may also be observed in free-standing sculpture, where objects and items of clothing become places for signatures. The earliest instance of this type of insertion to appear in the inscriptions I have gathered is Ghiberti’s signature on the hem of his St

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80 For more discussion, see Chapter IV in this dissertation on the status of the sculptor in the Middle Ages and Renaissance.
John the Baptist, which dates to c. 1412-15. This method of signing is soon picked up by other sculptors in Florence, such as Nanni di Bartolo and Donatello. Thus it seems that Florentine sculptors, and specifically those working within a culturally progressive humanist milieu, were the initiators in these new developments in the placement of signatures in works of sculpture, just as they were among the early innovators in fifteenth-century signatures’ content—discussed below—and just as they played a critical role ushering in a new era of lettering, to be discussed in the following chapter.

Part II. Content

By definition, a signature must include some sort of identifying or distinguishing element; typically we take this to mean the artist’s or the individual’s name, although emblems, self-portraits, or personal style (e.g., brush or chisel marks) may also be thought of as signatures in a less literal sense.81 In marking an object with a name, “one attests to responsibility for the object on which [the name] is written.”82 Yet for sculptors and painters of the Middle Ages and Renaissance a signature often included much more than mere identification,83 and consequently its purpose could be to signify much more than just the simple documentation of authorship or responsibility.84 For example, various information on the artist’s birthplace, lineage, or skill might also be included with the signature, as well as mention of the creative process. As will become apparent, the

83 Calabrese and Gigante 1989, 33-34.
period witnessed the development and rise in popularity of brief statements of authorship, such as the OPVS MINI of Mino da Fiesole. Such terse inscriptions seem to anticipate the publishing and printmakers’ marks that come about in the sixteenth century. And yet nearly coeval with this increasing frequency of shortened signatures is a thriving, and ultimately expanding, tradition of mentioning the act of creation within a signature. For these and all changes a difference in geography or time or media can have a significant impact on what types of signatures occur.

The following section will examine the range of material that Late Medieval and Renaissance sculptors in Italy included in their signatures, starting with the most basic and essential information, the name. The list is not intended to be exhaustive, but rather to illustrate the most frequent elements and describe, briefly, their associated or potential significance. None of the signatures employ all of these elements, but it is instructive to know what literary options and precedents were available to artists during the period who, as will be shown later, appear to have been keenly aware of how their peers and predecessors signed works.

2.0 Textual elements

2.1 Artist’s Name

Although signing via an emblem or motif is possible, 85 sculptors in the Middle Ages and Renaissance overwhelmingly chose to include their names rather than rely on non-textual means of declaring authorship (although non-textual items may be included

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85 See, e.g., “La signature emblématique” (Revue de l’Art 26, 1974): 31-32. Emblematic signatures were often related to the artist’s name, typically through wordplay such as verbal puns or similar sounding words. The ring used in the monogram of the early sixteenth-century Northern European painter Ludger Tom Ring is an example.
in addition, as I shall discuss below). Signing with just a name or with initials is the simplest form for a textual signature, although this type of signature is exceptionally rare in this period; Alberti’s self-portrait medal of c. 1435, with simply L.BAP, is an example (although his medal also includes non-textual elements: a self-portrait and an emblem). Typically a sculptor’s name or initials appear with other textual content, even if only a letter or two, such as an “F” to denote *fecit* or *faciebat*. Presumably, the hesitance to sign with nothing more than a name was in part a result of sculptors trying to avoid confusion with the various other textual elements that populated works of art; i.e., among other things, including additional information prevented the artist’s name from being understood as either an identification of the depicted subject or a reference to the patron, for example.

The types of names that appear can provide interesting information on both individual artists and on larger trends in migration habits and onomastic developments in the Italian Middle Ages and Renaissance. The practice of attaching a second name to a person’s first name for the purpose of identification became increasingly common in the tenth and twelfth centuries, although only after the twelfth century did the practice of passing a name from generation to generation develop. Even so, the two-name system

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was by that point rather standardized and generalized in some areas, such as Genoa.\textsuperscript{88} Naturally the degree of standardization and frequency varied across the peninsula, and through the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries hereditary family names were typically reserved for upper-class citizens. The 1427 \textit{catasto} in Tuscany, for instance, provides illustrative data: Florence had the highest incidence of families with a last name, at 36.7%; this figure drops to a fifth in secondary cities, and then to a tenth in the country.\textsuperscript{89}

In general, when secondary names begin to appear in Italy during the Middle Ages they appear in the following forms: \textit{patronymic},\textsuperscript{90} referring to the individual’s paternal ancestry via either the genitive (\textit{Goro Gregorii}) or with a preposition and the ablative (\textit{Nicola de Bartolomeo}); \textit{toponymic}, using either \textit{de} and the ablative place-name (\textit{Augustinus de Florentia}) or a “topographic” adjective (\textit{Johannes Pisanus});\textsuperscript{91} and \textit{epithetic}, using either an adjective (\textit{Johannes Albus}) or a noun (\textit{Gualterius Buccarellus}).\textsuperscript{92}

Names as they appear in sculptors’ signatures tend to mirror these larger trends, such that artists signing from c. 1350-1550 become increasingly likely to use a second name (or multiple names) compared to their predecessors. In the list of signatures from c. 1250-1350, some 25, or slightly fewer than half, feature a single name; e.g., ARNOLFVS, IOHANNE, and DEODATVS for the artists Arnolfo di Cambio, Giovanni Pisano, and Deodatus Cosmatus. In some instances the single name is the only way an artist’s name appears in his signatures, as is the case with Arnolfo di Cambio, who consistently signs as ARNOLFVS. Other sculptors occasionally include a second name.

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{88} D’Acunti 1994, 835.  
\textsuperscript{89} D’Acunti 1994, 833.  
\textsuperscript{90} D’Acunti 1994, 835; matronymic names also occur, though less frequently.  
\textsuperscript{91} For more on place-names in artists’ name and inscriptions see Dietl 2003, esp. 241.  
\textsuperscript{92} D’Acunti 1994, 835.}
Around 1260 the Cosmati sculptor Vassalletus, for instance, signed the papal throne in Anagni duomo VASALET DE ROMA and the candelabrum in the same location as simply VASSALLETO (presumably the presence of two signatures in the same cathedral would make the sculptor’s identity clear). Nicola Pisano’s name appears as NICOLA PISA(NVS) on his Pisa Baptistery pulpit signature and as an unadorned NICOLAVS on Perugia’s Fontana Maggiore (although the inscription later mentions that he and his son are from Pisa).93

Use of a single name is significantly less common for signatures appearing after 1350, although on some objects—like medals and plaquettes—it remains a popular choice through the sixteenth century. In the list covering the period c. 1350-1550, single-name signatures occur in around 50 examples, compared to some 190 instances of works with signatures containing multiple names or identifying information.94 The greatest dip in single-name frequency is from the period c. 1350-1400; of the 21 signatures from the second half of the fourteenth century only two can properly be considered to have single names. Of those two, one of those is from a monument with another signature that lists the artist’s full name: Bonino da Campione’s Tomb of Cansignorio della Scala (Sta Maria Antica, Verona, c. 1370-76), which is signed with BONINVS in one inscription and BONINVS DE CAMPIGHLIONO MEDIOLANENSIS DIOCESIS in another.95 The other single-name signature appears on a painted wood sculpture of the Angel Gabriel

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93 Moskowitz, Pisano Pulpits, 2005, 110.
94 There is one signature, attested to in the literature but whose actual existence has been denied by at least one scholar, that lacks any name: the DVO SOTII FLORENTINI INCISE that allegedly adorns the Justice Capital at the north-east corner of the Doge’s Palace in Venice (cat. 097). On this, see Christine Margit Sperling, “Artistic Lettering and the Progress of the Antique Revival in the Quattrocento,” PhD dissertation, Brown University, 1985, 141; Wolfgang Wolters, La scultura veneziana gotica: (1300-1460) (Venice: Alfieri, 1976), 251 (who believes it to be apocryphal); and Giuseppe Fiocco, “La segnatura del capitello della Giustizia,” Atti del Reale Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere, ed Arti 90.2 (1930-31): 1041-8.
95 Another figure named on this monument is also listed by a single name: GASPAR. The role of Gaspare, who is credited as the “recultor”, has been problematic for art historians; see below for further discussion.
from an Annunciation group (1369-70) attributed to Angelo di Nalduccio, in which the artist is identified only as ANGIELVS.\footnote{96} The remaining 19 signatures from the second half of the fourteenth century all use multiple names of the patronymic and toponymic variety (or of both). Examples include the NINVS MAGRI ANDREE DE PISIS of Nino Pisano on his Madonna and Child (Sta Maria Novella, Florence, c. 1360s); HENRICVS DE COLONIA below a statue of the marchese Alberto d’Este on the Ferrara cathedral façade (1393); and the ANDREAS CIONIS in the signature of Andrea di Cione (Orcagna) on his tabernacle in Orsanmichele (1360).

Signatures that identify artists by a single name regain some popularity in the fifteenth century, especially in small works such as medals, plaques or plaquettes, and small-scale bronzes. Examples include Pisanello (PISANVS), Antico (ANTI), and Moderno (MODERNI). A few artists in the Tuscan milieu also signed in this fashion, most notably Donatello (DONATELLI) and Mino da Fiesole (MINI). Donatello occasionally added the modifier FLO (Florentine), whereas Mino, to my knowledge, never deviated from using simply MINI or MINO.\footnote{97}

These instances notwithstanding, signatures with two (or more) names are about three times as common in the examples I have compiled from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. To cite only a few examples: Ghiberti’s LAVRENTII CIONIS DE GHIBERTIS on his second set of doors for the Florence Baptistery (1427-52); Giovanni Dalmata’s IOANNIS DAMATAE on his St John the Evangelist for Trogir Cathedral (c.

\footnote{96} Interestingly, the painted inscriptions mention two rectors, one with a single name and the other with two names. The inscription at the base of the Virgin refers to the rectorship of AGNOL(I)NO, while that on the base of Gabriel names a rector TOFO BARTALINI. See cat. 025.

\footnote{97} Mino’s use of OPVS MINI was so consistent that Shelley E. Zuraw even saw it as a type of trademark for the artist; see Shelley E. Zuraw, “Mino da Fiesole’s First Roman Sojourn: the works in Santa Maria Maggiore”, in Verrocchio and Late Quattrocento Italian Sculpture, ed. Steven Bule et al (Florence: Editrice Le Lettere, 1992): 303-19, esp. 305-6.
1490?); and the ANTONII GAGINII PANORMITAE on Antonello [Antonio] Gagini’s Pietà (1521; Chiesa SS Addolorata, Soverato). In what is perhaps an interesting statement on the status of sculptors heading a workshop compared to those who simply worked in one, two of the four appearances of Filarete’s name on his doors for Old St Peter’s use multiple names—ANTONIVS DE PETRI DE FLORENTIA and ANTONII DE FLORENTIA—whereas the members of his workshop (the so-called DISCIPVLI) are referred to by single names: ANGNIOLVS, IACOBVS, IANNELLVVS, PASSQVINVS, IOVANNNES, and VARRVS (although the members are modified by FLORENTIE at the end). Because the increasing use of multiple names and family names is mirrored in the general populace of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the fact that sculptors often signed in such a way should not be relied upon as an indicator of status or social mobility without due regard to other contextual factors. Yet it is certainly worth considering this phenomenon as one part of the larger social world these artists worked in, especially given the frequency of signing with a first and last name during a period when such names were still only used by a minority of the population. Another factor to bear in mind is that perhaps those artists with family names—such as Ghiberti, Brunelleschi, and Donatello—were helped in their careers and commissions due to familial standing or connections, a point which further complicates the picture of Early Renaissance artistic status and identity.98

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98 I am grateful to Dr John Paoletti for bringing this point to my attention. For more on artistic status and identity see Chapter IV of the present dissertation.
2.2 Opus, hoc opus, opus + name in genitive

One of the simplest—and most common—additions to an artist’s name in a signature is the use of *opus*. Of the 300 signatures in my study, around half (some 153) feature the word *opus*. In this context the translation of the Latin term is “work”, in the sense of something made or created, and its use predates the period covered by my study. The use of *hoc opus* (“this work”) is especially prevalent in works from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, often paired with “fecit” (discussed later), as in HOC OPVS FECIT ARNOLFVS or IOHS FILIVS MAGRI COSMATI FEC HOC OP(VS). Of the 26 signatures I have included from the thirteenth century the term *opus* appears in 18 of them; in the fourteenth century *opus* is used in 24 of 51 signatures. In most of these cases the phrasing is *hoc opus*. The phrase *hoc opus* continues to be used through the fifteenth century, although with decreasing frequency, and is encountered in only a few cases from the sixteenth-century signatures I have gathered, notably in the works of Antontello Gagini, as on his previously mentioned Pietà in SS Addolorata: HOC OP(VS) ANT / ONII GAGINII / PANORMITAE / MCCCCCXXI. Although *hoc opus* falls out of fashion in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, *opus* continues to be used, becoming especially popular in the fifteenth century before its use declines in the following century. The term appears in around 60% of signatures from the years c. 1400-1499 (78 of 127), before falling to around a third of those I have collected from c. 1500-1550 (33 of 96).

When *opus* does appear during this period (c. 1400-1550) it is most often in the form *opus* + the artist’s name in the genitive, signifying “the work/creation of…” The earliest incidence of this use in my study is that of Giovanni Pisano’s signature on his *Madonna and Child* (c. 1305?) in Padua’s Scrovegni Chapel, which is signed DEO

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99 Including a handful of appearances in Italian—*opera*—as opposed to Latin.
GRATIAS OPVS / IOHIS MAGISTRI NICOLI /DE PISIS (emphasis mine), although this seems to be unique. The trope only becomes common in the fifteenth century, during which period it is the most typical means of using opus. Just over 80% of fifteenth-century signatures with opus use it with the artist’s name in the genitive (64 out of 78). A similar percentage of signatures from c. 1500-1550 use opus in this fashion (26, or slightly under 80%).

The opus + genitive format is particularly favored by the Quattrocento sculptors who worked or were trained in the Tuscan milieu. Ghiberti was perhaps the first sculptor of his generation to use the form, on his St John the Baptist for Orsanmichele: OPVS LAVRENTII FLORENTINI. Nicolò Lamberti, another sculptor active in Florence at the time, signed the base of his nearly contemporaneous St Mark for the city’s planned cathedral façade with OPVS / NICH /OLAI. Donatello used this trope for all of his extant signatures, occasionally shortening it to its most basic elements: OPVS DONATELLI appears, for instance, on the bases of his Campanile figures Habakkuk and Jeremiah (both c. 1427-35). Mino da Fiesole signed this way as well, with his OPVS MINI. Filarete included this format twice on his bronze doors: OPVS ANTONII DEFLORENTIA and OPV / S / ANTO / NII. It appears on the tomb of Ruggierio Sanseverino (d 1433) in the oratory attached to S Giovanni a Carbonara in Naples by Andrea da Firenze—OPVS ANDREAE DE FLORENTIA—as well as on a mid-fifteenth century relief of the Virgin and Child by an unidentified “Andrea”: OPVS A(N)DREAE. The use of this signature is so characteristic of some fifteenth-century Tuscan sculptors that it is in my view a form of group branding, in addition to a form of individual

100 It is also popular among artists signing small-scale bronzes, such as medals and plaques.
branding; not since the Cosmati did a group of artists sign with such homogeneity.\textsuperscript{101}

Perhaps significantly, by the sixteenth century the artists who use it more often are those working either in northern or southern Italy, well away from Tuscany.

\textbf{2.3 Verbs referring to the work’s creation}

The use of verbs to indicate the making of a sculpture is found in signatures throughout the Middle Ages and Renaissance; it is a tradition whose origins go back at least to the beginning of the twelfth century, if not earlier.\textsuperscript{102} Of the 300 signatures collected for this study, some 190, or nearly two thirds, contain information related specifically to the act of creation.\textsuperscript{103} The practice is especially common in the signatures I have gathered from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries; around 74 out of 77 (over 95\%) use terms or phrasing to express the process of making or executing a sculpture. 

\textit{Fecit}, the simple past tense of Latin \textit{facio, facere}, is used with greatest frequency during this period, appearing in a majority of inscriptions from c. 1250-1400. When used by sculptors in the Middle Ages and Renaissance the sense of the word is “to make, fashion, build, construct”.\textsuperscript{104} Thus HOC OPVS FECIT ARNOLFVS—“Arnolfo made this work”—on the Guilliaume de Bray monument (d. 1282); HOC OPVS FECERVNT MAGISTRI CIOLVS ET MARCVS DE SENA on a \textit{Madonna and Child} by Ciolo di Nerio and Marco da Siena (c. 1310; Piombino, palazzo communale); and the

\textsuperscript{101} On some Cosmati conventions, see, e.g., Claussen 1981, Dietl 1987, and E. Hutton, \textit{The Cosmati: The Roman Marble Workers of the XIIth and XIIIth Centuries} (London, 1950).

\textsuperscript{102} See, e.g., Claussen 1981, esp. his section on the earliest phase he looks at c. 1100-1150, pp. 10-19.

\textsuperscript{103} It is not always clear if an abbreviation, such as “F”, is meant to indicate a verb of creation, such as \textit{fecit or faciebat}, or an artist’s nationality (e.g., \textit{Florentine}); this makes precise counting somewhat difficult for a handful of cases.

\textsuperscript{104} The word’s use is not limited to sculpture, and seems to have had broad application to the creation of works in diverse media. See, e.g., its appearance in the signatures of some manuscript illuminators, discussed in Robert Gibbs, “The Signatures of Bolognese Painters from 1250 to 1400”, in \textit{L’artista medievale}, ed. Maria Monica Donato (Pisa: Classe di Lettere e Filosofia, 2003): 321-35.
VASSALLETO / ME FECIT on his candelabrum from c. 1260 in the Anagni Duomo.

This last type of inscription, translated as “Vassalletus made me”, is often called a “speaking” or “speech” inscription, and seems to give the sculpture a voice. It appears on around seven works from the signatures collected from c. 1250-1400; the inscription running along the top of Andrea Pisano’s doors for the Florence Baptistery is another example: ANDREAS VGOLINI NINI DE PISIS ME FECIT A D M CCC XXX.

Following *fecit* and associated forms, the verb *sculpo, -psi, -ptum* (to carve, cut, grave, chisel) is another term used, appearing in around eleven instances from the period c. 1250-1400. It is seen in the INCOLA TRANENSIS SCULPSIT SIMEON RAGVSEVS on the portal of Sant’Andrea a Barletta by Simeon da Ragusa (before 1260). Another example is the signature of Giovanni di Balduccio on his arca for St Peter Martyr in S Eustorgio in Milan (1339): MAGISTER IOHANNES BALDVCII DE PISIS SCVLPSIT HANC ARCHAM ANNO DOMINI MCCCXXXIII. In at least one instance the artist used both *fecit* and *sculpsit*: Bonino da Campione, on the monument for Cansignorio della Scala in Santa Maria Antica, Verona (c. 1370-76), signed HOC OPVS FECIT ET SCVLPSIT BONINVS DE CAMPILIONO MEDIOLANENSIS DIOCESIS, presumably indicating that he wanted to take credit for both designing and carving the work.

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105 See Covi 1986, 69-100, for a discussion of speech inscriptions as they appear in painting.
106 For discussion of these two terms and possible interpretations, see Napione 2009, 401-26. The mention of another individual in an accompanying inscription complicates the issue of authorship somewhat; it reads: VT FIERET PVLCV POLLES NITIDVQVE SEPVLCRVM VERE BONINVS ERAT SCVLPTOR GASPARQVE RECVLTOR (“That this tomb should be beautiful, mighty and handsome, Bonino was the sculptor and Gaspare the realtor”; trans. In Pope-Hennessy 1996, I, 256). The identity and contribution of the “Gaspare” of this inscription is not entirely clear. Gian Lorenzo Mellini, “L’Arca di Cansignorio di Bonino da Campione a Verona,” in *I maestri campionesi*, ed. Rossana Bossaglia and Gian Alberto Dell’Acqua (Edizioni Bolis: Bergamo, 1992): 173-97, proposed that it was Gasparo Squaro de’ Broaspini, a scholar, shield painter, and heraldry expert who probably executed the painted elements. For other
Creation verbs appear less frequently in the examples I have compiled for the fifteenth century. Of 127 signatures from this period, just under half, or around 56, mention the production or execution of a work. *Fecit* and associated forms remains the most popular, accounting for around two thirds of the examples. Only toward the end of the century does the use of a creation verb become popular again. Starting in the 1490s, the imperfect form of *facio*, “faciebat”, begins to appear in sculpture. In Latin, the imperfect form is a past tense with an imperfective aspect; among other things, this aspect indicates the repetition or continuity of a past action. English lacks a specific verb form to indicate the imperfect tense, although the typical translation of *faciebat* as “was making” is sufficient to convey the intended meaning. According to Pliny the Elder, signing works in this way was a trope from antiquity. In the preface to his *Natural History*, he wrote:

> I should like to be accepted on the same basis as those founders of the arts of painting and sculpture who, as you will find in my book, inscribed their completed works, even those we never tire of admiring, with a sort of provisional signature—Apelles faciebat, for instance, or Polyclitus faciebat: ‘Apelles has been at work on this’—as if art was something always in progress and incomplete; so that in the face of any criticisms the artist could still fall back on our forbearance as having intended to improve anything a work might leave to be desired, if only he had not been interrupted. There is a wealth of diffidence in their inscribing all their works as if these were just at their latest state, and as if fate had torn them away from work on each one. Not more than three works of art, I believe, are recorded as being inscribed as actually finished: *fecit*.

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107 Grammatical “aspect” is the temporal flow, or lack of it, described by a verb; it is thus distinct from “tense”, which refers to the temporal location of an event. English does not have a verb form that marks the imperfect in the same way that Latin does; the progressive and continuous tenses are the closest approximants.

108 *inscriptionis apud graecos mira felicitas: κηρίον inscripsere, quod volebat intelligi favum, aliī κέρας Ἀμαλθίας, quod copiae cornu, ut vel lactis gallinacei sperare possis in volumine haustum; iam ἱνα, Μούσαι, πανδέκται, ἔγχειρίδια, λειμών, πίναξ, σχεδίων: inscriptiones, propter quas vadimonium deseri possit; at cum intraveris, di deaeque, quam nihil in medio invenies! nostri graviores antiquitatum, exemplorum artiumque, facetissimi lucubrationum, puto quia bibaculus erat et vocabatur. paulo minus asserit Varro in satiris suis sesculix et flextabula. apud graecos desiti nugari diodorus et βιβλιοθήκης historiam suam
Right around the end of the fifteenth century and the start of the sixteenth, the use of \textit{faciebat} supersedes \textit{fecit} in sculpted signatures.\footnote{The term also spread to painting shortly after it was taken up in sculpture. On its early appearance in Venetian painting, see Matthew 1998, 638-40. Occasionally the imperfect form of other verbs also appears in paintings, such as “pingebat”.
} In the first half of the sixteenth century the imperfect form appears in around 43 signatures that use verbs of creation, and possibly more, since the intended meaning of the abbreviation “F” is not always clear. In some cases the F can be assumed to be \textit{faciebat}, as with most of the signatures of Jacopo Sansovino, who used \textit{faciebat} extensively.\footnote{Of some 23 signatures from Jacopo Sansovino (all from c. 1530-50), eight of them spell out the full verb \textit{faciebat}. It is the only verb he uses, and thus when the initial F appears in his signatures my assumption is that he consistently meant it to mean \textit{faciebat} (for signatures where \textit{Florentine} is already spelled out). The exceptions or uncertainties arise in signatures where the F could be taken to mean either \textit{Florentine} or \textit{faciebat}; e.g., IACOBVS SANSOVINVS F (cat. 193-194).
} In other signatures there is less certainty, as with the ALPHONSVS / DE LOMBARDIS / FERRARIENSIS F on Alfonso Lombardi’s marble relief of \textit{Scenes from the life of St Dominic} for the Arca di San Domenico (1533; S Domenico, Bologna).

The source of this development is not entirely clear. Michelangelo’s St Peter’s \textit{Pietà}, signed MICHAEL A(N)GELVS BONAROTVS FLORENT FACIEBA(T), is often thought to be the first example of this signature type.\footnote{See, e.g., Aileen June Wang, “Michelangelo’s Signature” (\textit{The Sixteenth Century Journal} 35, 2004), 447-73, esp. 460.
} Vladimir Juřen has argued that the humanist poet and tutor Angelo Poliziano, who was in the Medici household at the
time when Michelangelo was there in the early 1490s, would have brought this classical signature type to the young sculptor’s attention. However it appears in a number of signatures from the north of Italy, suggesting a probable genesis in that region. Gian Cristoforo Romano used *faciebat* for his signature on the tomb of Gian Galeazzo Visconti, in the Certosa, Pavia, which dates to c. 1491-97; the brothers Tommasso and Giacomo Rodari signed an aedicule (dated 1498) below the figure of Pliny the Elder on Como cathedral’s façade with THOMAS ET IACOBUS DE RODARIIS FACIEBANT; and it appears in the signature of Giovanni Antonio Amadeo on his arca of S Lanfranco, in the Church of S Lanfranco, Pavia: IOANNES ANTONIVS HOMODEVS FACIEBAT. Thus it is possible that the rise of *faciebat* was, initially at least, a northern development, and it is worth considering whether this influenced the young Michelangelo to sign in this fashion, or whether the influence was from Northern artists working in Rome who were exposed to the *Pietà*. A likely scenario would be its development in both areas independently, simply as part of the cultural milieu of late fifteenth-century humanist scholarship in Central and Northern Italy. The picture is

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113 I am grateful to Dr Sarah Blake McHam for bringing this possibility to my attention, as well as for sharing several signatures from northern Italy with me.
115 Interestingly, and perhaps significantly, an early appearance of a painted signature with the imperfect form of a verb is in Albrecht Dürer’s *Self-Portrait* of 1500, which features *effingebam*. The full signature, one of two that appear in the painting (the other being his famous monogram) reads: *Albertus Durerus Noricus / ipsum me proprijs sic / effin / gebam coloribus aetatis / anno XXVIII*. For more on this, see Renate Trnek, Rudolf Preimesberger, Martina Fleischer (eds.), *Selbstbild: der Künstler und sein Bildnis* (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz, 2004); and Erika Boeckeler, “Writing at Eye/I Level: Letter and Self-Image in Albrecht Dürer’s *Self-Portrait* of 1500” (forthcoming). On the word *fingere*, see Anne-Marie Lecoq, “‘Finxit’. Le peintre comme ‘factor’ au XVIᵉ siècle” (*Bibliothèque d’humanisme et Renaissance* 37, 1975): 225-43.
further complicated by a *faciebat* signature—ADRIANVS FLOR FACIEB—on a bronze statuette of uncertain date depicting a *Satyr* (or *Pan*) by the sculptor Adriano Fiorentino, who may have spent time in the household of Lorenzo de’ Medici and who also spent time in northern Italy. The statuette is not dated precisely, although a *terminus ante quem* of 1499 is provided by the artist’s death that year. If it was made during the artist’s Florentine period, possibly in the 1480s or early 1490s, it would be the earliest example of a *faciebat* signature of which I am aware, but the lack of precise information on the work prevents such conclusions.

Following its introduction, likely by northern Italian sculptors and by Michelangelo, the trope of *faciebat* and the imperfect quickly became among the most common means of signing a work of sculpture, and its use in painted signatures became popular as well. In light of this popularity, it is worth reconsidering the extent to which sixteenth-century (and later) artists appreciated the “incomplete” aspect implied by the verb. The wide popularity of the term could have resulted in a dilution of its original meaning, such that for many artists it could have simply been the preferred way to expressed the act of creation. However a potential piece of evidence against this, at least for one artist, is provided by a signature of Niccolò Tribolo on his *Assumption of the Virgin* (1537; originally Madonna di Galliera, now Cappella delle Reliquie, S Petronio,

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116 Cat. 002. The signature was discovered in 1970. See *Rinascimento e passione per l’antico: Andrea Riccio e il suo tempo*, eds. Andrea Bacchi and Luciana Giacomelli (Trento, 2008), cat. 48.

117 The fact that Adriano also spent time in northern Italy could lend further support to the idea that the trope of *faciebat* signatures has its genesis in that area. However he is also documented in Naples and Germany. L. Forrer, *Biographical Dictionary of Medallists*, vol. I (London: Spink & Son Ltd, 1904), 26-27.


119 I am grateful to Erika Bockeler for bringing these issues to my attention.
Bologna) that reads TRIBOLO FIORENTINO FACEVA. In this case the artist (if indeed the inscription is original) used the vernacular imperfect verb, suggesting a level of appreciation for the original Latin sense of the word.

The use of other creation verbs in the signatures I have gathered from c. 1500-1550 is limited to *sculpo*. It appears in seven signatures, of which one is no longer extant and therefore only attested to in the literature. The sculptor Antonello Gagini was responsible for four of these signatures, and two of his sons, Antonino and Vincenzo, are associated with another two. Thus it seems in this instance to have been a trope passed down from father to son. The final example in my data was on the tomb monument of Fra Girolamo Confalonieri (1549; originally in the former church of the Crociferi in Padua, then moved to S Maria Maddalena; now destroyed) by the North Italian sculptor Gian Girolamo Grandi. According to eighteenth- and nineteenth-century sources the tomb was signed IO HIER GRANDVS PAT. SCVLPEBAT 1549.\textsuperscript{120} If these transcriptions are accurate it was thus an interesting combination of two disparate forms: one being the relatively fashionable use of the *imperfect*, and the other being the now outdated (but still used in the South) use of the verb *sculpo*. It was thus an interesting example of a sculptor using tropes both old and new to create a unique signature.

Other verbs apart from *facio* and *sculpo* also appear, although often limited to one or a few examples on the lists I have compiled. The tomb of Doge Tommaso Mocenigo in SS Giovanni e Paolo, Venice (1423), is signed by Piero di Niccolò Lamberti and

Giovanni di Martino da Fiesole with an INCISERVNT.\textsuperscript{121} In other examples verbs suggest the different processes involved in the creation of a work. The bronze statuette of Bellerophon and Pegasus by Bertoldo di Giovanni is signed in a way that mentions the contributions of both the artist and caster: EXPRESSIT ME BERTHOLDVS CONFLAVIT HADRIANVS.\textsuperscript{122} Somewhat similarly, Bongiovanni Lupi, a North Italian wood sculptor, signed a sculpted and polychromed wood ancona (1480; S Maria del Palladino, Rivolta d’Adda) with BONIOHANES DE LVPIS DE LAVDE INTALIAVIT PINXIT ET DORAVIT MCCCCLXXX; in this case it appears the artist was making clear the range of his abilities and contributions.

2.4 Date

On large-scale monuments, especially tomb monuments, the date is often included as part of the dedicatory inscription. In some cases sculptors record the date in their own inscriptions, either in addition to dates appearing in other inscriptions or as the sole record of the date. Typically dates take the form of Roman numerals; e.g., the brothers Jacobello and Pierpaolo dalle Masegna included MCCCLXXXXI at the end of their signature on the iconostasis of San Marco in Venice. Sometimes the date is actually written out in full in Latin, a practice the Pisani employed on their pulpits; Giovanni’s Pistoia pulpit, for example, records 1301 as PRIMO MILLE TRICENTIS. Arabic numerals make an appearance in sculptors’ signatures starting in the fifteenth century, although they appear infrequently. The tomb of Doge Tommaso Mocenigo in SS

\textsuperscript{121} Cat. 264. PETRVS MAGISTRI NICHOLAI DEFLORENCIA ET IOVANNES MARTINI DEFESVLIS INCISERVNT HOC OPVS 1423.

\textsuperscript{122} Cat. 075. The caster was Andriano Fiorentino; see Wilhelm Bode, \textit{The Italian Bronze Statuettes of the Renaissance}, ed. and rev. James David Draper (New York: M.A.S. De Reinis, 1980), 7 and plate IX.
Giovanni e Paolo, Venice, by Piero di Niccolò Lamberti and Giovanni di Martino da Fiesole, is an early example, signed with 1423 in Arabic numerals. Amadeo did likewise on his shrine of St Areald (Cremona Cathedral), which features a relief of St Jerome signed ZO ANTONIO AMADEO F OPVS 1484. In some cases sculptors go beyond simple dating to give an indication of time or the passage of time by noting that a work has been brought to completion, as on Pollaiuolo’s signature for the tomb of Pope Innocent VIII, which states that the artist “brought to an end the work he had begun.”

2.5 Sculptor’s place of origin; mention of citizenship

Mention of a sculptor’s place of birth or training, or of his adopted city, is one of the more common features included in signatures. Most often this forms part of the sculptor’s name (for which see the section on Names). In other cases the mention of citizenship is woven into longer inscriptions, as on Giovanni Pisano’s signature for the Pistoia pulpit, which notes SCVLPSIT IOH(ANN)ES QVI RES NO(N) EGIT INANES NICOLI NAT(VS) SEN(SIA MELIORE BEATVS QVE(M) GENVIT PISA DOCTV(M) SVP(ER) OMNIA VISA (“Giovanni carved it, who performed no empty work. The son of Nicola and blessed with higher skill, Pisa gave him birth, endowed with mastery greater than any seen before.”). The tympanum of the Chiesa del Rosario in Terlizzi (c. 1240-50) provides an example of origin presented via metrical expression as TRANVM QVEM GENVIT, indicating the sculptor Anseramus’s roots in Trani. These longer

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125 Cat. 026. The full signature reads TRANVM / QVEM GENVIT / DOCTOR SCOLPEN / DO PERITVS / ANSERAMVS / OP(VS) P(OR)TE FELICIT(ER) IMPLET; Dietl 1987, 81-82; and Dietl 2003, 241.
inscriptions and metrical styles fall out of use in the fifteenth century, although sculptors continue to mark their origins via toponymic adjectives and second names. As Albert Dietl has illustrated, such information can be useful in studying the mobility of Medieval artists during a period that often lacks other documentation on the lives and travels of artists and craftsmen. However by the fifteenth century artists’ names lose some of their descriptive significance, as more and more second names become family names without any relevance to a person’s actual place of birth. Considerations of whether artists sign with their cities of origin more frequently when working outside their home areas are thus problematic, since in many cases doing so simply meant signing with a full name. Furthermore, many artists signed with indications of citizenship regardless of where they were working, and others never included such information.

In a few instances a sculptor includes the word CIVIS in his signature, emphatically stating that he is a citizen of a particular locale. Use of this term in signatures dates back to the twelfth century in Italy, and is picked up by a few artists in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Giovanni di Cosma’s signature on the tomb of Cardinal Gonsalvo Rodriguez (d. 1299), in Santa Maria Maggiore, proclaims: HOC OP FEC IOHES MAGRI COSME CIVIS ROMANVS. The practice seems to disappear in the fifteenth century, although a few examples from Tuscan sculptors in the sixteenth century appear to revive the term; Cellini’s signature on his Perseus (1545-53) is a

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126 Dietl 2003 and 2009.
127 Goffen 2001, 308, claims that “specification of citizenship is typical for signatures on works made for other city states.” However this practice is also common for signatures on works made for artists’ native cities; Ghiberti, for example, signed his first set of doors for Florence’s Baptistry and his St John the Baptist for Orsanmichele with OPVS LAVRENTII FLORENTINI. Donatello included FLOrentini on signatures for both his Gattamelata in Padua and his Judith and Holofernes in Florence. By comparison, Mino da Fiesole signed works in Florence and Rome without any indication of his origins (apart from the style of signature he favored). Covi 1986, 46-51, claims that Florentine painters in the fifteenth century tended to sign with a designation of citizenship if they were working outside their native city.
noteworthy and highly public example: BENVENVTVS CELLINVS CIVIS FLORENT FACIEBAT MDLIII. When the term was used in the later Middle Ages it carried an implication of both civic pride and social distinction, and it seems likely that it worked similarly for the Florentine sculptors of the High Renaissance. In the examples I have collected there is no significant difference in sculptors using the term in or outside their native cities, and so it seems likely that factors other than straightforward citizenship identification—such as civic pride—were of greater significance in choosing to use the term.

2.6 Magister

The term Magister, which may be translated as “master” or “master craftsman”, is used in signatures from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, before largely disappearing by the second quarter of the fifteenth century. The roots of this practice appear to be in the conventions of Roman sculptors in the second half of the twelfth century, many of whom signed using this term. Sculptors in the first half of the period covered by my study, c. 1250-1400, used this to refer both to themselves—e.g., MAGISTER NICOLAVS—as well as to refer to their fathers, under whom they trained—e.g., NINVS MAGI(S)TRI ANDREE DEPISIS. One of the most famous examples of this deference to an older master is in the signature of Tino di Camaino for the now fragmentary tomb of Bishop Orso in the cathedral of Florence, from c. 1321.

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signature claims that Tino did not want to be called master while his father was still alive:

\[ \text{OPERV(M) DE SENIS NATVS EX MAG(IST)RO CAMAINO IN HOC SITV} \]
\[ \text{FLORENTINO TINVS SCVLPSIT O(MN)E LAT(VS) / HVC P(RO) PATRE} \]
\[ \text{GENITIVO DECET INCLINARI VT MAGISTER ILLO VIVO NOLIT APPELLARI} \]

(“Tino, son of Master Camaino of Siena, carved every side of this work in this Florentine site. Out of respect for his father, it is fitting that he was so humble as to not want to be called Master while the other was still alive.”).¹³⁰

*Magister* falls out of use by the second quarter of the fifteenth century. Among the last artists to consistently use the term is a sculptor known only as *Magister Paulus de Gualdo*.¹³¹ Three signatures survive from the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century that feature the name MAGISTER PAVLVS, and a fourth inscription that survives in fragmentary form is postulated to have featured it as well.¹³² Two signatures by Tuscan sculptors, almost exactly contemporaneous, are the last examples in my sets of data to feature the term *Magister* in relation to a sculptor’s father; these are also the last appearances of the term in the fifteenth-century signatures I have collected. One is from a

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¹³⁰ Cat. 277. See Tommaso Gramigni, “La sottoscrizione di Tino di Camaino al monumento funebre del vescovo Antonio d'Orso,” in S. Maria del Fiore: Teorie e storie dell'archeologia e del restauro nella città delle fabbriche arnolfiane, ed. Giuseppe Rocchi Coopmans de Yoldi (Florence: Alinea Editrice, 2006), 235-41. My translation is based on those provided by both Pope-Hennessy and Gramigni. The translation in Pope-Hennessy 1996, I, 242, is, “Tino, son of Master Camaino of Siena, carved this work on every side in this site in Florence. It is fitting that he should so defer to his father as to refuse, during his life-time, to be called Master.” The second sentence of Pope-Hennessy’s translation lacks some of the inscription’s character, and thus a better translation (into Italian) is given by Gramigni 2006, 240 n4 (who is modifying a translation originally provided in Giovanni Poggi, In Santa Maria del Fiore (di alcuni recenti lavori), “La Rassegna Nazionale”, XXV, vol. 131, 1903, pp. 665-72): “Tino del maestro Camaino, da Siena, in questo luogo fiorentino scolpi tutti i lati dell’opera; per rispetto di suo padre conviene che si umili, tanto da non voler essere chiamato maestro finché quello è vivo.”

¹³¹ On whom see Simona Cesari, Magister Paulus: uno scultore tra XIV e XV secolo (Rome: Edilazio, 2001).

¹³² The three surviving signatures are the Briobris tomb (c. 1400; S Francesco, Vetralla; cat. 205); the Tomb of Bartolomeo Carafa (c. 1405; S Maria del Priorato di Malta, Rome; cat. 206); and the tomb of Pietro Stefanescchi (c. 1417; S Maria in Trastevere, Rome; cat. 207). The fragmentary inscription is from the tomb of Antonio de Vitulis, now in the Vatican (c. 1405; cat. 204).
signature by the Sienese artist Jacopo della Quercia on the Trenta Altar in S Frediano, Lucca (1416-22), which reads H(OC) OP(VS) / FEC(IT) IACOB(VS) MAG(IST)RI PET(RI) D(E) SENI(S). The other is the signature on the Tommaso Mocenigo tomb, which Piero di Niccolò Lamberti signed as PETRVS MAGISTRI NICHOLAI DEFLORENCIA. In the sixteenth-century signatures I have collected the term appears to be used only in the South, such as by the Sicilian sculptor Antonello Gagini, who signs as MAGISTRI ANTONI in at least one and possibly two works from around 1504-05. The disappearance of the term is likely related to a variety of factors, including the increasing standardization of names and the potential desire of sculptors to move away from the idea that they were “artisans” or “craftsmen”. Perhaps most significant, at least for fifteenth-century Florentine sculptors, was the increasing fluidity of guild boundaries, such that boys born to fathers of a particular craft or trade were not destined to remain in that trade. Rather, the lack of guild ties meant that boys could—in theory, at least—go into whatever trade they wanted. As a consequence, the lack of patrilineal or hereditary significance meant there was less incentive to credit one’s master.

133 A Madonna and Child in S Bernardino da Siena, Amantea, from 1505, is signed MANVS AVTEM MAGISTRI ANTONI / DE GAGINO SCVLTORIS DIE X SBRS M CCCCC V. CM (cat. 032); another Madonna and Child, from 1504, also seems to be signed with M(AGIST)R[I] [ANT]ON[I], although the signature is partially destroyed (cat. 30). For these two sculptures, see Hanno-Walter Kruft, Antonello Gagini und Seine Söhn (Munich: Bruckmann, 1980), cat. 8, p. 367, figs. 23, 24; and cat. 113, p. 412, fig. 16.

134 On this, see Richard A. Goldthwaite, The Economy of Renaissance Florence (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), Ch. 5, and esp. 349-51. He notes that almost none of the major artists in Florence during the fifteenth century were the sons of artists; e.g., Brunelleschi and Leonardo (the sons of notaries), Fra Filippo Lippi (son of a butcher), Pollaiuolo brothers (sons of poulterers), and Verrocchio (son of a brickmaker).

135 For further analysis on several of the topics discussed in this section, see Chapter IV of the current dissertation, which focuses on the social status of sculptors’ during the Middle Ages and Renaissance.
2.7 Mentions of—or calls for—praise of the sculptor’s skill

Sculptors occasionally include praise for their own skills or ask for praise from the viewer. Giovanni Pisano’s inscriptions on his pulpits in Pistoia and Pisa are two famous examples, but the practice extends back into at least the eleventh century and continues into the fifteenth, albeit in greatly diminished form and frequency.\textsuperscript{136} No artist expresses self-admiration to such an extent as Giovanni Pisano, but several make their belief in their own skill or fame clear. The signature of the Sienese sculptor Gano di Fazio on his Monument of Tommaso d’Andrea, executed around 1304, proclaims that the artist’s “hand is worthy of great praise.”\textsuperscript{137} Ghiberti’s signature on his second set of doors (1427-52) goes a bit further; the inscription states the doors were “Made by the miraculous art of Lorenzo Cione di Ghiberti;” LAVRENTII CIONIS DE GHIBERTIS MIRA ARTE FABRICATVM. As with many other ostensibly extraneous elements of signatures, this too disappears by the sixteenth century. Pollaiuolo’s inscriptions on his tombs for Pope Sixtus IV (d. 1484) and Innocent VIII (d 1492), which refer to the artist’s fame in a variety of different media—“famous in gold, silver, bronze, and painting” according to the second signature—are among the last examples to give such explicit praise to a work’s creator.\textsuperscript{138} In all of these instances there is a question of whose voice is


\textsuperscript{137} Cat. 118. CELAVIT GANVS OPVS HOC INSIGNE SENENSIS—LAVDIBVS IMMENSIS EST SVA DIGNA MANVS. I am grateful to Benjamin Eldredge for assistance with this translation.

\textsuperscript{138} The inscription on the tomb of Pope Sixtus IV reads: OPVS ANTONI POLAIOLI / FLORENTINI ARG AVRO / PICT AERE CLARI / ANDO MCCCCLXXXXIII (cat. 046). Pope Innocent VIII’s tomb is signed: ANTONIVS / POLAIOLVS A/VR ARG AER PICT CLARVS / QVI XYST SEP/VLCHR PER E/GIT COEPTVM / AB SE OPVS / ABSOLVIT (cat. 047). Fehl 1997, 203, renders the second signature as: “Antonius Polaiuolus, famous in gold, silver, bronze and painting, he who finished (\textit{peregit}) the sepulchre of Sixtus here by himself brought to an end the work he had begun.”
responsible for making such claims of artistic skill or fame; although they are presumably
crafted by the artist, the phrasing—putting the artist in the third person—implies an
outside voice, the identity of which is not always clear.

2.8 Mention of patrons or other individuals associated with a work’s creation

Signatures from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries will sometimes include
references to figures other than the principal sculptor who were instrumental in the
work’s execution. These might be patrons, operai, ecclesiastical figures, or members of a
workshop. The practice of naming a work’s commissioner is part of a longstanding
tradition, seen in both painting and sculpture, of documentary inscriptions (independent
of artists’ signatures) mentioning ecclesiastical patrons such as popes or bishops under
whose patronage or reign a work was created. Nicola Pisano’s inscription on the
Fontana Maggiore, in Perugia (1278), contains nearly everyone involved: the pope
(Nicholas III), the emperor (Rudolph I of Hapsburg), members of the civic government,
and the fountain’s engineers are all mentioned (in addition to the sculptors). A pair of
inscriptions on a Virgin and Gabriel from a wood Annunciation group attributed to
Angelo di Nalduccio note who was rector when each figure was made; the Virgin is
signed [ANNO DOMINI] MC[CC] LXVIII L’ARTE DE C(A)LCOLARI FECERO […]
FARE QUESTA FIGURA AL TEMPO D’AGNOLINO RETORE (“AD 1369 the
guild of shoemakers had this figure made at the time of the rectorship of Agnolino”),
while the signature on the Angel states, QUESTO ANGNIOLFECE FARE L’ARTE
DE CALCOLARI ANGIELUS SCULPSIT ET PINISIT AL TEMPO DI TOFO

139 Covi 1986, 45.
140 Cat. 248. See Pope-Hennessy 1996, I, 231; and Moskowitz 2005, 110
BARTALINI RECTORE MCCCLXX, ("This angel the guild of the shoemakers had made. Angelo sculpted and painted it at the time when Tofo Bartalini was rector 1370"). In these instances the listing of individuals not involved in the “creative” elements of production implies a notion of authorship that is somewhat more nuanced than the idea of a one to one relationship between an artist and a work of art. The wording used for many of the references to a patron’s participation—often *fecit fieri or fieri fecit*, roughly signifying “caused to be made”—further underscores the important role (at least in the patron’s mind) they played in the execution of a work.

Occasionally a signature or inscription will give credit to more than one artist, further complicating the picture of authorship. Arnolfo di Cambio’s signature on his ciborium in San Paolo fuori le mura, completed 1284, mentions an associate named Pietro: HOC OPVS FECIT ARNOLFVS // CVM SVO SOCIO PETRO.142 The tomb of Cansignorio della Scala, mentioned above, is another example, as it includes reference to “Gaspare the *reclutor*”. Among the most inclusive of signatures is one (of several) on Filarete’s bronze doors (1435-45) originally for Old St Peter’s; the reverse of the doors contains a plaquette with a self-portrait not only of Filarete but of six members of his workshop and two other men. The sculptor, labeled *Antonius*, holds a compass and leads a mini-parade of his assistants (credited as ET DISCIPVLI MEI), all of whom are identified by name: Angniolus, Iacobus, Iannellus, Passquinus, Iovannes, and Varrus (all *Florenti(a)e*). They wear workshop aprons and brandish tools, further identifying them as

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141 Covi 1986, 50.
142 Cat. 058. Another inscription mentions the patron, as well, who is also shown presenting a miniature model of the ciborium to St Peter.
143 See cat. 99-101. Filarete’s doors contain four mentions of the artist’s name: the example listed in text, where he is presented with his workshop; an inscription that also gives the date completed (ANTONIUS PETRI DE FLORENTIA FECIT DIE ULTIMO IULII MCCCCXLV); a signature that reads simply OPVS ANTONII DEFLORENTIA; and a medal inscribed OPV / S / ANTO / NII. On Filarete’s signature see especially King 1990, as well as Woods-Marsden 1998, 54-55.
sculptors. Holding up the rear of the procession is a man—labeled Petrutius—holding a jug and riding a horse loaded with wine skins. To the far right is another man, riding a camel and playing reed pipes (the camel is also labeled: Dromendarius). Needless to say this signature and its accompanying scene are highly unusual. In addition to sharing the spotlight with his assistants Filarete seems also to be promoting himself as the benevolent and intelligent master of his workshop.\(^{144}\)

Also interesting in light of sculptural collaborations and authorial credit is the omission of artists associated with a work’s creation. Knowing when a specific sculptor is not credited for work is difficult and rare, although in some instances surviving documentary evidence or distinctive styles make the phenomenon apparent. The sculptor Pace Gagini and his uncle Antonio dell Porta (Tamagnino), for instance, were both paid for a seated figure of Francesco Lomellini (1508; Palazzo S Giorgio, Genoa), although only Pace’s name appears in the signature: PACES GAZINVS BISSONIVS FACIEBAT.\(^{145}\) This is especially curious given the fact that Pace and Antonio signed at least two other collaborative works, both executed for churches in France, with both their names: a statuette of the Virgin and Child (1506; parish church of Ruisseauville, Pas-de-Calais) is signed ANTONIVS TAMAGNINVS DE PORTA / ET PAXIVS DE GAZINO MEDIOLANESIS FACIEBANT; and the tomb of Raoul de Lannoy and Jeanne de Poix

\(^{144}\) King 1990, 297, notes that the giant compass held by Filarete, as well as his lack of an apron, imply the artist’s ability to give rational order to the work. An inscription above the procession—CETERIS OPER[AE] PRETIUM FASTUS […]MUS VE MIHI HILARITAS—translated as “for others the honor/fame and the money, for me the joy”, gives further indication of how the artist wanted to present himself. The translation is provided in Woods-Marsden 1998, 55. The fifth word in the inscription is unclear, although it was often assumed to be “fumus” (King 1990, 297). Most recently, at the 2011 Annual Conference of the College Art Association, Robert Glass illustrated that the word in question is almost certainly not “fumus”; his talk, “Filarete at the Papal Court: Claiming Authorship and Status on the Doors of St. Peter’s in the Vatican”, was presented in the session Claiming Authorship: Artists, Patrons, and Strategies of Self-Promotion in Medieval and Early Modern Italy, Part I.

(1507; parish church of Folleville, Picardy, France), is signed ANTONIVS DE PORTA / TAMAGNINVS MEDIOLANENSIS FACIEBAT // ET PAXIVS NEPOS SVVS.\footnote{Cat. 050. On these works in France, see, e.g., Luca Beltrami, “Le opere di Pasio Gaggini in Francia” (Rassegna d’arte antica e moderna 3-4, 1904): 58-62; and Hanno-Walter Kruft, “Genuesische Skulpturen der Renaissance in Frankreich”, in Actes du XXII congrès international d’histoire de l’art: Budapest (1972) 697–704.}

Another notable omission occurs with Verrocchio’s Colleoni monument (completed 1494; Campo SS Giovanni e Paolo, Venice), which was cast after the artist’s death by Alessandro Leopardi, who had previously competed with Verrocchio for this commission. Leopardi signed the monument ALEXANDER LEOPARDVS V F OPVS, making no mention of the earlier artist.\footnote{Cat. 015. Dario A. Covi, “Four New Documents Concerning Andrea del Verrocchio” (Art Bulletin 48, 1966): 97-103.} In the context of sculptural production, all of these signatures, both those that include associated individuals and those that mention only a single sculptor, point to a complex and mutable concept of authorship in the Middle Ages and Renaissance.\footnote{On this topic with regard to books in Early Modern Europe, see Robert Darnton’s essay “What is the history of books?” (with thanks to Erika Boeckeler for notifying me of this source), as well as the discussion and bibliography in Chapter V of this dissertation.}

2.9 The artist’s profession

A few signatures explicitly mention the artist’s profession, or the profession he perhaps wished to be associated with or in which he was originally trained.\footnote{In the thirteenth century there was a period when sculptors used the term Doctus to refer to themselves or their profession; for a discussion of this phenomenon see Claussen 1981 and Dietl 1987.} Not surprisingly, Giovanni Pisano’s lengthy Pisa inscription contains this element; it refers to “many sculptors”, of which Giovanni is of course the best.\footnote{PLVRES SCVLPTORES: REMANENT SIBI LAVDIS HONORES ; see cat. 157 for the full inscription and translation.} In some instances artists who worked across media signed their works with specific mentions to their other professions. Orcagna referred to himself as pictor—often translated as “painter” but a
term potentially loaded with greater significance meant to cover all the pictorial arts—on his tabernacle in Orsanmichele: ANDREAS CIONIS PICTOR FLORENTIN(VS) ORATORII ARCHIMAGISTER EXSTIT HVI(VS) MCCCLIX. According to Vasari the fourteenth-century artist did this for very specific reasons: “[Orcagna] used to write in his pictures: fece Andrea di Cione scultore; and in his sculptures: fece Andrea di Cione pittore; wanting his painting to be known by his sculpture, and his sculpture by his painting.” Another example of this is provided by the Sienese sculptor Lorenzo di Pietro, known as Vecchietta, who occasionally signed his paintings as a sculptor and his sculptures as a painter. His Risen Christ (1476), for example, is inscribed: OPVS LAVRENTII PETRI PICTORIS AL VECCHIETTA DE SENIS MCCCCLXXVI PRO SVI DEVOTIONE FECIT HOC. In comparison, his painted panel of the Assumption of the Virgin for Pienza Cathedral, from the 1460s, is signed: OPVS LAVRENTII PETRI SCVLTORIS (my emphasis). In such instances it seems Vecchietta and the few others who signed in similar fashion were hoping to convey their excellence in both media as well as the relationship between the arts.

2.10 Praise to God or Heavenly Figures

Praise to figures from the celestial realm might be expected, although they are extremely rare in the sculpted signatures I have collected. Giovanni Pisano includes them in his Pistoia and Pisa pulpit signatures—LAVDE DEI TRINI and LAVDO DEVVM

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151 A point brought to my attention by Dr Sarah Blake McHam.
154 Per Grove on Vecchietta; see G. Vigni, Lorenzo di Pietro detto il Vecchietta (Florence, 1937).
VERVM, respectively—as do Jacobello and Pierpaolo dalle Masegne on their iconostasis in San Marco, although stated less emphatically in their example: simply DEI GRATIA. The practice, seen in earlier periods and occasionally in paintings,\textsuperscript{155} largely disappears on sculptors’ signatures by the later Middle Ages and Renaissance.

2.11 Identification or mention of the work or the work’s subject

In a few sculptures a signature or accompanying inscription will directly mention either the specific type of work, such as HANC ARCHAM, “this arca”, on Giovanni di Balduccio’s Arca of St Peter Martyr (1339),\textsuperscript{156} or will identify the subject of the work. Thus Nanni di Bartolo’s signature on Obadiah includes the identification: PROPHETAM (...) ABDIAM.\textsuperscript{157} And occasionally, as in Pollaiuolo’s signature on the tomb of Innocent VIII, an artist made mention of another work he had completed. The signature of Pollaiuolo notes that he is the artist who “finished the sepulcher of Sixtus here by himself”: ANTONIVS / POLAIOLVS A / VR. ARG. AER. PICT.CLARVS / QVI.XYST.SEP / VLCHR.PER.E / GIT.COEPTVM / AB.SE.OPVS / ABSOLVIT.\textsuperscript{158} And according to early sources on the tomb of Simone Vigilante, Bishop of Senigallia (d. 1428), originally in S Francesco alle Scale, Ancona (dismembered in the eighteenth century), an inscription noted that the artist responsible for the tomb—Andrea da Firenze—was also responsible for the tomb of King Ladislas.\textsuperscript{159}

\textsuperscript{155} See, e.g., Covi 1986, 45, and 57-68.
\textsuperscript{156} Cat. 146. MAGISTER IOHANNES BALDVCI DE PISIS SCVLPSIT HANC ARCHAM ANNO DOMINI MCCCVIII.
\textsuperscript{157} Cat. 236. IOHANNES / ROSSVS / PROPHETAM / ME SCVLPSIT / ABDIAM.
\textsuperscript{158} Fehl 1997, 203, and above.
\textsuperscript{159} Cat. 012. See, e.g., M. Buglioni, Istoria del Convento di San Francesco d’Ancona (Ancona, 1795)
2.12 Self-portraits

Artists occasionally include self-portraits in their works, either in addition to their signatures or independent of signatures, in which case they can serve as a type of signature on their own. According to Vasari, Andrea Orcagna included a self-portrait in his *Dormition of the Virgin* on the tabernacle in Orsanmichele. He writes, “In one of these Apostles [Orcagna] portrayed himself in marble, old, as he was, with the beard shaven, with the cap wrapped around the head, and with the face flat and round, as seen above in his portrait, drawn from that one.”\(^{160}\) The figure in question, at the far right, aligns closely with what is described by Vasari, and most scholars today accept the identification (fig. 101).\(^{161}\)

Orcagna seems to be the first artist to insert himself into a religious narrative, or at least the first of which we are aware.\(^{162}\) Earlier artists, however, had inserted self-portraits in other contexts long before the mid-thirteenth century.\(^{163}\) Some of the first instances of this practice in Italian art occur in sculpted doors; Verona’s San Zeno, the cathedral of Trani, and the cathedral of Monreale all have twelfth-century doors that feature self-portraits.\(^{164}\) Ghiberti and Filarete may have been responding to this in the fifteenth century, when both of them included self-portraits on their bronze doors (figs. 32 and 102). Ghiberti even included a portrait of his son on his second set of doors (fig.\(^{165}\))

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\(^{160}\) “In uno de’ quail Apostoli ritrasse di marmo se stesso vecchio, com’era, con la barba rasa, col cappuccio avvolto al capo, e col viso piatto e tondo; come di sopra nel suo tritratto, cavato da quello, si vede.” Vasari-Milanesi 1906, I, 606.

\(^{161}\) See, e.g., Woods-Marsden 1998, 43ff.

\(^{162}\) Woods-Marsden 1998, 43.

\(^{163}\) See Catherine King, “Filarete’s Portrait Signature on the Bronze Doors of St Peter’s”, in *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 53, 1990: 296-99, esp. 297-98 n10, for a list of some self-portraits in the Middle Ages.

\(^{164}\) See Ursula Mende, *Die Bronzetüren des Mittelalters, 800—1200*, Munich 1983, esp. figs. 57, 156, 157, 161, and 163.
103), and Filarete went so far as to portray and identify his entire workshop (discussed above).  

2.13 Emblems, flourishes, etc.

The use of emblems or personal devices is a technique more associated with patrons than artists; instances of artists in the Middle Ages or Renaissance doing so is rare, although it does occur. One of the most well-known examples is found on Alberti’s self-portrait plaque of about 1432, in which he included both a signature, “L.BAP”, as well as his emblem, the winged eye. One of Filarete’s two signatures on the front of his doors for Old St Peter’s has four small symbols in it. The OPVS ANTONII DEFLORENTIA is preceded by two emblems: a cross inscribed within an oval and a Florentine lily (or *fleur-de-lis*); and it is followed by two more emblems: another Florentine lily and a figure that looks suspiciously like an imperial eagle (fig. 33).

**Content trends from c. 1250-1550**

Looking at sculptors’ signatures diachronically, from roughly 1250 to 1350, several significant trends may be observed. One is the near total disappearance of the term *magister*. Just as the use of the term *doctus* fell out of favor previously, so too did mention of a sculptor as being a *magister*. The potential implication is that sculptors no longer saw it necessary to give themselves titles in order to justify their work, experience, or qualification; alternatively, sculptors may have considered the use of the term, and its

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165 See Woods-Marsden 1998, 56-68; also see King 1990 for Filarete’s portrait.
associations with the workshop tradition, as being detrimental to their aims within the context of rising trends in humanistic thought. Another development is the appearance and subsequent popularity of *opus* + artist’s name, a recognizably fifteenth-century Tuscan means of signing a work of sculpture. It seems to start with Ghiberti and Donatello and is subsequently picked up by a number of sculptors working in their milieu. A final development is the prevalence of signing with *faciebat* over all other means of signing with a verb in the first half of the sixteenth century. As will be discussed in following chapters, the implications of these changes are tied to sculptors’ changing roles in the social worlds of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.
Chapter II. Signatures’ Lettering: Formal and Stylistic Elements

Introduction

My examination of sculptors’ signatures continues with a look at their most basic and readily apparent element, and yet one that is often overlooked: their formal characteristics, which is to say primarily the style and arrangement of their lettering.¹⁶⁸ In choosing to mark a sculpted monument with a signature or an inscription of any sort the sculptor—or whoever was responsible for the inscription—had to make a decision about lettering. The carving or casting of letters in stone or metal takes time, as opposed to the comparatively immediate process of writing or painting letters. Though the amount of time invested in an inscription would no doubt vary based on a number of factors, including letter size, inscription length, graphic complexity, materials, and so on, it is safe to say that even the most basic signature was the result of several hours of work, and more complex ones likely took several carving sessions spread out over multiple days.¹⁶⁹ An examination of the lettering used in signatures illustrates that significant care was often taken to ensure a high standard of quality with regard to the letterforms, and the very fact that this element of a signature was of importance to some artists suggests it is deserving of closer study.

¹⁶⁸ The issue of lettering and font selection continues to be a divisive issue for people involved in visual and graphic fields; note, e.g., the recent appearance of an article in BBC News Magazine by Tom de Castella, “Do typefaces really matter?” (20 July 2010; http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-10689931), as well as the 2007 documentary Helvetica, devoted entirely to the font of the same name and the intense feelings it stirs up among graphic designers.

¹⁶⁹ Modern scholars and letter-carvers have given different figures for the amount of time it takes to carve inscriptive lettering. Gordon 1983, 32, writes that a head workman at a stonemason’s shop near a Roman cemetery (Campo Verano) claimed an expert cutter was capable of 300 letters per day, although anything over 250 was still considered good work. Meyer and Shaw 2008, 323 n90, take issue with this statement; they cite Richard Kindersley, a London lettercutter, who said he was capable of carving five 50 mm (2 in) letters in marble per hour using modern, tungsten-tipped tools, which gives a total of 40 letters per day (given an eight hour workday).
Unfortunately, our knowledge of epigraphical practices during the Middle Ages and Renaissance is largely incomplete. In truth, almost the entire industry of putting letters in stone or metal, from the composition of the text to the actual execution, needs to be rediscovered. As the typographer Paul Stiff has accurately noted, we know precious little about the “on the ground” reality of inscriptional work during this period, although that is just beginning to change as scholars pay greater attention to artistic lettering. Among the questions raised by an investigation into late Medieval and Renaissance epigraphy are the following: Who actually did the carving or casting of letters? Who designed them? Were they worked out on the monument or prepared beforehand? If the latter, how were the designs transferred to the monument? Were designs actually done using geometrical construction, as some instructional books on lettering promote, or was the work done freehand? What was the extent of the patron’s role, and what was the artist’s role? What was the intended relationship, if any, between the text’s contents and formal elements? What about the relationship between the text and the monument’s formal elements? Who was the intended audience? The list of problems to be addressed can be easily expanded, but the general point should be clear: the study of Italian Renaissance epigraphy raises a multitude of questions—more than it can ever answer—but the potential wealth of information to be gained from answering even some of these questions is likely to be well worth the effort.

171 See, e.g., recent work by Debra Pincus, Christine Sperling, Starleen K. Meyer, and Paul Shaw, included in subsequent notes and the bibliography.
172 Many of these are issues raised in Stiff 2005, 71-3; and Starleen K. Meyer and Paul Shaw, “Towards a New Understanding of the Revival of Roman Capitals and the Achievement of Andrea Bregno,” in Andrea Bregno: Il senso della forma nella cultura artistica del Rinascimento, ed Claudio Crescentini and Claudio Strinati (Florence: Maschietto, 2008), 276-331, esp. 278.
173 Christine Margit Sperling, for instance, has illustrated how an examination of letterforms can have far-reaching consequences for a sculptor’s oeuvre. See Sperling, “Artistic Lettering and the Progress of the
It is not the aim of the present study to write or rewrite the history of inscriptive lettering in the Middle Ages and Renaissance. Yet my study of sculptors’ signatures—which are themselves a form of inscriptive writing—must take issues of letterform into account. Though it is no way intended to be complete, the following chapter will address the types and styles of lettering used by sculptors for their epigraphic work as well as their carved and cast signatures. Scholarship in typography has tended to focus on important areas of typographic development, and thus my examination is biased toward those centers, as well. These areas include central Italy, primarily Florence and Rome, and parts of northern Italy, primarily Padua. Furthermore, the main focus of the discussion is on letters inscribed in stone and bronze. The chapter begins with a short note on terminology, followed by a brief survey of the most important secondary sources, and then continues to an overview of trends in epigraphy during the later Middle Ages and Renaissance; I then conclude by examining sculptors’ signatures and the significance of their lettering styles. As an addendum, I briefly address areas outside the centers of epigraphic development and signatures that were painted, rather than cast or carved, onto sculptures.

A Short Note on Terminology

The terminology of lettering and typefaces can be confusing even for those who study epigraphy, paleography, and typography. For the purposes of this chapter it is only

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174 For more detailed discussion of some of these terms, as well as examples of the dizzying array of type categories, see the following works: Carl Wehmer, “Die Namen der ‘Gotischen’ Buchschriften” (Zentralblatt für Bibliothekswesen 49, 1932), in three parts: Jan/Feb, pp. 11-34; April, pp. 169-76; and May, pp. 222-34; B. L. Ullman, Ancient Writing and Its Influence (London, 1932); Michelle P. Brown, A Guide to Western Historical Scripts from Antiquity to 1600 (Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto, 1996).
necessary to understand a few very general terms. The definitions and categories provided here are based partly on modern distinctions and partly on those understood in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; in some cases I recognize I am greatly oversimplifying, and thus I direct the reader to refer to the bibliography for further and more detailed reading.

The term *Gothic* refers to those letterforms developed primarily in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and examples are illustrated in figures 81, 87, and 96. *Roman* lettering, which I use interchangeably with the term *classical* lettering, refers to the letterforms used in ancient epigraphy during both the Republican and Imperial periods, or to letterforms based on such models; an example is provided in figure 97. *Humanistic script* is the style of handwriting developed by fourteenth- and fifteenth-century humanist scholars, who developed their script (fig. 98) as a more legible alternative to *Gothic script*.

*Majuscule*, in the context of this chapter, is used to refer to CAPITAL letterforms, such as those in Roman epigraphy. By comparison, *minuscule* is the term used for lowercase letters or letters derived from those forms; *uncial* letters are typically letters that are related to or form the basis of *minuscule* letters.

An *interpunct* is a small element used between words; examples of common *interpuncts* are small circles (•) and small triangles. *Serifs* are the small finishing strokes or details at the ends of letter-strokes in certain lettering styles (the current font, for Press, 1990); Christopher Perfect and Gordon Rookledge, *Rookledge’s International Type Finder* (Mount Kisco, NY and London: Moyer Bell Ltd, 1991; orig. ed. 1983); and Edward M. Catich, *The Origin of the Serif: Brush Writing & Roman Letters*, 2nd ed., ed. Mary W. Gilroy (Davenport, IA: Catich Gallery, 1991; 1st ed. 1968).
example, features serifs); letterforms without serifs are called *sans serif*. Other terms will be defined, as necessary, in the main body of the chapter.

**Review of the Literature**

Shortly after the midpoint of the twentieth century, the eminent type historian and typographer Giovanni Mardersteig noted the lack of a written history of Latin inscriptions. Since then a number of scholars—including historians of art as well as of type—have made significant contributions to our knowledge of the development, use, and revival of Roman letterforms. And while a comprehensive study of inscriptions remains to be written, there is in some sense an embarrassment of riches with regard to certain areas of inquiry, even as other areas remain largely unexamined. The following section will attempt to trace the most important developments in scholarship on inscriptions, with particular emphasis given to those sources most relevant to my topic.

Scholars have long recognized the important role played by epigraphy and lettering in the Italian Renaissance; indeed it is a point that is impossible to ignore, as so many of the period’s most important figures were amateur epigraphers. The eminent art historian Fritz Saxl, in an article written almost three quarters of a century ago, noted

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175 Giovanni Mardersteig, “L. B. Alberti e la rinascita del carattere lapidario nel quattrocento” (*Italia mediovale e umanistica* 2, 1959), 285-307, noted the lack of a written history on Latin inscriptions. The gap in our knowledge on inscriptions was perhaps most recently noted by Paul Stiff, in his article “Brunelleschi’s epitaph and the design of public letters in fifteenth-century Florence” (*Typography Papers* 6, 2005), 66-114, who, among other points, highlights just how little we know about the design and execution of Renaissance inscriptions.

176 For example, Ghiberti, Donatello, Alberti, Jacopo Bellini, Mantegna, Niccolo Niccoli, Felice Feliciano, and Cyriac of Ancona are all known (or theorized) to have been interested in ancient epigraphy.
the great interest many of the Italian humanists took in Greek and Latin epitaphs.\footnote{177} Despite the impressive scope suggested by Saxl’s title—“The Classical Inscription in Renaissance Art and Politics”—the article deals primarily with a fifteenth-century manuscript containing inscriptions collected by the humanist Bartolomaeus Fontius, a pupil of Cristoforo Landino and the Greek Aristotelian scholar Argyropoulos.\footnote{178} Limitations aside, the article was one of the earliest works of modern scholarship to highlight the field of Renaissance epigraphy as a valuable area of study.

A work of significantly greater breadth is Dario Covi’s 1958 dissertation, “The Inscription in Fifteenth-Century Florentine Painting,” which offered a detailed study of the appearance and development of various letterforms in Florentine painting of the Cinquecento.\footnote{179} Shortly thereafter, Covi published a portion of his findings in an *Art Bulletin* article that detailed the history and characteristics of how Roman inscriptional capitals were gradually adopted by fifteenth-century painters.\footnote{180} Among Covi’s important contributions, including a concise history of the development of humanist script, is his recognition of the continued importance of Gothic letterforms in painted and printed materials despite the fifteenth century’s increased preference for Roman majuscules.\footnote{181} Although scholars since at least the eighteenth century had been aware of a shift away from Gothic lettering during the Italian Renaissance,\footnote{182} Covi was perhaps the first to acknowledge that in painting the development was not as simple as Roman letters being

\footnote{178} Saxl 1940, 29; the article’s more limited scope is suggested by its qualified subtitle, “Bartholomaeus Fontius: Liber monumentorum Romanae urbis et aliorum locorum”.  
\footnote{179} Dario Covi, “The Inscription in Fifteenth-Century Florentine Painting” (PhD dissertation, New York University, 1958); published under the same title in 1986 by Garland Publishers in New York.  
\footnote{180} Dario Covi, “Lettering in Fifteenth Century Florentine Painting” (*Art Bulletin* 45, 1963), 1-17.  
\footnote{181} Covi 1963, 11-15.  
\footnote{182} Luigi Lanzi, in his *Storia pittorica dell’Italia*, published in Bassano in 1795-96, noted the shift from Gothic to Roman letterforms in the mid-fifteenth century; cited in Covi 1963, 1-2.}
used more and more frequently during the fifteenth-century, as was the case with Florentine sculpture. Rather, Covi correctly observed that for Florentine painters the use of Gothic versus Roman letters often depended on style, context, and content, and that both forms were used, sometimes in the same paintings, long after the revival of Roman lettering.\(^{183}\)

A number of scholars roughly contemporaneous with Covi, just after the midpoint of the twentieth century, made further contributions to our understanding of the development and use of Renaissance letterforms. Giovanni Mardersteig, in his 1959 article “Leone Battista Alberti e la rinascita del carattere lapidario romano nel Quattrocento,” placed Alberti, along with the antiquarian Felice Feliciano and the printer Damiano da Moyle, at the center of the revival of Roman inscriptional capitals.\(^{184}\) Shortly thereafter, Nicolete Gray explored a variety of inscriptonal forms that contributed to the increasing use of Roman capitals in the fifteenth century.\(^{185}\) In her view, experimental letterforms with varying degrees of similarity to ancient models, apart from being interesting designs in their own right, highlight the gradual, century-long process of the revival of Roman capitals. Though her article lacks any mention of Mardersteig, her observations lead her to suggest, as he does, that Alberti was at the center of these developments. At roughly the same time, Millard Meiss offered a different interpretation of the evidence, and suggested that Mantegna, and more generally those active in the Paduan intellectual circle, were the initiators of a true revival of Roman capitals; earlier

\(^{183}\) Covi 1963, esp. 15.


\(^{185}\) Nicolete Gray, “Sans serif and other experimental inscribed lettering of the early Renaissance” (Motif 5, 1960), 66-76. Also see her article (written in 1987 but only published in 2005), “The Newberry alphabet and the revival of the roman capital in fifteenth-century Italy” (Typography Papers 6, 2005), 5-16.
efforts in Florence were based more on Romanesque examples than ancient models.\textsuperscript{186} According to Meiss, the humanist manuscripts from Padua in the second half of the fifteenth century were the first to employ the new style of lettering, and Mantegna was the artist who perfected it.\textsuperscript{187}

Despite this apparent interest half a century ago, and despite calls for further studies of letterforms, until recently few art historians or scholars of type have undertaken such research. Iiro Kajanto’s 1980 study of Latin epitaphs in Medieval and Renaissance Rome is a notable exception,\textsuperscript{188} as is Christine Sperling’s 1985 dissertation, “Artistic Lettering and the Progress of the Antique Revival in the Quattrocento,” which explored changes in artistic lettering in Italy between about 1410 and 1500.\textsuperscript{189} Sperling’s work is the most comprehensive examination of inscriptive lettering in the fifteenth century, and it highlights the important role played by artists such as Ghiberti, Donatello, and Mantegna in the development of the Roman capital. Sperling followed her study with a 1989 article on Alberti’s inscription for the Holy Sepulcher in Florence’s Cappella Rucellai, in which she proposed the means by which the Renaissance humanist and architect constructed accurate Roman-revival letters.\textsuperscript{190} More recently, Paul Stiff highlighted some of the significant limitations in our current picture of lettering in the

\textsuperscript{186} Millard Meiss, “Toward a More Comprehensive Renaissance Paleography” (\textit{Art Bulletin} 42, 1960), 97-112. The temporal overlap of these scholars’ articles is highlighted by Meiss himself, who, in a note on page 109 of his article, writes that Mardersteig’s paper was made available to him shortly before he received the proofs for his \textit{Art Bulletin} article.
\textsuperscript{187} Meiss 1960, 107-9.
Italian Renaissance,\textsuperscript{191} claiming that in nearly all areas of production and development
our views have not advanced much since the flurry of scholarship in this area seen some
fifty years ago.\textsuperscript{192} Since that article, Starleen K. Meyer and Paul Shaw have made an
attempt at clarifying our picture of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century insessional lettering
practices, concomitantly highlighting the important role played by Andrea Bregno and
Bartolomeo Sanvito in the revival of the Roman capital.\textsuperscript{193} And the most recent work by
Sperling continues to shed light on practical issues of executing letters in works of
sculpture.\textsuperscript{194}

In addition to the narrower studies of letterforms a number of works with a
broader focus have also examined inscriptions and epigraphy in the Middle Ages and
Renaissance. John Sparrow’s \textit{Visible Words: A Study of Inscriptions in and as Books and
Works of Art}, traces the roots, emergence, and development of a particular artistic form,
the “literary inscription”, which relies on lineation to complement or enhance the text’s
meaning, from antiquity to the modern era.\textsuperscript{195} Since then the Italian scholar Armando
Petrucci has published a number of works on the topic of written culture in general, many
with a particular focus on lettering intended for insessional display.\textsuperscript{196} To the preceding

\textsuperscript{191} Paul Stiff, “Brunelleschi’s epitaph and the design of public letters in fifteenth-century Florence
(\textit{Typography Papers} 6, 2005), 66-114.
\textsuperscript{192} Stiff 2005, esp 71 and 111.
\textsuperscript{193} Starleen K. Meyer and Paul Shaw, “Towards a New Understanding of the Revival of Roman Capitals
and the Achievement of Andrea Bregno,” in \textit{Andrea Bregno: Il senso della forma nella cultura artistica del
Rinascimento}, ed Claudio Crescentini and Claudio Strinati (Florence: Maschietto, 2008), 276-331; also see
Starleen K. Meyer, “Bregno e l’epigrafia classicheggiante a Roma” in \textit{Andrea Bregno, Giovanni Santi e la
\textsuperscript{194} See, e.g., Christine M. Sperling, “Written in stone: sculptors’ patterns for Roman letters in inscriptions
\textsuperscript{195} John Sparrow, \textit{Visible Words: A Study of Inscriptions in and as Books and Works of Art} (Cambridge:
Cambridge University Press, 1969). For a review and criticism of some of his claims see Dario Covi, “A
Study of Inscriptions” (\textit{Burlington Magazine} 113, 1971), 158-60.
\textsuperscript{196} I list here only a partial bibliography of sources more immediately relevant to the current study: (ed)
\textit{Libri, scrittura e pubblico nel Rinascimento: guida storica e critica} (Rome: Laterza, 1979); \textit{La scrittura,
Ideologia e rappresentazione} (Torino: Einaudi, 1986) [available in English as \textit{Public Lettering: Script},
sources focusing on late Medieval and Renaissance public lettering may be added a wide array of literature addressing epigraphy and paleography across the centuries. Of particular relevance are those dealing with ancient epigraphy, such as the work of Arthur E. Gordon and Giancarlo Susini, as well as the fascinating investigation into the influence of brush writing on the forms of inscriptive letters in antiquity by Edward M. Catich. In the area of Medieval epigraphy the work of Robert Favreau is especially notable, and he has expanded the definition of epigraphic studies to include a wide-range of writing that would have been accessible to the public, such as that in mosaics, frescoes, glass, and on cloth, metalwork, and other objects. Also important are the numerous contributions scholars of paleography have made to our knowledge of the development and influences of the so-called “humanistic script”, the origins of which first appeared in Italy in the fourteenth century. And finally, many notable scholars of type have examined the sources and evolution of early printed letterforms.

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Part I. The Inscriptional Letter in the Later Middle Ages and Renaissance

Although a comprehensive study of inscriptional lettering in the art of the later Middle Ages and Renaissance is lacking, the general trends and developments made to letterforms during the period can still be discerned. As stated previously, authors as early as the eighteenth century noted the increasing frequency with which the Roman-inspired capital began to appear in Quattrocento Italy. Scholars since then have complicated our picture of this era, and although the details of the revival of Roman lettering remain somewhat unclear, the general timeline of inscriptional letterforms in Italy from the thirteenth through the sixteenth centuries is relatively well documented, and a survey of it is useful for the purposes of examining signatures’ letterforms in their proper context.202

For much of the first half of the thirteenth century in Italy, Romanesque and Gothic letterforms coexisted, although Gothic—the newer of the two—was used with increasing frequency. Examples of surviving Romanesque lettering from this period include the famous palindrome EN GIRO TORTE SOL CICLIO ET ROTOR IGNE found on the pavement of the Florence Baptistry (fig. 92), as well as inscriptions from the

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202 For a concise history of lettering from antiquity to the Middle Ages, see Sperling 1985, 2-36; also Kajanto 1980, 11-14. For an overview of the development of written script during the same period, B. L. Ullman, Ancient Writing and Its Influence (New York: Cooper Square Publishers, Inc., 1963), esp. 59-144, remains a good (if somewhat dated) source; for excellent reproductions and examples of scripts, see Michelle P. Brown, A Guide to Western Historical Scripts from Antiquity to 1600 (Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1990).
These cases form the end of a revival of ancient epigraphic models in Italy that occurred between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries, illustrated especially by a number of inscriptions in Pisa, as well as at Palermo under the reign of Frederick II von Hohenstaufen.

In all aspects of formal writing, Gothic lettering peaked in popularity during the later thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, both in Italy and across central Europe. For manuscripts and scholastic writing the preferred bookhand in Italy was *littera rotunda* (fig. 99), a rounder script than the Gothic forms used in Northern Europe (fig. 100). In sculpted monuments from the period Gothic variants are also the norm, with varying degrees of uncial and antique influence visible. The inscriptions on the façade of Siena’s Duomo, which date from c. 1285-1300, provide illustrative examples (fig. 96); the proportions are narrow, there is a notable degree of contrast between thick and thin strokes, and letterforms are highly legible (even if they are potentially beyond the range of any real viewer, a topic addressed further in my chapter on reception). Like the writing in manuscripts from this time, not much attention is given to creative or artistic lineation with an eye toward presenting the text for public reception, and there is extensive use of

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203 Stiff 2005, 90 and note 54; in his article, Stiff notes that these Romanesque sources deserve consideration as possible sources for the revival of Roman letterforms.
204 Petrucci 1993 (1980), 3-5.
205 Sperling 1985, 29, notes the inscriptions on the tomb of Costanza II of Aragon (d. 1122), Frederick II’s first wife, and on the sarcophagus of Archbishop Ugone, both in the city’s cathedral.
206 Stiff 2005, 92; Sperling 1985, 35-36. Covi 1963, 1-2, notes a similar chronology for painted letterforms; after first appearing shortly after 1200, Gothic letters became the principal mode of lettering until the revival of Roman characters in the mid-fifteenth century.
207 Gray 2005, 6. Covi 1963, 2, notes that, in comparison to Northern Gothic, Italian Gothic is less slender, with less angular proportions, and it lacks the spiky projections and crowded spacing of its Northern counterpart. Similarly, Ullman 1963, 131, notes that Italian Gothic “did not go nearly as far in developing compression, broken lines, and angularity; it is a decidedly round script, relatively speaking…”
208 Gray 2005, 6-7; Favreau 1979, 75; Covi 1963, 3 n14, refers to these as the “so-called Gothic majuscules.”
ligatures and abbreviations.\(^{210}\) Thus we see MAGRO and MAGRI for MAGISTRO and MAGISTRI; DNI for DOMINI; OP for OPVS; IOHES for IOHANNES, and so on.\(^{211}\)

Beyond these observations there are few generalizations that can be made for the Gothic script as it appears on Italian sculpture of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries; indeed, variation is a key feature of this lettering style.\(^{212}\) A range of letterforms can be observed among nearly contemporary works by the same artist, and even sometimes within a single inscription or a single word. Examples from the last decades of the thirteenth century and first decades of the fourteenth provide evidence for the great diversity possible, as well as for the continued influence of Romanesque forms. A cursory look at the lettering seen on two of Arnolfo di Cambio’s works from the 1280s, the tomb monument for the French Cardinal Guillaume de Braye, in San Domenico in Orvieto (fig. 17) and the ciborium in San Paolo fuori le mura in Rome (fig. 18), highlights the different forms in which inscriptions were executed.\(^{213}\) The tomb letters are taller, narrower, and feature a number of spindly decorative flourishes, all of which characterizes them as truly Gothic letters; those on the ciborium have squatter proportions and less stroke contrast, as well as an absence of terminal flourishes, making them considerably more Romanesque in appearance. In addition, the \(U/V\) of the tomb appears as an inverted minuscule (or uncial) \(N\), while the ciborium uses a more classically-inspired (or Romanesque) \(V\) shape.

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\(^{210}\) Sparrow 1969, 10; and Covi 1963, 2.

\(^{211}\) The study of abbreviations and ligatures in Medieval inscriptions is dizzyingly complex and far beyond the scope of the present discussion. For an excellent and concise introduction to some of the conventions and their development, see Kajanto 1980, 15-16. Kajanto bases his summary on the results found in Ulla Nyberg, “Über inschriftliche Abkürzungen der gotischen und humanistischen Schriftperioden” (Arctos 12, 1978), 63-79, whose work is based on material from Santa Maria in Aracoeli, Santa Sabina, and Santa Maria Maggiore, all in Rome.

\(^{212}\) Hence the problem in developing a precise terminology.

\(^{213}\) Cats. 057 and 058, respectively.
Even within these monuments’ inscriptions there is variation, most notably seen in the letter $E$. Both inscriptions exhibit the straight-backed capital $E$ that is associated with classical lettering, as well as the curved uncial $E$ of Gothic provenance.

Interestingly, the tomb inscription, despite its apparent Gothic flair, features the squared “Roman” $E$ far more than the Gothic round $E$—twenty-nine times as compared to six—underscoring the mixing of letterforms that is a hallmark of Gothic epigraphy. Similar variation may be observed in the tomb of Cardinal Consalvo Rodriguez (d. 1299), bishop of Albano, in Santa Maria Maggiore, Rome, by Giovanni di Cosma. In the inscriptions, the letter $U/V$ appears as a $V$ in all instances except as the second letter of the cardinal’s name, Gunsaluus, where it is an inverted uncial $N$. The letter A appears in three variations: flat-topped with a curved left stroke and vertical right stroke, in QVONDA(M); flat-topped with a diagonal left stroke and vertical right stroke, as in ANN(O); and flat-topped with two diagonal strokes meeting at the center of the top horizontal, seen in MAG(IST)RI. Again, the lettering is Gothic, but apart from general similarities it bears little relationship to the nearly contemporaneous inscriptions on the monuments of Arnolfo di Cambio; rather, the common thread is the Gothic willingness to use variant letterforms, seemingly at random. Consistency in Gothic inscriptions does exist, however. The signature of Tino di Camaino below his tomb monument to Bishop Orso in the Florence Duomo (fig. 81), done in the 1320s, is a good example of

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214 Four of the twenty-nine straight-backed Es are ligatures of “TE”. The inscriptions on the ciborium show a similar preference for the roman $E$, though it is less pronounced (eight capital Es as opposed to five uncial versions). As for patterns, there seems to be none; for example, the “fecit” of the tomb signature uses a curved $E$; in the ciborium the word “fecit” appears twice, once with each form of $E$.

215 Cat. 148.

internally consistent Gothic letterforms: all the E’s have round backs, \( U / V \) is a consistent inverted \( N \), and the \( D \) is a typically Italian uncial, with an ascender bent so strongly to the left that it is essentially parallel to the baseline.

Gothic letters persisted into the early decades of the fifteenth century across Italy, visible for instance on the tomb of Pietro Stefaneschi (d. 1417) in Santa Maria in Trastevere in Rome (fig. 61), and on the tomb of Doge Tommaso Mocenigo in Santi Giovanni e Paolo in Venice, completed in 1423 (fig. 76). And some elements of gothic scripts, such as variations in letterforms and abbreviations, continue to be used throughout the fifteenth century in areas outside the traditional Renaissance fold, such as the south and the extreme north. Yet by the second quarter of the Quattrocento the Renaissance revival of the Roman capital initiated by Florentine sculptors, painters, and humanists had already begun. It is likely that these early attempts at Roman capitals were derived at least in part from Romanesque models as well as ancient ones. As noted, Romanesque inscriptions were readily available to Florentine artists; examples include an inscription from Sant’Andrea di Candeli, Florence, from 1176, the inscription over the main door of the Badia in Fiesole, and the inscription on the floor of Florence’s Baptistery (fig. 92). Although Romanesque epigraphy contains occasional Gothic

217 Covi 1963, 11-12, notes that in painting, as well, Gothic letters remained part of an artist’s repertoire until the very end of the fifteenth century.
218 Cat. 207.
219 Cat. 264. Interestingly, the signature on this monument is done in transitional roman capitals.
220 Earlier revivals of Roman or Roman-inspired capitals had already taken place in Italy and Europe, including the previously mentioned instances in Pisa and Palermo during the eleventh through thirteenth centuries and the classical revival seen during the Carolingian period. Of the Carolingian inscriptions, the epitaph of Pope Hadrian I (d. 795) in St Peter’s, Rome, featuring gilded letters cut in black marble, is perhaps the best example. See Sperling 1985, 22-29.
221 The importance of Romanesque models has been noted by several scholars, including Meiss 1960, 101; Gray 1960, 68; Sperling 1985, 70-72; and most recently Stiff 2005, 90 and 107. It is interesting that nearly contemporaneous humanist scholars were mistaking Carolingian lettering in manuscripts for ancient writing, and using it as the model for their own writing, although Sperling 1985, 68-72, speaking of the term *lettere antiche*, notes that for fifteenth-century artists and humanists it likely came to mean any lettering that was pre-Gothic or pre-contemporary.
elements, such as intertwined letters and uncials, its general appearance, including its symmetry and weight, approximates ancient Roman capitals to a certain degree.\textsuperscript{222} A further source of classicizing influence was provided by the scripts of contemporary humanist scholars such as Niccolò Niccoli (1363-1437) and Poggio Bracciolini (1380-1459), who were then copying Carolingian models (which they believed to be written in ancient script).\textsuperscript{223}

The initial artists promoting and developing this “new” style of inscriptive lettering were Donatello and Lorenzo Ghiberti,\textsuperscript{224} each of whom developed an interpretation of Roman-styled capitals.\textsuperscript{225} Their works from the 1410s and 20s are the earliest to exhibit these revived classical letterforms (figs. 29 and 58). These early examples, which form a distinctly Florentine style of inscriptive lettering that was influential well into the fifteenth century,\textsuperscript{226} share certain characteristics despite an understandable degree of diversity. Most of them have minimal serifs or are almost pure sans serif; their spacing tends to be fairly close; and letters often have slightly compressed and slender proportions.\textsuperscript{227} Though Ghiberti and Donatello were the

\textsuperscript{222} Meiss 1960, 101.
\textsuperscript{223} Covi 1963, 3. Recently, Starleen K. Meyer and Paul Shaw, in “Towards a New Understanding of the Revival of Roman Capitals and the Achievement of Andrea Bregno,” in Andrea Bregno: Il senso della forma nella cultura artistica del Rinascimento, ed. Claudio Crescentini and Claudio Strinati (Florence: Maschietto, 2008), 276-331, credit the new manuscript style used by early fifteenth-century humanists as the primary source of inspiration for contemporary inscriptive lettering (p. 284). I think they are right to assert the importance of humanist scripts, though the surviving Romanesque inscriptions also seem particularly influential.
\textsuperscript{224} Stiff 2005, 107.
\textsuperscript{225} Sperling 1985; on Ghiberti and his followers, see esp. 48-110; for Donatello and his followers see esp. 111-78.
\textsuperscript{226} Stiff 2005, 86.
\textsuperscript{227} Gray 2005, 7. She notes some other defining characteristics for individual letters: A often has a flat top, as did its Gothic predecessor; the leg of R curves downwards, like the arc of circle, instead of out; D’s appear with pinched tops; G may end with a curl, though it shows a significant degree of variation; C is occasionally square; N typically has thick verticals and a thin diagonal (entirely at odds with true classical lettering); and M often has a short and thin internal V that does not touch the baseline, again at odds with ancient epigraphy.
originators of the new styles of lettering their developments were soon taken up by other sculptors, including Luca della Robbia, Michelozzo, Pietro Lamberti, and Nanni di Bartolo.\textsuperscript{228} The subsequent adoption of the classicizing letterform developed in Florentine circles was rapid and widespread,\textsuperscript{229} and by the 1430s these Roman capitals had almost entirely supplanted Gothic lettering in epigraphy in centers like Rome and Florence.\textsuperscript{230}

The middle of the fifteenth century was witness to major developments in the area of inscriptive lettering. The dominant role of Florence gave way as artists, calligraphers, and antiquarians from northern Italy made significant contributions to the Quattrocento revival of Roman letterforms. These developments centered around the cities of Padua and Verona, though Rome played an increasing role as well.\textsuperscript{231} Padua was especially important during the period, as it was a university city and a center of classical learning and study in Italy. Epigraphers like Cyriac of Ancona as well as artists like Mantegna and Melozzo da Forli were key figures in the refinement of \textit{all’antica} lettering during this period and the second half of the century.\textsuperscript{232} The Paduan calligrapher Bartolomeo Sanvito (1435-1511) was also a notable figure, and possibly the first to perfect the new majuscular style in his manuscripts from the 1450s and 60s.\textsuperscript{233} The letters from this period show the increasing sensitivity to the actual forms of classical epigraphy

\textsuperscript{228} Sperling 1985, provides the most thorough treatment of the Quattrocento revival, with particular emphasis on the contributions of Donatello, Ghiberti, and other sculptors.

\textsuperscript{229} On this trend in epigraphy in general, Kajanto 1980, 14, notes, “The victory of the Roman majuscules in epigraphy seems to have been a rapid and sweeping one.”

\textsuperscript{230} Kajanto 1980, 14, and Sperling 1985, 171, both note the speed with which Roman capitals spread throughout Rome.

\textsuperscript{231} Sperling 1985, 184-85.

\textsuperscript{232} Stiff 2005, 107, who also places the late works of Donatello into this category. Meiss 1960, 108, considered Cyriac of Ancona the “most competent and the most passionate of the early epigraphers”, and saw Mantegna as “the perfecter of the new majuscular style.”

\textsuperscript{233} Meyer and Shaw 2008, give Sanvito most of the credit for first developing this style.
as typically defined by modern historians of type: they have more clearly articulated thick and thin strokes, clearly defined serifs, and proportions that better approximate their classical models (fig. 30). This was also when the first Renaissance treatises on the construction and rules of capital alphabets appear; Felice Feliciano published his—the Alphabetum Romanum—around 1464, and the printer and calligrapher Damiano da Moyle produced his version around two decades later. Though the influence of these treatises on geometrically constructed alphabets is debated, they very clearly point to an increased interest in recapturing “true” Roman capitals.

Perhaps appropriately, the final steps in the Renaissance revival of Roman capitals appear to have happened in Rome, in the last decades of the fifteenth century and the first decades of the sixteenth. The shift in artistic and cultural production from areas like Florence and the courts of northern Italy to the Eternal City is mirrored in contemporary lettering, for it was there that the lettere antiche were truly revived and subsequently adapted to create a uniquely Renaissance idiom. As in the past, the city became a center of inscriptive writing, often in highly public, monumental form, using letters descended from Imperial Rome. The likely source of this new style of lettering—often called “Sistine” since its emergence coincides with the reign of Pope Sixtus IV (1471-84)—was the Venetian sculptor Andrea Bregno, who was in Rome by

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235 Gray 2005, 10; Sperling 1989, 221. Felice’s MS is in the Vatican Library (Vat Lat 6852); a modern printing of it is available as Felice Feliciano, Alphabetum Romanum, ed Giovanni Mardersteig (Verona, 1960).
236 Damiano’s (Damianus Moyllus) exists in only one known copy: Parma, Biblioteca Palatina, MS 1229. Sperling 1989, 222.
237 Meyer and Shaw 2008, 331 n156, are particularly dismissive of these complex theories, claiming that they “had no discernible impact on epigraphy, or type design, in the Renaissance.”
238 Stiff 2005, 107, notes that the “accomplished revival of the classical capitals” happened in Rome during the last three decades of the fifteenth century, with further developments continuing into the first half of the sixteenth century.
the early 1460s. Tombs by Bregno from the 1460s and 70s, such as those of Antonio da Rio (d. 1450, but tomb c. 1467-75) in Santa Francesca Romana and Ludovico d’Albret (c. 1466-70) in Santa Maria in Aracoeli, feature inscriptions with the earliest examples of the new lettering style. These capitals, which may have their origins in the work of Sanvito, who was also in Rome by the early 1460s and possibly in contact with Bregno, were enormously influential and their use became widespread soon after their introduction. Famous examples include papal bulls placed on the façade of Santa Maria del Popolo in 1472, as well as commemorative inscriptions placed on the Ponte Sisto in the later 1470s. Aiding the spread of these capitals were the books being printed in the city, which opened up the revived letterforms to an entirely new audience (as well as a new mode of seeing and reading them). Though variations in style and quality persisted, by the sixteenth century the victory of Roman lettering—in nearly all areas of letter production in Italy—was complete.

**Part II. Lettering and Sculpted Signatures**

The lettering of signatures carved and cast by sculptors of the thirteenth through sixteenth centuries follows the same general trends as lettering in the broader realm of Medieval and Renaissance epigraphy. Signatures on sculpted monuments from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries are predominantly Gothic; those from the fifteenth century tend to be done first in transitional and then in “true” Roman capitals. What is perhaps most

240 For a detailed discussion of the contributions of Bregno and Sanvito, as well as of their potential association, see Meyer and Shaw 2008, esp. 284-300. Petrucci 1993 (1980), 20, also notes the importance of Bregno’s lettering in the 1460s.

interesting is that signatures are among the first places where the revival of Roman inscriptional letters can be observed.

With very few exceptions, signatures on monuments from the early period of my study are done in what Dario Covi referred as the “so-called Gothic majuscule”, a term he coined to encompass “the particular combination of capitals, uncials and enlarged minuscule N that is characteristic of this alphabet.”242 Inscriptions from the Pisani provide illustrative examples. Nicola Pisano’s signature on his pulpit for the Pisa Baptistery, located below the Last Judgment relief, is an example of this type of lettering.243 So too are the signatures of Nicola’s son, Giovanni, for his pulpits in Sant’Andrea, Pistoia (fig. 46), and the Pisa Duomo (figs. 47 and 47b).244

Despite slight variations in style and execution there are general formal characteristics that unite all three signatures, and a number of other examples from the later thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries are similarly related. The letters tend to be narrow, and spacing between them is typically compressed; ligatures and abbreviations are common. Furthermore, while the alphabet is predominantly capitals (at least for the letters that have distinct majuscule forms, e.g., A, B, G, L, Q, R, T), there are a number of letters that occasionally or always appear as minuscules. The letters H, N, and U/V are consistently minuscule in these examples. The letter D, while nearly always in its majuscule form, does appear in its Italian uncial form in Giovanni’s Pisa signature. The letter E is another character whose form varies; in the father’s signature it is most often

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242 Covi 1963, 3 n15; to give credit to his acceptance of the term’s inherent inaccuracy as well as his reasons for using it anyway it is worth quoting him in full: “It is, of course, incorrect to refer to majuscule letter forms as Gothic. But because of the absence of any acceptable term for the particular combination of capitals, uncials and enlarged minuscule N that is characteristic of this alphabet, I have adopted the phrase ‘so-called Gothic majuscules’ as indicative at least of the period when they flourished.”

243 Cat. 247.

inscribed in its squared form, while the son greatly favors the curved uncial version. The sculptors’ usage of $M$ is similar: the father’s signature has the squared $M$ that looks like Romanesque examples, while the son uses the curving uncial type. In these respects the signatures of Giovanni are somewhat “purer” examples of Gothic lettering (especially on his Pisa pulpit), although both artists are firmly within the same epigraphic tradition. In the case of Nicola this is interesting given his interest in classical sculpture and the significant influence it had on his art;\footnote{Gray 2005, 6, saw the situation somewhat differently, as she highlighted the contrast between Gothic letters in the inscription of Giovanni’s Pisa pulpit and the classical influence she saw in his figures. Regarding the influence of classical sculpture on Nicola, see Moskowitz 2001, 23-31.} surely the sculptor must have been aware of ancient epigraphy, and yet—apart from minor points like $M$ or that squared $E$—it makes no real inroads into his own lettering.\footnote{Petrucci 1993 (1980), 3-6, notes that a major revival of public monumental epigraphy took place in Italy between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries, and Pisa was at the center of it from about 1064 (the year construction on the city’s Duomo began) until the 1120s.} For reasons that are as yet unclear, the influence of ancient artifacts, which were numerous in Pisa, stopped at inscriptive lettering. Perhaps it is simply worth noting that the son—the more “Gothic” sculptor—signed his works with letterforms largely purged of classicizing of Romanesque tendencies.

The so-called Gothic majuscule described above can be observed, with variation of course, on any number of signed monuments from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The signature of Arnolfo di Cambio on his de Bray tomb, which accompanies the monument’s dedicatory inscription mentioned previously, is one variant, rather heavy on decorative flourishes (fig. 17).\footnote{Cat. 057.} Andrea Pisano’s signature on his doors for the Florence Baptistery, installed in 1336, is a more straightforward example (fig. 8).\footnote{Cat. 018.} Despite being executed in bronze rather than marble the letterforms are closely related to those seen in the inscriptions of Nicola and Giovanni Pisano. The contemporaneous
reliquary for the Holy Corporal in Orvieto by the goldsmith Ugolino di Vieri provides an example of a related script, this time executed in precious metals on a much smaller scale (fig. 87). Again, the letterforms are similar and unmistakably Gothic, and yet materials and size have informed their execution in a way that differs from what is seen in larger works; most apparent is the greater contrast between thick and thin strokes as compared to the examples in bronze and marble.

What is perhaps most interesting about these Gothic signatures is the high quality of their execution, and the often significant erudition suggested by the letterforms. The signatures’ letters on these monuments are consistently done with the same level of proficiency and skill seen in other instances of contemporary epigraphy, such as dedicatory tomb inscriptions. Though it does not reach quite the level of refinement seen in antiquity and then in the High Renaissance, late Medieval epigraphy nevertheless exhibits a notable degree of care for producing artfully constructed Gothic letterforms, and this is the case for sculptors’ signatures, as well. The implication is that whoever was executing the signature—be it the eponymous sculptor himself or a specialized assistant—was someone familiar with the most learned script of the day.

In an interesting departure from prevailing trends (including his own), Arnolfo di Cambio’s signature on his ciborium in San Paolo fouri le mura is a highly unusual instance of a late Medieval artist using forms that, while not quite Roman revival, are not truly Gothic, either. The two inscriptions—HOC OPVS FECIT ARNOLFVS on the left, and CVM SVO SOCIO PETRO on the right—are done with a curious mix of letterforms

250 Sparrow 1969, 9-12.
that in some ways approximates those seen in the works of Florentine sculptors from the early fifteenth century, albeit with thicker strokes (fig. 18). To be certain, there are some clear Gothic elements, such as the minuscule $H$ and $N$, the $AR$ ligature, and the $CI$ ligature. And yet many of the other letters suggest an artist aware of Romanesque, and perhaps even Roman, letterforms. The $O$ is notably rounder than typical Gothic examples, and $M$, with its short internal $V$, looks remarkably like the Florentine capital version of the fifteenth century.\footnote{Gray 2005, 7, discussed above.} The letter $V$, which is formed by two straight diagonal strokes (except for its awkward appearance in Arnolfo’s name), is unlike typical examples associated with the Gothic script—the inverted minuscule $N$—and again bears some relation to Roman/Romanesque versions.\footnote{Interestingly, this version of $V$ can also be observed in inscriptions that are decidedly more Gothic, such as that seen in the Santa Maria in Trastevere example, or the signature of Andrea Pisano on his doors for the Florence Baptistery.} Perhaps the use of such lettering was a response or nod to the renowned Roman marble-workers of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries—known to us today as the Cosmati—some of whom signed using lettering that tended toward Romanesque; the signature of Vassalletus on the papal throne in Anagni (c. 1260) is one such example (fig. 88). In this instance Arnolfo, working in Rome, may have wanted to use letterforms in keeping with this local tradition, or he may have been asked to do so by his patrons.

Despite the intriguing example of Arnolfo’s ciborium inscription, it is only in the fifteenth century that sculptors consistently start signing their works with classically-inspired letterforms (or forms they assumed to be classical). Perhaps not surprisingly—given his reputation as a seminal figure in the Italian Renaissance—Ghiberti is the first artist to do so in the signatures I have gathered. His \textit{St John the Baptist}, done for the Arte
di Calimala’s niche on Orsanmichele in 1412-16, features the earliest surviving instance of antique styled capitals;\(^{253}\) both the letters on the Baptist’s scroll and the signature—OPVS LAVRENTII FLORENTINI—on the hem of his cloak (fig. 58) are done using these new sans serif letterforms. For the remainder of his career—and in all his signatures—Ghiberti used lettering similar to this, and he later referred to them as “lettere antiche”.\(^{254}\) Examples of these letters appear again on both sets of doors for the Florence Baptistery. Although scholars have long noted that these forms bear more resemblance to contemporary humanist scripts and Romanesque inscriptions than they do to ancient epigraphy,\(^{255}\) what was important for artists and scholars at the time was that these letter forms were distinctly different from those of traditional Gothic epigraphy.\(^{256}\)

As revolutionary as the sans serif lettering in Ghiberti’s signatures was, the lettering of his contemporary, Donatello, was notably more influential in the first half of the fifteenth century, as well as more recognizably classical, and anticipated the developments of the later Quattrocento. Early examples include the signatures on his Zuccone (Habakkuk) (fig. 27) and the Jeremiah (fig. 28), from the 1420s-30s for the Florence Duomo Campanile,\(^{257}\) as well as those on his tombs for Giovanni Pecci (d 1426) (fig. 29) in Siena Cathedral and Giovanni Crivelli in Santa Maria Aracoeli, Rome (1432-33).\(^{258}\) The lettering of these signatures is related to Ghiberti’s, and exhibits several stylistic traits characteristic of early fifteenth-century Florentine letterforms, e.g., the D with a pinched top, the thin diagonal of N compared to slightly thicker stems, and the

\(^{253}\) Cat. 199. Stiff 2005, 92; Sperling 1985, 48-51.
\(^{254}\) Sperling 1985, 68.
\(^{255}\) Meiss 1960, 99; Sperling 1985, 49-50; Meyer and Shaw 2008, 284.
\(^{256}\) Sperling 1985, 72.
\(^{257}\) Cats. 090 and 091.
\(^{258}\) Cats. 092 and 093. Covi 1963, 8; Meiss 1960, 101; Millard Meiss considered the signatures on the prophet figures to be more “authentically epigraphic” than the less refined script on the Pecci tomb.
narrower proportions of letters like E and L. Yet even in these early signatures there is evidence that Donatello was observing not just contemporary manuscripts and Romanesque inscriptions but true Roman epigraphy as well. The Pecci signature, for example, is the earliest surviving instance of a centered inscription in Renaissance epigraphy, mimicking what had been done in antiquity; this seemingly small detail is a significant departure from Medieval epigraphy, in which an inscription either fills the entire field or is justified only on the left margin. His signatures on the Campanile figures contain similarly interesting elements. In both inscriptions a triangular interpunct is used to separate the “OPVS DONATELLI” (Jeremiah has one at the end, as well). Furthermore, the P of the Jeremiah has an open bowl (the lower part of the bowl’s stroke does not meet the stem). All of these features—the centering, the triangular interpuncts, and the open P—suggest that Donatello was observing and, to an extent, copying Roman inscriptions in the first half of the fifteenth century, making him among the earliest sculptors to do so. Even some of the ostensibly “unclassical” elements, such as the relatively monolinear strokes with little contrast and the letters’ overall simplicity, are indicative of what Sperling claims is a “thorough rejection of the ornamental principles of Gothic lettering.” In all aspects, Donatello makes clear his desire to sign his works using lettere antiche.

259 Gray 2005, 7; Sperling 1985, 117-18 also discusses some traits that are characteristic of Donatello’s early lettering.
260 Sperling 1985, 118.
261 The tomb of Cardinal Consalvo Rodriguez, discussed previously, features a signature that might be classified as centered, although it is complicated by the fact that the inscription directly above is justified to the left margin.
262 Sperling 1985, 121.
263 Sperling 1985, 121-23. Sperling also notes that the open P supports the claim that the figure of Jeremiah was the last to be executed, even while the signatures’ similarities suggest that they are contemporaneous. In the end it is unclear why the P exhibits variation in the two examples.
264 Sperling 1985, 128.
The influence of the new lettering style pioneered by Ghiberti and Donatello can be seen almost immediately in the signatures of contemporary sculptors, and becomes a hallmark of Tuscan sculptors working at home and abroad. Despite variations in style and quality the signatures of central Italian sculptors from this period predominantly exhibit a conscious abandonment of the older, Gothic style, and a turn toward the classically-inspired capitals of the Florentine milieu. The tomb monument for Doge Tommaso Mocenigo in Santi Giovanni e Paolo, Venice, executed by the Tuscan sculptors Piero di Niccolò Lamberti and Giovanni di Martino da Fiesole in 1423, provides a telling example of how important the shift was for certain artists. Although the dedicatory inscription is done using Gothic letterforms, the signature immediately below it is inscribed in a variant of the early fifteenth-century Florentine sans serif capital (fig. 76), a form undeniably related to those seen in contemporary works by Donatello and Ghiberti.265 In Rome, the tomb of Pietro Stefaneschi (d 1417) in Santa Maria in Trastevere (fig. 61) features one of the last extant signatures on a Roman sepulchral monument executed in a purely Gothic script;266 the influence of Donatello’s lettering on his tomb slab for Giovanni Crivelli (1432-33) was almost immediate, and Florentine-style letters were soon used in sculpted monuments across the city.267

If Donatello’s signatures from the first half of the fifteenth century betray his debt to Ghiberti and the Florentine humanist circle, his signatures from later in his career are a testament to the refinements taking place in northern Italy. It is not surprising that the

265 Sperling 1985, 138-40; in her view the lettering style of the signature suggests Piero was the carver.
266 Cat. 207. Gerald Davies, Renascence. The Sculptured Tombs of the Fifteenth Century in Rome (London: John Murray, 1910), 53, writing about this tomb, notes: “It is one of the last in Rome whose inscription is carved in Gothic character.” Also noted by Sperling 1985, 170 n447.
267 Sperling 1985, 170-71; she notes that the 1432 inscription in the cortile of Santa Maria della Anima already uses Donatello’s lettering style.
first appearance of Donatello’s new lettering style is seen on his *Gattamelata*, executed between 1447 and 1453 and located in Padua, which by mid-fifteenth century had become a nucleus of humanist and antiquarian activity. It is entirely possible (and, given the epigraphical evidence, quite likely) that he came into contact with men like Leon Battista Alberti (1404-72) and Cyriac of Ancona (c. 1390-1452), both of whom are important figures in the revival of Roman lettering.\(^{268}\) Whatever their ultimate source, it is clear that the letters in Donatello’s signature—OPVS DONATELLI / FLO—indicate that the sculptor had been looking closely at ancient Roman inscriptions (fig. 30).\(^{269}\) All of the letters in this inscription are notably broader and more regular than previous examples and all have clearly discernible serifs. The *O* is stressed slightly to the left of the vertical axis; *N* has a diagonal thicker than the stems, as well as a serifed upper left terminal and pointed lower right terminal; the arm of *L* has a curved interior and bends slightly upwards; and the serifs on the bar of *T* point to the upper right and lower left. All of these features—save for the thin-thick-thin variation in the strokes of *N*—are readily recognizable characteristics of Trajanic lettering, generally regarded as a high point of ancient Roman epigraphy.\(^{270}\) Indeed, the letters of this signature—carved c. 1450—are very likely the first truly accurate copies of Roman capitals (from a modern perspective) of the Renaissance.\(^{271}\) Given the early appearance of Donatello’s capitals it is worth

\(^{268}\) Mary Bergstein, “Donatello’s *Gattamelata* and its Humanist Audience” (*Renaissance Quarterly* 55, 2002): 833-68, esp. 835; Bergstein also mentions several other notable humanist scholars in the area, including Pietro Donato (Bishop of Padua, 1428-47), Francesco Barbaro (1390-1454), Jacopo Zeno (c. 1418-81), and Palla Strozzi (c. 1373-1462).

\(^{269}\) Cat. 095. Meiss 1960, 102, recognized that these were a departure. Sperling 1985, 185-88, notes this as well, and the description of the lettering in this signature is based upon her own writing.

\(^{270}\) See Catich 1991 (1968), esp. 21.

\(^{271}\) Sperling 1989, 225. It is disappointing to note that despite the extraordinary innovation in the lettering of this signature it is almost never reproduced in the scholarship on Donatello. There are occasional incidental appearances when the photograph of the *Gattamelata* includes the equestrian statue’s base, but
considering the possible exchanges he made have had with another seminal figure in the revival of Roman lettering, the Paduan calligrapher Bartolomeo Sanvito, whose earliest manuscripts date to the 1450s and who had developed a new, highly influential capital script by the following decade. Such a scenario seems probable or even likely given the fact that both men were in Padua around the same years in the mid-fifteenth century.

The last known example of Donatello’s lettering is also his last signature, found on the *Judith and Holofernes* of c. 1455-60. The sculptor signed this work with OPVS DONATELLI / FLO on the cushion at the figures’ base; it is located at the front of the work, below the twisted right hand of Holofernes (fig. 31). Meiss considered the lettering of this signature to be a further development of the Roman capital first used in the *Gattamelata*, though the similarities between the two signatures’ lettering are more noteworthy than the slight differences. As in the equestrian statue’s signature, the letters are wide Roman capitals, with clearly defined serifs and stroke contrast. The only individual letter that is notably different is A, which is wider in the *Judith and Holofernes* and has a lower bar and small notch in the apex. The other difference concerns the unusual arrangement of the letters in the word OPVS, in which each successive letter is nested within the preceding letter, and thus all the letters are entirely contained within the O. This curious arrangement—unique in Donatello’s oeuvre and in Quattrocento

most of the monographs on Donatello fail to reproduce the signature, despite its great importance in the history of Renaissance epigraphy.

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273 Cat. 096.
274 Meiss 1960, 102; Sperling 1985, 190.
signatures in general—seems to underscore the sculptor’s highly personalized and intimate act of signing a work of art.

With the lettering used in his signatures for the *Gattamelata* and *Judith and Holofernes* Donatello inaugurated a new period of revived Roman lettering. The victory for Roman letterforms in Renaissance epigraphy had long been complete; the second half of the fifteenth century was thus concerned with the study and refinement of these letterforms in areas like Rome and parts of northern Italy. And while humanist scholars were making their contributions via manuscripts and treatises, a number of sculptors were busy propagating the new forms via their inscriptions, which often meant via their signatures. Though there are variations in quality and execution, the lettering used by Tuscan sculptors to sign their works in the second half of the fifteenth century is primarily a form of Roman capitals. Prior to about 1480 certain signatures still exhibit qualities found in early fifteenth-century lettering; the OPVS PAVLI and OPVS MINI on Paolo Romano and Mino da Fiesole’s angels for the tympanum of S Giacomo degli Spagnuoli, Rome (c. 1460?) are illustrative examples (fig. 69). The spacing is still compressed (note especially the tight gaps between the AV and in MINI), strokes are rather monoweight, and the letters lack true serifs (although most thicken slightly at their ends). By the 1480s these vestiges of Florentine sans serif lettering mostly disappear, probably due in part to the letterforms propagated by Andrea Bregno in the 1460s and 70s. Common features of this later style include letters with relatively wide proportions;

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275 I have yet to find another example of a Renaissance signature where a word with more than two letters is entirely contained within the confines of a single letter.
276 Stiff 2005, 107, notes that the *Judith and Holofernes* signature “needs explanation, since it is graphically unlike any other of his: the nested treatment of OPVS so contrived and distinctive as to suggest personal work—a statement of intent, the graphic equivalent of a speech act—rather than that of an assistant.”
277 Cats. 257 and 225.
broader and somewhat more uniform spacing between letters; fully developed serifs; and
greater think-thin contrast in strokes than typically seen in Romanesque or early fifteenth-
century lettering. The signatures of diverse sculptors from all across Italy display a
familiarity with and proficiency in these Roman capitals: Matteo Civitali’s signature on
the Tempietto del Volto Santo (1482-4) in Lucca’s cathedral (fig. 63), Pietro
Lombardo’s signature on Dante’s tomb (1483, but reassembled later; fig. 77), and
Antonio Pollaiuolo’s signed tablet for the tomb of Pope Sixtus IV (d. 1484; fig. 13)
originally in Old St Peter’s are just a few of the examples of Roman letters by these and
other artists working at the time.

Sixteenth-century sculptors continue the tradition of using classical letterforms in
their signatures. The leading sculptors of the period sign with inscriptions whose quality
mirrors that seen in other instances of contemporary epigraphic lettering. Early examples
include the signatures of Andrea Sansovino on his figures of the Madonna and Child (fig.
9) and St John the Baptist (both c. 1503) in the cathedral of Genoa. His tombs in Santa
Maria del Popolo, for cardinals Ascanio Sforza and Girolamo Basso della Rovere (c.
1505 and 1507), and his Madonna and Child with St Anne in Rome’s Sant’Agostino
(1510-12) are all signed with similar lettering (figs. 10 and 11), based on the revived
Roman capitals developed in the last decades of the fifteenth century. Works by Tullio
Lombardo, Jacopo Sansovino, and Baccio Bandinelli are all signed using the revived

278 Cat. 211.
279 Cat. 266.
280 Cat. 046. There is a notable exception to this trend: Michelangelo’s signature on his St Peter’s Pietà,
which is executed using capital letters that, while not Gothic, are even less “authentically” classic (from a
modern perspective) than those of the early fifteenth century. It is a curious feature of the signature, and
one that will be addressed later.
Roman capital, although some signatures—such as Bandinelli’s on his copy of the Laocoön—are less faithful to their classical prototypes than others.

**Part III. Commentary and Discussion**

As mentioned previously, the trends in sculptors’ signatures generally mirror those found in the broader realm of Medieval and Renaissance epigraphy. In some instances—Donatello’s *Gattamelata*, for example—the signature is developmentally ahead of the curve, paving the way for future inscriptions. In the following discussion of the information presented above, I will expand on the following points: first, the significance of the signatures’ formal and stylistic characteristics as they relate to Renaissance sculptors’ identity; and second, the potential limitations of examining revived Roman capitals from fifteenth-century Italy with a modern typographical eye, despite the importance and usefulness of such studies.

The choices sculptors made about lettering, while always important, become even more significant in the fifteenth century, when the revival of Roman letterforms made new epigraphic styles available. Ostensibly, sculptors during this period had a variety of alphabetic options from which to choose when signing their works, and the options increased as the century progressed: Romanesque, Gothic, Florentine sans serif, Roman, as well as variations on each of these. These diverse styles were all potential forms that could be chosen for use by Renaissance sculptors. Yet with very few exceptions the leading sculptors of fifteenth-century Italy, those working in or around central and northern Italy, chose to sign in the dominant forms used by their peers—sans serif in the first half of the century, Roman in the latter. On one level this is a choice that reflects the
straightforward following of prevailing trends set by men like Ghiberti, Donatello, and Andrea Bregno; presumably, to sign in Gothic letterforms after the early part of the fifteenth century would have seemed retardataire in light of the period’s epigraphic developments.

Beyond the straightforward component of signing with what was “fashionable”, the use of similar styles in signatures suggests a strong element of group identity and cohesiveness. When Piero di Niccolò Lamberti and Giovanni di Martino da Fiesole signed the tomb of Doge Tommaso Mocenigo their decision to use sans serif lettering—totally at odds with the tomb’s primary inscription—was as much a statement of identity and Tuscan pride as was the inclusion of the cities’ names from which they hailed in the text of the signature. These identifiably Tuscan letterforms made the sculptors’ origins and allegiances clear. Furthermore, inscriptions such as this were also an expression of a sculptor’s broader artistic identity, beyond his particular civic identity. For sculptors working within a humanist milieu in the fifteenth century, the proper appropriation of ancient elements, including letterforms, was a significant component of their self-presentation and fashioning. Thus the use of classical or classically-inspired letters was as much about sculptors linking themselves to their peers as it was about making clear their associations to antiquity. In this sense they called attention to their shared work recovering the glory of antiquity and inserted themselves into a narrative and group framework that had contemporary and ancient components. The result is signatures that are often more about conformity and group identity than individuality, contrary to what many modern perceptions of signatures assume.
Perhaps not surprisingly, one of the exceptions to this situation is Michelangelo. His famous signature on the St Peter’s Pietà is executed in an epigraphic style that is markedly un-classical compared to contemporary examples, and thus highly personal (figs. 65 and 65b).\textsuperscript{281} To note just a few elements, the $M$ features splayed legs and an interior $V$ that does not touch the baseline; the letters are generally narrow, especially the $E$ and $L$; spacing between letters is rather compressed (and becomes increasingly so after his name); letters are nested within each other, such as $C I$ in FACIEBA(T); and the abbreviation used for $N$ in A(N)GELVS is a superscript line with a hump in the middle rather than a simple straight line. In an article dedicated to this signature, Aileen Wang noted that Michelangelo’s “adoption of a decidedly old-fashioned lettering style […] looks back to the humanistic script and art of the early quattrocento, despite the developments that had already been made in Renaissance epigraphy and paleography by this time.”\textsuperscript{282} Though her article is not primarily concerned with the signature’s lettering \textit{per se}, it does correctly call attention to the meaning Michelangelo intended to convey through creative formal and textual elements, such as the division of his name into MICHAEL and A(N)GELVS and the use of a truncated faciebat. And though I disagree with Wang’s assertion that Michelangelo was attempting to imitate fictive Quattrocento writing rather than epigraphy,\textsuperscript{283} I do think she is correct in claiming that the artist’s use of outmoded letterforms is as significant as the other choices he made in signing this work. Furthermore, I believe Michelangelo’s anachronistic lettering highlights the

\textsuperscript{281} Cat. 217.
\textsuperscript{282} Aileen June Wang, “Michelangelo’s Signature” (\textit{The Sixteenth Century Journal} 35, 2004): 447-73, notes this point; see esp. 454-59; and 459 for the quote.
\textsuperscript{283} Wang 2004, 454.
importance that signatures’ formal elements could have for Renaissance sculptors’ identities.

The closest analogs for Michelangelo’s lettering are fifteenth-century inscriptions and signatures up to about 1475. Wang notes the lettering’s similarity to that seen in Donatello’s signatures, which is correct up to his mid-century example on the *Gattamelata*; at that point, Donatello’s lettering becomes the type of Roman capital that Michelangelo deliberately chose not to carve. Rather, the letters on the *Pietà* look back to the Florentine sans serif epigraphic style used in the first half of the fifteenth century by nearly all Tuscan sculptors, as well as to even earlier, Gothic traditions. Even the choice of abbreviation—a superscript line with a hump—is a feature that appears regularly in inscriptions from the first three quarters of the fifteenth century and earlier; Donatello used it, as did Nicola and Giovanni Pisano before him. Though this style of lettering persisted in Rome until around the 1470s, by the time Michelangelo was working on his *Pietà* it had all but disappeared. A papal bull of Sixtus IV from 1475 that features many elements found in Michelangelo’s signature—the non-classical M, nested letters, medieval abbreviations—was already outdated compared to contemporary

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284 Wang 2004, 458-59, notes the signature’s lettering is especially close to the style used by Donatello. I would argue for a broader relation to fifteenth-century sculptors in the Florentine circle, including both Donatello and Ghiberti. Interestingly, all of the elements of this signature also appear in the papal bull of Sixtus IV from 14 July 1475 confirming the primacy of the Lateran basilica, currently displayed at the Lateran. The most notable difference is that the papal bull lettering is more classically Roman than Michelangelo’s Florentine letterforms.

285 Wang 2004, 454-55, notes that this is not a feature commonly found in classical inscriptions, and thus she believes it to be derived from writing rather than epigraphy. Though it is true that this is not a common element of classical epigraphy, it does appear frequently in Medieval and early Renaissance epigraphy. Inscriptions with this sort of abbreviation include Donatello’s tomb of Pope John XXIII in the Florence Baptistery; Donatello and Michelozzo’s Brancacci monument in S Angelo a Nilo, Naples; Luca della Robbia’s Federighi monument in Santa Trinita and his Cantoria in Santa Maria del Fiore, both in Florence; the Medea Colleoni monument by Amadeo in Bergamo; the inscription on the scroll held by the figure of Justice on Nicola Pisano’s Siena Duomo pulpit (Pope-Hennessy 1996, 1, plate 20 p 27); the inscription on the façade of Santa Maria Novella; and Giovanni Pisano’s signature on the Pisa Duomo pulpit. It appears several times in Giovanni Pisano’s signature for the Pisa Duomo pulpit, where it replaces an N in IOHANIS, the same letter Michelangelo replaced.
inscriptions executed for the same pope, such as those originally on Santa Maria del Popolo from 1472. By 1499, when Michelangelo was signing his Pietà, this style had been passé in Rome for nearly three decades.

In choosing to inscribe his name in this manner, Michelangelo appears to be calling attention to an earlier epigraphic and sculptural tradition. The use of such a personal style allowed the young artist to express both his individuality as well as his identification not with his contemporaries but rather with the great Florentine sculptors who came before him. For an artist who famously claimed to have had no teacher in sculpture this was an important component of his identity construction. Had Michelangelo signed using then-current Roman capitals it would have been a nod to contemporaries, or possibly a mark of association with them, both of which were anathema to Michelangelo. Thus the appropriation of old-fashioned lettering is just as significant as Michelangelo’s use of the imperfect verb faciebat or his placement of the signature on a strap running between the breasts of the Virgin. By rejecting contemporary norms for lettering, and thus rejecting larger ideas about a group identity centered around the emulation and recovery of antiquity, Michelangelo called attention to his desire to be considered entirely on his own terms, a sculptor set apart from all other living sculptors.

Michelangelo may have been the most famous sculptor to use such a distinctive signature but he was by no means the only artist to do so. The few other examples of signatures I have found that tend not to conform to prevailing trends illustrate the importance of conformity for most artists. Furthermore, such signatures provide a

286 Meyer and Shaw 2008, 293.
window into those artists for whom the formal elements of a signature were another means of leaving a unique artistic imprint on a work of sculpture. Niccolò dell’Arca’s signature on his Lamentation group, for example, is a highly personal expression of authorship. The forms of the letters are Roman, but their arrangement, with every word featuring nested and joined letters, results in an inscription that is as original and unique as the sculptural group itself. So too the early signature of Giovanni Antonio Amadeo, on the Madonna and Child adored by Certosi (late 1460s; Certosa, Pavia), which features a similarly interesting and unusual disposition of letters. Although practical considerations of available space are no doubt important, such realities need not diminish from the signatures’ originality and personality. In some sense these signatures are illustrative of a few fifteenth-century sculptors trying to express a sense of individuality and creativity through their signatures, even while working within the parameters of established epigraphic norms and conventions. Thus, working within the prevailing current of Roman style lettering, they have adapted contemporary practices to suit their own artistic needs and purposes. In cases such as these we may have a glimpse into the problem of who actually executed a sculpted signature; examples this personal suggest that it was the artist himself.

My final point concerns the issue of the “true” revival of Roman letterforms in the early fifteenth century: to whom does credit belong for this accomplishment? This has been a highly debated topic in modern scholarship on Renaissance typography and epigraphy, with little consensus among scholars. It is an extraordinarily interesting area of study, and one that deserves our attention given the fact that Renaissance scholars

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288 Cat. 242.
289 Cat. 126.
290 Stiff 2005, esp. 111.
themselves seemed concerned with recovering the rules of ancient lettering; furthermore, the forms developed (or redeveloped) in the fifteenth century became the basis of lettering and printing in the West for the next five hundred years. Yet given what scholars have argued about the larger issues of Medieval and Renaissance approaches to copying and antiquity, I believe that focusing only on this debate is anachronistic, especially for the artists on the first half of the Quattrocento. This stance is not intended to downplay the significant advances made in epigraphical lettering from c. 1400 to 1500; even a cursory look at the visual evidence makes it clear that the letters of Bregno from the 1480s are more authentically “Roman” than those of Ghiberti from the first half of the century. Rather, it is crucial to remember that even as artists and calligraphers and humanists were developing and refining their letters they were always operating under the belief that they were copying and producing true Roman capitals, or letters that were intended to be regarded as such. As Christine Sperling has noted, lettere antiche in the humanistic circles of the early fifteenth century referred primarily to letterforms that were pre-Gothic or pre-Contemporary. What changed during the course of the century was what elements were required for letters to be considered lettere antiche, and the requirements of the early Quattrocento were not the same as those from the end of the century.

291 The following discussion is largely based on general views put forth in Richard Krautheimer’s seminal article, “Introduction to an ‘Iconography of Mediaeval Architecture” (Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes 5, 1942), 1-33. The ideas presented in his article have been further developed and applied to Renaissance art by Alexander Nagel and Christopher S. Wood, in “Toward a New Model of Renaissance Anachronism” (Art Bulletin 87, 2005), 403-15. I was inspired to consider lettering through these viewpoints by both Christine Sperling’s research and through discussions with Catherine Kupiec. Nagel and Wood recently published a book that greatly expands on the ideas in their initial Art Bulletin article: Anachronic Renaissance (New York: Zone Books, 2010).
292 Sperling 1985, 72.
My views are an extension of a methodological approach that seeks to situate Medieval and Renaissance copies within their proper intellectual context. As Krautheimer first noted with regard to the substantial variation often seen in architectural copies from the Middle Ages, “the medieval conception of what made one edifice comparable to another was different from our own.”293 For the medieval viewer what mattered was not a faithful replica of a prototype in all of its parts and measurements; rather, a copy could be considered as such as long as it reproduced certain parts of the prototype.294 Confirmation for this view comes from a variety of extant structures, as well as from “copies” in other media, e.g., painted representations of buildings and surviving writings on buildings from Medieval authors. In both cases, a few of a structure’s outstanding elements are enough to stand in for the building entire.295 Though Krautheimer limited his discussion to a group of centrally-planned churches from the ninth through twelfth centuries subsequent scholars have found his contributions to be applicable to a range of architectural structures from the Middle Ages and Renaissance.296

Most recently, Alexander Nagel and Christopher S. Wood have elaborated upon Krautheimer’s concepts and applied them to Renaissance painting and sculpture.297 Their

293 Krautheimer 1942, 3.
294 Krautheimer 1942, 13; he pushes this concept even further by noting that the parts selected for copying “stand in relation to one another which in no way recalls their former association in the model.”
297 Their article was the first of Art Bulletin’s “Interventions” series, in which an article with broad scholarly interest was followed by several responses from other authors, all within the same issue.
argument seeks to re-contextualize ancient artifacts and their Renaissance copies, claiming that “all artifacts…were understood in the pre-modern period to have a double historicity: one might know that they were fabricated in the present or in the recent past but at the same time value them and use them as if they were very old things.” This thought-provoking (and controversial) article has important implications for the entire visual and material culture of the Renaissance, of which lettering is an integral and yet often overlooked part. For humanist scholars and artists alike, epigraphic remains provided a steady stream of ancient artifacts, as did the Carolingian manuscripts that preserved the writings of antiquity. As such, reproductions and copies of these textual artifacts must be considered using an approach that incorporates the findings of Krautheimer and Nagel and Wood. The immediate consequences of this approach are twofold: one is that we need to reconsider the way in which humanist authors thought Carolingian manuscripts to be “ancient”; and two, we must approach revived Roman letterforms from the Renaissance with an appropriately informed period eye.

A discussion of humanist views on Carolingian manuscripts is outside the domain of my study, but the second point is especially important for an examination of Quattrocento sculptors’ signatures, notably those of Ghiberti and Donatello from the first half of the century. To expand on the claim initially made by Sperling, when Ghiberti wrote that he used lettere antiche for his sculptures, he meant it in a way that he and all of


298 Nagel and Wood 2005, 405; their next sentence provides an important comment on this thesis: “This was not a matter of self-delusion or indolence but a function of an entire way of thinking about the historicity of artifacts repeatedly misunderstood by the modern discipline of art history.”

299 Michael Baxandall’s Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century Italy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988; 1st ed. 1972) remains the classic text on considering Renaissance art through a period eye.
his peers understood to be true: that his letters were copies of those used by the ancients, and that they were thus stylistically and historically linked to ancient forms. Similarly, as impressive as the development of Donatello’s lettering is to modern eyes (and no doubt it was appreciated by audiences at the time, as well), from a historical standpoint the lettering used for his early fifteenth-century signatures is every bit as “ancient” as that found on his *Gattamelata* and *Judith and Holofernes*. What mattered in the case of Ghiberti and Donatello and indeed any Renaissance sculptor who signed his works using non-Gothic capitals was that the essential forms and elements of their lettering copied ancient, rather than Medieval, epigraphy; in a very broad sense, this means capital letterforms written without decorative flourishes. That this style of lettering has much in common with Romanesque forms is, from a Renaissance standpoint, largely irrelevant. From their perspective, these were the hallmarks of antiquity. Elements like serifs, stroke contrast, and wide proportions were subordinate to the more general formal characteristics of both the alphabet as a whole and of certain individual letters. An antique $D$, for instance, was—to a fifteenth-century sculptor—a capital $D$; that its top was pinched or that it lacked serifs did nothing to detract from its status as a copy of ancient examples in the context of a classically-inspired Renaissance signature. So too with a letter like $M$, early examples of which are often criticized for the failure of their interior diagonals to meet the baseline. For a fifteenth-century sculptor this characteristic was not an essential part of being considered ancient; what was important was that it did not look like a Gothic $M$, with curving stems or other flourishes.

It is important to consider that the characteristics of individual letters must also be considered with relation to the signature as a whole. Gothic epigraphy often mixed capital
and uncial forms, and thus it is a mistake to consider a capital D in an otherwise Gothic inscription to be intended as a copy of ancient epigraphy. But when the important elements of an inscription consistently refer to ancient sources smaller details, and even individual letters, become less and less significant in and of themselves, and therefore less able to detract from the signature’s status as a copy of lettere antiche. Rather the overall essence of the inscription takes on a classical rather than Gothic character due as much to its reception by a willing and understanding audience—fellow artists and humanists—as to the letters’ characteristics. In this context, many of the more general features of *scriptura monumentalisi* outlined by Catich are applicable here as those that would have been important to early Renaissance sculptors for letters to be considered properly classicizing: an economy of parts, the exclusion of romantic or decorative elements, uprightness, and the absence of ligatures. \(^{300}\) Indeed, the more sophisticated typographical aspects of ancient lettering are only crucial if one’s focus is on epigraphy from Imperial Rome; Republican epigraphy has simpler forms, monoweight strokes, and often very small serifs, if any. \(^{301}\) To the early fifteenth-century sculptors interested in reviving Roman capitals the distinction between Imperial, Trajanic lettering—considered by many modern typographers to be the pinnacle of ancient epigraphy—and earlier, Republican lettering was essentially nonexistent. \(^{302}\) All of it, Republican and Imperial and the Renaissance copies, fell under the rubric of *lettere antiche*, and no doubt this cohesion was further strengthened by the shared use of Latin rather than Italian. \(^{303}\) Thus

\(^{300}\) Catich 1991 (1968), 162, who lists several other elements he considered important from the standpoint of the ancient letter-carver.

\(^{301}\) Meyer and Shaw 2008, 279.

\(^{302}\) Stiff 2005, 106, claims that there is no evidence to support the belief that Quattrocento artists could distinguish between Republican and Imperial letters.

\(^{303}\) The association of certain scripts with certain languages is also seen in early printed books in Italy (and elsewhere). Some fifteenth- and sixteenth-century publishers used Gothic letters primarily for textbooks
when a Renaissance sculptor signed his work in Roman capitals the accompanying appropriation of antique culture was twofold, as both the linguistic and formal elements of his signature linked him to the glory of the ancient world and to his contemporaries involved in that world’s revival. As mentioned previously, within this context the act of signing says as much about group identity for these sculptors as it does about their own individual personalities.
Chapter III. Signatures’ Audiences and Reception

Introduction

Like all texts, sculptors’ signatures assume both an author and a reader or audience of some sort, even if it is only the sculptor himself. Yet the prominence and legibility of most sculptors’ signatures suggests these inscriptions were intended for public or semi-public reception. Questions of audience and reception are thus crucial to an understanding of the signatures on the works of sculpture discussed in my project. No doubt these issues were in the artist’s mind as he chose to inscribe his name and at times other information on his creations. Accordingly, a full understanding of the circumstances surrounding a signature’s production must address issues of its reception when the work of art left the sculptor’s studio.

Questions of audience necessarily imply a form of communication—verbal, visual, textual—between a sender and a receiver. Signatures, as a form of textual communication, necessitate the study of several issues that affect the transmission and reception of written information between senders/creators—the artists—and receivers/audience—the viewing public. With regard to the texts’ creators—the authors of the signatures—certain variables important in other forms of writing or communication are here considered constants; that is, all of the cases I will be addressing involve male Christian sculptors, all of whom primarily lived and worked in Italy. And

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304 Albert Dietl, “In arte peritus. Zur Topik Mittelalterlicher Künstlerinschriften in Italien bis zur Zeit Giovanni Pisano’s” (Römische Historische Mitteilungen 29, 1987): 75-125, esp. 77, notes the public nature of many medieval signatures; the trend continued well into the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries.

yet within this subset of the population variables do emerge, both across time and within the same period. Aspects that might be important for the full understanding of a particular signature might include the following, to name just a few: When was the sculptor working? What was his specific occupation, i.e., sculptor, architect, painter, goldsmith, etc? What city or region was he from? Was he working in his native city or somewhere else? How literate was the artist? What was the artist’s relation to the work’s commissioner?

In the case of the intended audience for signatures, the viewers or receivers, the variables are significantly more numerous. To start, we must consider whether the primary intended reader—or the ideal reader, as envisioned by the person who signed the work—was human or divine. This is an important consideration given the fact that signatures are occasionally located in places that would have been inaccessible or out of view for the normal public, and thus the presence of such signatures may imply a divine viewer. If the receiver is divine, which in this context means the Christian god, is it a specific part of the Trinity? The Virgin? A saint or saints? The whole heavenly court? What was the purpose of such a limited audience? Similar divisions take place in the event that a signature is meant to be appreciated by those in the earthly realm (and the two audiences are not exclusive). Is a signature meant for all viewers? Only literate viewers? Only certain segments of the population? Only the patron, or perhaps even only the artist himself? Or is it a combination? Again, each variable brings up further questions, including the literacy levels of the audience, their potential knowledge of textual precedents or other works of art, their relation to the artist, their own status as authors, and so on. The numerous possibilities are further complicated by the fact that
sculptors typically did not specify their intended audience, although placement and content can give clues to such information.

Of course, despite their status as texts, and the need to consider them with due regard to textual and sometimes even literary criticism, signatures on works of sculpture have unique characteristics that distinguish them from most other written records. For one, they are typically very brief, even if they do consist of much more than just an artist’s name. Further, they are often composed of formulae or topoi that appear with remarkable regularity. Thus an examination of a signature in isolation can be problematic, since it fails to account for textual precedents and history; as important as individual studies are, the brevity and regularity of many signatures demands study with a diachronic lens. Other elements critical to the study of signatures include their placement and visibility, a factor that can change over time; a sculpture intended for a niche high on a cathedral façade undergoes a significant transformation in reception when it is placed at eye level, or interred in a museum, and the same is true for an accompanying signature. Although this is more common several centuries after a work’s creation, occasionally the change in audience happens relatively soon after the work’s completion, as with Donatello’s *Judith and Holofernes* (discussed below). Stylistic considerations, such as lettering or arrangement, are also of special importance, something that is typically not thought of when dealing with other texts.

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308 Although more recently scholars have begun to recognize the importance of the book or text as a work whose appearance could be linked to its meaning. The reduction of a text to nothing more than data is likely a result of modern circumstances; see, e.g., Marco Mostert, “Forgery and Trust,” in *Strategies of...*
In the following section I will examine some of the possibilities offered by variables of sender and audience, as well as intent and reception. I begin with a section on literacy in the later Middle Ages and Renaissance, in order to give the reader an idea of the textual world within which these inscriptions operated. Though it is impossible to establish precise literacy rates the issues raised by scholars of literacy and education allow for compelling observations and conclusions with regard to the ways various people interacted with the written word. After establishing a framework of the problems and implications of period literacy, I move to a discussion of the sculptors, and the significant factors that determine their status as “authors”, before ultimately examining the signatures’ audiences, both intended and accidental. Though most incidents of reception must be theorized or reconstructed via circumstantial evidence, in a few instances—notably with regard to artists discussed by Vasari—we have surviving documentation of a signature’s reception, and these cases will be examined accordingly.

Part I. Literacy in Italy in the Middle Ages and Renaissance

Italy in the later Middle Ages and Renaissance was a literate society. This is not to say that a majority of its population was able to read and write, either in Latin or the vernacular; indeed, it is highly unlikely that individuals with basic literacy ever represented even half of the general public at any given time and place prior to the nineteenth century.\(^{309}\) And yet to limit definitions of literacy and a literate society in such

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Writing: Studies on Text and Trust in the Middle Ages, papers from “Trust in Writing in the Middle Ages” (Utrecht, 28-29 November 2002), ed. Petra Schulte, Marco Mostert, and Irene van Renswoude (Turnhout: Brepols, 2008), 37-59, esp. 48.

\(^{309}\) Paul F. Grendler, *Schooling in Renaissance Italy: Literacy and Learning, 1300-1600* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), 71-8; using later fifteenth-century Florence as a case study, he puts the figure at around 30-33% of the male population.
a way is to approach the subject anachronistically. As scholars like Matthew Innes have
warned, we must remember to consider literacy—as well as separate but related traditions
of orality—in the specific context of the social and cultural world being studied.310
Examined in this way, many of the towns and cities of Italy emerge as rich centers of
textual production and use, such that the written word formed an inescapable part of daily
life for all but the most isolated individuals. Work, religion, government, recreation—all
required varying degrees of interaction with the written word.311 Increasingly, to
participate in daily life in later Medieval Italy meant to participate in literate culture in
some fashion.312

The literary culture of Italy—and indeed of all of Western Europe—was heir to an
intellectual tradition that originated in the Roman world, in which writing played a
significant role.313 No doubt the fall of the Roman Empire had catastrophic effects on
certain secular literary traditions, but Europe was never an exclusively oral society.314
The central role of the Bible in Christianity, for one, made a total collapse of literacy

310 Matthew Innes, “Memory, Orality and Literacy in an Early Medieval Society” (Past & Present 158,
1998), 3-36, esp. 4.
311 See, e.g., Everett 2009, 375; also Camille 1985, esp. 39-40 (who considers Medieval society to be
primarily oral, despite increasing numbers of lay readers in the thirteenth century); and Thomas Behrmann,
“The Development of Pragmatic Literacy in the Lombard City Communes,” in Pragmatic Literacy, East
and West, 1200-1330, ed. Richard Britnell (Woodbridge, UK: The Boydell Press, 1997), 25-41, as well as
312 Authors such as Bäuml have made this claim for medieval society across Europe, as well; see Franz H.
313 Rosalind Thomas, “The Origins of Western Literacy: Literacy in Ancient Greece and Rome,” in The
Cambridge Handbook of Literacy, ed. David R. Olson and Nancy Torrance (Cambridge: Cambridge
University Press, 2009), 346-61; 346-9. Also see, e.g., W. Harris, Ancient Literacy (Cambridge, MA and
London, 1989), who estimated literacy at 10-15% of males during the Julio-Claudian or Antonine rulers
periods; for a critical response, see Humphrey 1991.
314 Everett 2009, 362. Such conclusions, however, are plagued by normal problems of preservation and
survival; see, e.g., Mary Garrison, “‘Send More Socks’: On Mentality and the Preservation Context of
Medieval Letters,” in New approaches to medieval communication, ed. Marco Mostert (Turnhout: Brepols,
impossible.\textsuperscript{315} It is more accurate to say that while many elements of literate society were lost in the centuries immediately following the decline of the Roman Empire, others—such as the legacy of Roman legal studies—remained active, while new elements—like the importance of Scripture—thrived in unprecedented ways.\textsuperscript{316}

By the thirteenth century, Italy and Europe had been witness to two great periods of burgeoning literary activity. If the surviving documentary evidence is an accurate representation of the larger picture, both periods saw an increase in the production of texts and in the ways in which texts and writing were used. The first such instance was in the eighth and ninth centuries during the Carolingian period: manuscript production skyrocketed; new scripts were developed and used as a means of ordering and enriching texts; and attempts were made to reform and standardize Latin orthography and pronunciation.\textsuperscript{317} The next wave of literacy came during the eleventh and twelfth centuries.\textsuperscript{318} The historian Brian Stock sees this period as a turning point in European intellectual history, during which all areas of life became increasingly governed by written communication. Oral communication remained important, but it too acted within a world defined by texts. In Stock’s view these changes were of such significance that by 1100 Western Europe could no longer be accurately described as an oral society, having

\textsuperscript{315} Everett 2009, 367, but also see Michael Camille, “Seeing and Reading: Some Visual Implications of Medieval Literacy and Illiteracy,” \textit{Art History} 8, 1985, 26-49, esp. 28-31, on the importance of the voice and speaking in Medieval epistemology.

\textsuperscript{316} Everett 2009, 364-65.

\textsuperscript{317} On the Carolingian developments, see the many works of Rosamond McKitterick, especially \textit{The Carolingians and the Written Word} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), as well as her essay “Text and image in the Carolingian World,” in \textit{The Uses of Literacy in Early Mediaeval Europe}, ed. Rosamond McKitterick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 297-318, which also contains several other pertinent essays on the written word in the Carolingian period; also Everett 2009, 370.

\textsuperscript{318} On this, see Brian Stock, \textit{The Implications of Literacy: Written Language and Models of Interpretation in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries} (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983).
made the permanent transition to a written one; it was a shift that forever altered the intellectual landscape of European culture.319

Italy in the later Middle Ages is representative of just how literate parts of European society could be during the period. Evidence from a variety of sources underscores the ways in which written communication was used by nearly all levels of society, and attests to the significant increase in these uses from the thirteenth century on. In the north, specifically the Lombard area, there is a jump in the number of charters that survive from the thirteenth century on;320 the period saw a steady rise in books produced in the vernacular, suggesting an increase in lay literacy;321 new forms of trade and commerce—notably in places like Florence and Venice—gave rise to whole new forms of book- and record-keeping, such as ricordanze, for business and personal matters;322 social chronicles emerged as an established tradition in cities like Padua and Florence;323 and the increasing use and availability of paper made writing—and often writing extensively—more economically feasible, even for the middle classes.324

324 Britnell 1997.
Thus Italy from the thirteenth century on was a society for whom written communication touched all levels of life and society, meaning that even those totally unable to read or write often lived and worked within a literate world; as a result, to divide society into “literate” and “illiterate” is anachronistic and misleading. The written word was, in a sense, inescapable, and with the steady growth of vernacular literature and the advent of printing this became even truer in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. And even if a majority of the public never achieved basic literacy skills, the communal nature of so many texts—like so much art from period—ensured that the written word extended to all levels of society. The Liturgy, popular preaching, sacred and secular plays, public spectacles—all relied, to varying degrees, on textual traditions and formed the basis of daily life within an Italian city.

Part II. Sculptors as Authors

As a class of authors, Italian sculptors from the later Middle Ages and Renaissance who signed their works are a highly uniform group, although variations emerge for those artists whose lives are better documented. To begin, these sculptors were universally male. This may seem an obvious point, but it is one worth mentioning given the period’s rise (albeit slight) in female literacy and even female writers, as well as female painters in the sixteenth century. Economically there is greater variation, but generally the majority of sculptors who were heading workshops—and thus signing works—were earning wages comparable to others in the artisanal classes, which is to say

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325 Bäuml 1980, 246, refers to this class of people, who have access to the written word and depend on it for socio-political functions, as “quasi-literate”.
326 Camille 1985, 39; Petrucci 1995, 139-40.
several orders above the manual laborers and several below bankers and merchants.327 Their class was not one of fabulous wealth, but it was also not composed of men living on the margins of society.328

The social world inhabited by these sculptors—a complex issue to which I will return in the following chapter—was similar to their economic one. Sculptors did not occupy the highest levels of ecclesiastical or political life, even if they moved in these circles and worked with these men regularly. The nature of their work, which was at heart manual labor, grouped most sculptors with other skilled laborers and middle-class citizens. But as artists and creative figures they also occupied a more fluid and marginal position within society, one that could change depending on a variety of factors, such as the patrons they worked under or the cities in which they worked. Thus in their capacity as architects, sculptors from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries occupied positions of great authority compared to their craftsman peers. Men like Giovanni Pisano and Arnolfo di Cambio, for example, were appointed to oversee construction of cathedrals in Siena and Florence, respectively. The tradition of sculptors as architects continued into the following centuries with figures such as Brunelleschi in Florence and Michelangelo at St Peter’s in Rome. Sculptors also occasionally held civic appointments: Nanni di Banco served as Consul of the Stoneworkers’ Guild in Florence for two terms (January to April, 1411, and May to August, 1414) and was podestà for two small towns under Florence’s


328 Not surprisingly, Michelangelo is a notable exception; he amassed what amounted to a significant fortune during his lifetime. See Rab Hatfield, The Wealth of Michelangelo (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2002).
control, Montagnana Fiorentina from August 1414 to January 1415 and Castelfranco di Sopra from June to December 1416. A number of sculptors, such as Jacopo della Quercia, were given the honor of knighthood.

Given the economic and social world of sculptors who ran workshops it seems likely that many of them also had at least basic literary skills. Of the artists who held government positions their literacy may be assumed, for even if they could not properly read or write (which seems highly unlikely) they would have been forced to work in the context of a text-based government. For a few sculptors the surviving evidence makes their literacy comparatively clear; e.g., the writings of Ghiberti, or the books listed in an inventory of Giuliano and Benedetto da Maiano’s “scrittoio”. Though we lack concrete evidence for the literary abilities of many other sculptors—especially those in the early part of this study—several factors suggest that sculptors who signed their works were more often than not part of a group in which basic literacy was a relatively common skill.

As mentioned previously, the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries saw a general trend of increasing lay literacy in Italy. Government documents, account books, business letters, personal diaries or ricordanze (over a hundred of which survive in Florence alone from between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries), social chronicles, pilgrimage literature, and descriptions of cities all attest to the expansion of textual production. Furthermore, the monumental building projects of the period, such as the

331 On the Maiano inventory, see Doris Carl, Benedetto da Maiano: A Florentine Sculptor at the Threshold of the High Renaissance (2006); see App of Docs, A, doc 26, no 72, p 462.
332 Petrucci 1995, 139-40.
333 See esp. Hyde 1993; idem, “Some uses of literacy in Venice and Florence in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries” (Transactions of the Royal Historical Society 5:29, 1979): 109-28; and Peter Burke,
great cathedrals, lavish palazzi, and civic government buildings, would have required significant amounts of written communication, just as the period’s growing commercial enterprises did. The surviving contracts and church records, which are significant, no doubt comprise only a fraction of what was actually produced. In this and every period what survives is typically only what is considered worthy of preservation, either via copying into a corpus or through storing the actual document; no doubt there was a vast amount of written communication that dealt with the mundane tasks of building and daily life that has not survived. Nevertheless, what does survive highlights what must have been a rich and varied world of written communication, one that included many members of the artisanal classes.

Further evidence for the expanded presence of literacy among the middle classes comes from what we know about lay education in Italy in the later Middle Ages and Renaissance. While Italy’s famous universities such as those in Bologna and Padua served a crucial role for those citizens able to pursue the highest levels of education, equally important were the many educational opportunities available to the broader public. Documentary evidence suggests that lay education, via communal schools or independent instruction, was increasingly popular in the thirteenth century. In the fourteenth century, when even more evidence survives, it appears that there was an extraordinary increase in the amount of secular education provided in Italy. Nearly all Italian cities and towns had a mix of independent, church, and communal schools.


334 Garrison 1999, 71-4, notes this problem for the early Medieval period, though the point is well taken for all eras.

335 Grendler 1989, 12.
available, sometimes without charge, during the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries.\textsuperscript{336} Education was typically available in either a Latin or Vernacular curriculum, although it is likely that Latin, or a mix of Latin and Italian, was the traditional starting point regardless of the curriculum.\textsuperscript{337}

Evaluating just how many young men (surviving evidence of the formal instruction for women appears to be significantly less common) received a basic education is a difficult task. No doubt it varied from city to city and year to year. Paul Grendler, using the Florentine \textit{catasto} of 1480 for his data, estimates that around 28\% of boys 10-13 attended formal schools that year. Given this, he puts a conservative literacy rate at around 30-33\% of the male population at the time.\textsuperscript{338} Looking at Venice about a century later he comes up with an almost identical figure—about 33\%.\textsuperscript{339} And although these are rates for large, metropolitan cities in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, it is reasonable to think that they were similar even for smaller towns and communes in preceding centuries. Indeed some studies have shown that literacy rates can actually be higher in rural areas where there is a strong religious presence.\textsuperscript{340} As far back as the thirteenth century places like Siena, Arezzo, San Gimignano, Pistoia, and even the small

\begin{footnotes}
\item[336] Grendler 1989, 71.
\item[337] Grendler 1989, 71; 152. See ibid., chapter six, 142-61, for an examination of how Renaissance students would have likely learned to read.
\item[338] Grendler 1989, 77-78. Harvey J. Graff, “On literacy in the Renaissance: Review and reflections,” \textit{History of Education} 12 (1983): 69-85, esp. 73-74, gives a similar estimate of 25-35\% for Florence in the Renaissance. Both figures are at odds with claims made by Giovanni Villani, who, writing around 1338, stated that Florence had about 9,550 to 11,800 boys and girls enrolled in some type of school. Were this the case, it would mean that about 37-45\% of the school age population (given a total population of 120,000) of both sexes attended school. For boys, who were the overwhelming majority of pupils, this would mean their schooling rate was between 67 and 83\%, and thus the highest rate in Europe for centuries. Given the evidence available from later centuries, it seems that Villani’s figures represent a two- or three-fold exaggeration. For a detailed criticism, see Grendler 1989, 71; the numbers are from Villani 1844-45, vol. 3, bk. 11, ch. 94, p. 324; ch. 93 in some editions.
\item[339] Grendler 1989, 46.
\item[340] Everett 2003, 363.
\end{footnotes}
town of Colle di Val d’Elsa had instruction available in at least grammar and often law and medicine, as well.\textsuperscript{341}

Given the evidence, it seems probable that sculptors who ran workshops in the later Middle Ages and Renaissance represented a group with at least basic literacy skills. At a minimum, this would mean the ability to read and write in the vernacular, and probably also a familiarity with Latin pronunciation and maybe some basic word recognition, given that Latin was often the starting point for all students’ reading instruction.\textsuperscript{342} Thus the sculptors who signed their works were literate, male authors, whose social status was fluid but respectable. They typically signed in Latin, and though this does not mean they were all fully literate in Latin, I suggest that the sculptor was at least aware of the meaning of the Latin that he used. In most cases the content was simple—opus so-and-so, or so-and-so \textit{fecit/faciabet}, perhaps with the addition of a city name—and thus easily comprehensible. In the early period of this study, where inscriptions were often longer and more complex, content could be significantly more erudite, with Giovanni Pisano’s inscription being the most famous—and lengthiest—example. And yet even in these instances I believe that the sculptors whose names were being inscribed knew and understood the content of their signatures and had a role in their composition, and should rightly be considered authors.

In exceptionally long or complex instances, such as the aforementioned Giovanni Pisano pulpit or his father’s \textit{Fontana Maggiore} in Perugia, there may have been assistance with the composition or grammar, perhaps by the patron himself or the overseer of the project. Yet this does not necessarily detract from the sculptors’ role as


\textsuperscript{342} Grendler 1989, 152-53, notes that tradition probably dictated starting to learn in Latin, which would have been easy for an Italian speaker given the similarities in sound and pronunciation.
authors. For one, the often personal nature of these longer inscriptions—e.g., Giovanni is referred to as Nicola’s “most dear son” on the fountain signature—highlights their status as texts belonging to these particular artists.\footnote{Moskowitz, \textit{Pisano Pulpits}, 2005, 110.} Furthermore, the act of composing a text can involve varying levels of direct participation by an author; actual pen and paper composition by an author is only one means of textual production. In antiquity, for instance, it was not uncommon for authors to use scribes, a practice foreign to most modern writers.\footnote{See, e.g., Saenger 1982, 371-73; and Petrucci 1995, 145-68.} Despite the potential problem of scribes’ faithfulness to what was uttered—an issue noted even in antiquity—credit still goes to a text’s “author” rather than its scribe, and signatures, as the product of an artist, should be similarly understood.

\textbf{Part III. The Audience/Readers}

Just as important as understanding who the sculptors were is discovering who the readers and viewers were. Although this question is related to larger issues of a work’s audience the two are not necessarily one and the same; the audience for a sculpture and for its signature could be two very different things. Signatures on public monuments may not have been intended to be read by the general public. It is hard to imagine, for instance, that the lengthy signature on Nicola Pisano’s \textit{Fontana Maggiore}, a public monument, was intended to be read and appreciated by everyone who used the fountain; it is unlikely it was read by very young children or working-class women or even most workmen from the lower class. The very fact that signatures almost invariably use Latin automatically implies limitations in the audience. Yet in the case of readily visible inscriptions on public monuments the use of Latin provided only partial control; there
was no reason why educated women or especially precocious children could not form part of a signature’s audience, it was just that they were unlikely to do so. Changes in a sculpture’s location over time could also result in changes of audience that sculptors might not have anticipated. Donatello’s *Judith and Holofernes*, originally located in the Medici palace, was exposed to a much wider audience when it was moved to the rostrum attached to the Palazzo della Signoria in 1495. Furthermore, sculptors could have planned for future audiences that differed from contemporary viewers; the permanent, monumentalizing nature of sculpture makes this a likely scenario. This is a significant point which I will expand upon later.

To examine some of the different audiences sculptors may have tailored their signatures to I will discuss aspects of signatures’ accessibility, or how private or public they would have been. This is not intended to be an exhaustive survey of the types of viewers sculptors may have had in mind; nor should these be considered strict demarcations. Rather, the following examples are meant to demonstrate the potential audience of a signature when a work of sculpture left the artist’s studio.

**Accessibility**

The most exclusive type of signatures—those that were least visible or accessible to the public—are those that would have been legible to only a select group of individuals or a single individual, due either to the signatures’ placement or to the exclusivity of the sculpture in its initial location. Sculptors signing works in these instances may have done so for their eyes only, or for the eyes of a patron or patrons; god or other heavenly figures

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might also be included in this audience, implicitly or explicitly. Hidden signatures, signatures on private works of art, and signatures on sculptures out of normal viewing range can all fall in this category. Signatures in this category may not have been strictly private, but their location or legibility rendered them largely unavailable to anyone outside a very small circle of readers. The signature of Vassallettus on the back of the papal throne in Anagni (c. 1260) is a noteworthy example; presumably only the artist, the pope, and select clergymen would have been able to read the VASALET DE ROMA ME FECIT.\textsuperscript{346} The throne’s location behind the altar, and thus on holy ground, suggests that heavenly readers were intended, as well. Even more exclusive is the signature of another Cosmati master on the entrance wall of the Santa Sanctorum: MAGISTER COSMATVS FECIT HOC OPVS.\textsuperscript{347} Again, the signature’s location on such holy ground implies a celestial readership as well as a highly private earthly one. In instances such as these it seems appropriate to assume that sculptors were hoping for divine appreciation or favor.

Other examples of relatively private signatures include those occasionally found on male portrait busts from the fifteenth century. Antonio Rossellino inscribed the hollowed out base of his bust of Giovanni Chellini (1456) with OPVS ANTONII;\textsuperscript{348} presumably none but the Chellini family and their close associates would have ever been privy to see such a signature (if they even bothered to do so at all). Mino da Fiesole’s inscription on the base of his portrait of Alexo di Luca (1456)—ALEXO DI LVCA MINI 1456—is similarly private in scope,\textsuperscript{349} although its location renders it more immediately

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\textsuperscript{346} Cat. 290.
\textsuperscript{347} Cat. 203.
\textsuperscript{348} Cat. 056. Also inscribed in the base is an inscription identifying the subject: MAG[ISTE]RI IOHAN[N]ES MAG[IST]RI. ANTONII DE S[ANC]TO MINIATE DOCTOR ARTIVM ET MEDICINE. MºCCCCLVI.
\textsuperscript{349} Cat. 221.
visible to this inner circle of viewers. The same sculptor’s signature on a plinth on the back of his bust of Diotisalvi Neroni (1464)—OPVS MINI MCCCCLXIII—is another example of a signature whose initial audience would have been private. And another inscription on a work by Mino da Fiesole provides an exceptionally rare example of a signature in the vernacular on a sculpted female portrait: his Profile of a Lady, in Florence’s Bargello, is inscribed ET IO DA MINO O AVVUTO EL LVME on the base. The many plaques, medals, and small bronzes that appeared with increasing frequency during the fifteenth century are another example of objects with private or semi-private signatures. The small bronze Satyr by Adriano Fiorentino, for example, is signed ADRIANVS FLOR FACIEB on the base underneath the figure, although the signature was concealed enough that it was only rediscovered in 1970.

An interesting example of a signature that was completely and deliberately hidden until its discovery by modern scholars is found on the famed Dioscuri in Rome. The prominent signatures on the works’ bases—OPVS FIDIAE and OPVS PRAXITELES—have long been noted, and in the Middle Ages and Renaissance were believed to be from Roman Antiquity (although the signatures were actually additions from Late Antiquity,

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350 Cat. 223.
351 Cat. 222. The question of whether this is an actual “signature” deserves to be raised, given how different this example is from Mino’s other signatures. Yet the lettering style does not appear out of place given the date, and thus I am inclined to include it as a signature, even if executed by a workshop. So far as I am aware this is the only female portrait bust of the Renaissance that is signed; identifying information of any sort is exceedingly rare on female portrait busts. On this lack of identifying information, see, e.g., Arnold Victor Coonin, “The Most Elusive Woman in Renaissance Art: A Portrait of Marietta Strozzi,” Artibus et Historiae 59 (2009): 41-64. On portrait busts in general, see Irving Lavin, “On the Sources and Meaning of the Renaissance Portrait Bust” (Art Quarterly, XXXIII, 1970): 207-26 [reprinted in Looking at Renaissance Sculpture, ed. Sarah Blake McHam, Cambridge, 1998, pp. 60-78]; Jane Schuyler, Florentine Busts: Sculpted Portraiture in the Fifteenth Century, New York, 1976; and John Pope-Hennessy, Italian Renaissance Sculpture, 4th ed., London, 1996 [reprinted 2000], pp. 181-197.
352 Cat. 002. Per Rinascimento e passione per l’antico: Andrea Riccio e il suo tempo, eds. Andrea Bacchi and Luciana Giacomelli (Trento, 2008), cat. 48.
after the works’ execution). But the group also contains another signature, from the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century, located on the back of the pier supporting the horse signed OPVS PRAXITELIS; it reads ANTICVS MANTVANVS • RF. The inscription is that of the Mantuan sculptor Antico, famous primarily for his small bronze work, but who was also involved in the restoration of the Dioscuri sometime between c. 1495 and 1515 (hence the verb refecit in the signature). It was hidden from view until Arnold Nesselrath discovered the signature while working on scaffolding and studying the Dioscuri. As he noted, the signature, which lacked an audience for some five centuries, appears to be “addressed only to eternity.” Yet it also seems that the signature performed its duty of carrying Antico’s name across the centuries admirably, as the more prominent signatures on the group’s bases had done previously.

Most Medieval and Renaissance sculptures and their accompanying signatures were much more accessible than the examples discussed above. Large-scale sculptural commissions tended to occupy spaces that were available to a broad audience. Many of the sculptures found in churches or religious spaces fall into this category, such as tombs, pulpits, and ciboria, even if the public’s access to sacred spaces was somewhat controlled or limited. Civic sculptures, such as fountains or public tombs or commemorative monuments, were even more public, as they were located in outdoors spaces. With this class of monuments—those intended for public display—the issue of signatures is how

354 Cat. 028.
357 The issue of just how “public” a space a church interior was is not always clear. See, e.g., Everett 2003, 239; also Petrucci 1986.
visible they would have been; e.g., the signature on a cathedral figure, such as on Nanni
di Bartolo’s *Obadiah [Abdias]* (c. 1422), could be illegible to a viewer due to its height,
even if the work itself was public.\(^{358}\). Reconstructing contemporary viewing conditions is
part of this problem, especially with works that have been moved or otherwise
reconstructed. The pulpits by Nicola and Giovanni Pisano provide illustrative examples:
while they were certainly accessible to the general congregation it is unlikely that the
entire congregation would have been able to read (or even see) the pulpits’ inscriptions
(although the fact that later writers—like Vasari—were aware of such signatures suggests
they were still available to those who wished to look). In addition, all of the major pulpits
from this period have been moved or altered in some way from their original locations
and conditions.\(^ {359}\). Despite these problems and potential limitations to visibility, the
signatures still occupied spaces available to public viewing, and thus their reception
should be considered with respect to this larger and more diverse audience than that for
the private examples mentioned previously.

The most public signatures were those on sculptures in outdoor spaces, visible at
all times and to all viewers. Perugia’s *Fontana Maggiore*, signed with a lengthy
inscription crediting Nicola Pisano and his workshop (as well as patrons and sacred and
secular rulers), is a notable example; as the city’s main fountain it was intended not just
for public appreciation but for consistent public use and interaction, as well.\(^ {360}\)

Donatello’s *Gattamelata* in the Piazza del Santo, Padua (ca. 1447-53), signed OPVS

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\(^{358}\) Cat. 236.


DONATELLI / FLO, is another monument in a public space that served as a center of civic life. The three sets of doors on the Florence Baptistery are similarly public monuments adorned with authorial inscriptions: Andrea Pisano’s doors from the 1330s and the two sets by Ghiberti from the first half of the fifteenth century all have signatures visible to any and all passersby. Also included are Ghiberti’s signed figures for Orsanmichele—the St John the Baptist and St Matthew—as well as roughly contemporary figures by Nanni di Bartolo (Obadiah [Abdias], 1422) and Donatello (Habbakuk and Jeremiah, both c. 1427-35) for Florence’s campanile.

As mentioned with earlier examples, despite these works’ public nature it is still questionable how visible some of these signatures would have been when installed at a height of several meters; Nanni di Bartolo’s signature on the prophet’s scroll would not have made reading easy or even possible for unaided eyes at ground level. So too the signatures on the bases of Donatello’s cathedral figures; even with the shadows created by carving letters with deeper v-cuts (compared to ancient epigraphy) it is unlikely most people would have noticed the works’ OPVS DONATELLI, much less been able to read them. For whom these inscriptions were intended is thus not immediately clear, although it seems that in many cases even hard to read signatures were appreciated by a viewing public and succeeded in carrying sculptors’ names into posterity. In other

362 See Edward M. Catich, The Origin of the Serif: Brush Writing & Roman Letters, 2nd ed., ed. Mary W. Gilroy (Davenport, IA: Catich Gallery, 1991; 1st ed. 1968), esp. 75-81; and Christine Margit Sperling, “Artistic Lettering and the Progress of the Antique Revival in the Quattrocento” (PhD dissertation, Brown University, 1985), esp. 13. According to these authors, ancient sculptors used very shallow v-cuts, with an angle of about 105 degrees. The creation of shadows for legibility was not of primary concern, as inscriptions were typically painted with a reddish-orange pigment (mentioned by Pliny in NH, xxxiii, 122; per Catich 1991, 63)
instances it appears that sculptors signed for their eyes alone, either out of a sense of personal satisfaction or perhaps because they identified with the represented figure.

Who Could Read Signatures?

Within the range of audiences—both private and public—that were exposed to signatures questions of literacy and appreciation still deserve consideration. For private works with limited visibility (e.g., intended for divine beings or a handful of viewers such as ecclesiastical figures or a small circle of patrons) literacy can be assumed. Among the clergy, literacy rates were relatively high, and illiteracy among their ranks was a rare and surprising thing; similar claims can be made for men involved in governmental capacities. Unless evidence for a specific example suggests otherwise, the viewers who made up the limited numbers of people with access to chapels, tombs, and restricted church spaces can be considered a fully literate group.

As was noted earlier with regard to the difficulties of assessing literary rates, it is similarly difficult to say what percentage of people could understand signatures on works of sculpture. Yet certain general claims can be made, with the caveat that each case should be evaluated and assessed in its own specific terms. It is unlikely, for example, that the majority of women would have been able to read signatures. The same may be said for the majority of unskilled laborers and daily wage earners who lived on the margins of society; with little opportunity to learn reading or writing it seems probable that most of them also lacked literacy skills. Certain towns had free educational opportunities available for the public good, although schooling for the lowest levels of

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363 Burke 1987, 30-35.
society seems to have been rare.\textsuperscript{364} For women, there were no doubt educational opportunities for those in the upper classes—many of whom were patrons of the arts themselves—or for those in religious orders. And as will be discussed below, even those without any ability to read were not entirely cut off from literate society.

When speaking of skilled artisans, shopkeepers, and merchants the situation is much different; members of these groups were significantly more likely to have had at least basic literacy skills and would have thus been able to read sculptors’ signatures. Most boys of artisan and merchant families probably received some education,\textsuperscript{365} and even rudimentary reading abilities would have been sufficient to appreciate the majority of signatures, especially as they became increasingly formulaic in the fifteenth century. Though basic literacy for most working- and merchant-class men meant vernacular literacy, this did not necessarily mean they were entirely closed off from the Latin used in sculpted signatures. For one, scholars as far back as Dante noted the overlap between the Romance language of \textit{sì} and Latin.\textsuperscript{366} And the Tuscan variety of Romance, which gained increasing popularity as the “standard” form of Italian thanks to writers like Dante and Petrarch, was the closest of the dialects to Latin.\textsuperscript{367} Furthermore, surviving primers used for teaching Renaissance pupils suggest that Latin phonetics and pronunciation would have formed the basis of any education. The closeness of the two languages’ phonetic systems made this possible; in Italian, for example, every syllable has one vowel, whereas in Latin every syllable has either one vowel or diphthong.\textsuperscript{368} Primers also

\textsuperscript{364} Grendler 1989, 13, 102-8.
\textsuperscript{365} Grendler 1989, 102-8.
\textsuperscript{366} Everett 2003, 137.
\textsuperscript{368} Grendler 1989, 153.
typically started with a Latin prayer, the *Pater Noster*, making some measure of Latin almost inescapable.\(^{369}\) And even without specific instruction in Latin, the similarities of the two languages’ pronunciation system, combined with Italian’s simple phonological structure and relatively transparent orthography,\(^{370}\) would have meant that sounding out a line of Latin was not beyond an educated person’s abilities.\(^{371}\) From a phonetic standpoint, a phrase like OPVS DONATELLI contains nothing that would be unintelligible to someone with even basic Italian literacy.\(^{372}\)

Evidence for this slippage between Latin and Italian comes from one of the rare extant wooden sculptures that was signed. On the bases of a Virgin Annunciate and Angel Gabriel, from 1369 and 1370, respectively, are a pair of inscriptions that give credit to the works’ patrons, the church’s rectors, and the artist. The inscription on the Angel Gabriel, which includes the artist’s signature, reads: QUESTO ANGNIOL FECE FARE L’ARTE DE CALCULARI ANGIELUS SCULPSIT ET PINSIT AL TENPO DI TOFO BARTALINI RECTORE MCCCLXX (“This angel the guild of the shoemakers had made. Angelo sculpted and painted it at the time when Tofo Bartalini was rector 1370”).\(^{373}\) In this instance there is a mix of Latin and Italian words that appear curious to the modern reader until we remember that vernacular and Latin, rather than being distinct

\(^{369}\) Grendler 1989, 154-55.

\(^{370}\) On reading acquisition in different languages, see, e.g., Usha Goswami, “The Basic Processes in Reading: Insights from Neuroscience,” in *The Cambridge Handbook of Literacy*, ed. David R. Olson and Nancy Torrance (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009): 134-51. The survival of Psalters that contained Latin also suggests an increase in the number of lay readers who understood at least some Latin, at least for devotional purposes; see Camille 1985, 39.

\(^{371}\) Beyond issues of mutual intelligibility, there is also the fact that people acquire literacy in first and second languages through a variety of means, not all of which leave remnants for us to study. See, e.g., Michael Richter, “Monolingualism and Multilingualism in the 14th Century” (*Historiographia Linguistica* VII:1/2, 1980): 211-20.


poles, existed along a continuum. Sculpsit and pinsit appear to us as Latin, and Angielus is recognizable as the nominative form of the artist’s name, “Angelo”, but other words, as well as much of the grammar, are closer to modern Italian. Interestingly, the actual signature embedded within the longer inscription—ANGIELUS SCULPSIT ET PINSIT—is the only part that we would recognize as “uncorrupted” Latin. It is hard to believe that any literate Italian would have been unable to read this portion of the text, despite being able to read the rest of it.

Even those audience members who lacked any ability to read Latin or the vernacular on their own were not cut off entirely from sculptors’ signatures. Many of the monuments intended for public display would often have been appreciated by groups of people rather than by individuals. They formed the focal points of religious ceremonies, as with Orcagna’s Tabernacle in Orsanmichele, and they often served as, or were located at, critical centers of town life, like Nicola Pisano’s Fontana Maggiore or Donatello’s Gattamelata. Any group of viewers was likely to include individuals with varying levels of literacy or illiteracy. This shared appreciation of art in many ways mirrored contemporary textual reception, which was often a communal activity. For a variety of reasons—religious, political, civic—texts were read or performed in public,

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374 This mix of Latin and the Vernacular is also seen in wills, a point brought to my attention by Dr Benjamin Paul.
375 It is possible that the sculptor knew just enough Latin to sign his name, perhaps from seeing other signatures or from his training, but not enough to complete the entire inscription in Latin. I thank Chiara Scappini for suggesting this to me.
377 Moskowitz 2001, 35-44.
giving illiterate individuals access to a literate world.\textsuperscript{379} Given this context, it is likely that inscriptions—including signatures—were similarly read and even discussed; as the historian Pierre Riché remarked, “why would it have been engraved if not to be read?”\textsuperscript{380}

Thus in some sense the audience for signatures on public sculptures was potentially open to anyone who cared to look or listen.

**The intended audience and effect**

Just because large segments of the middle and even lower classes were exposed to sculptors’ signatures and possibly even able (or made) to understand them does not mean that they were whom the signatures were primarily intended for. If Medieval and Renaissance sculptors had the general public and their immediate contemporaries first in mind when they signed works they would have done better to simply use the vernacular. Yet Renaissance sculptors in bronze and marble consistently chose to execute their signatures in Latin.\textsuperscript{381} The decision to do so suggests that some sculptors had other aims in mind when inscribing their works with statements of authorship. The appeal of Latin, as opposed to the vernacular, was twofold: it commanded a degree of exclusivity and respect, and it guaranteed a certain degree of long-term security.

\textsuperscript{379} Innes 1998, 4. This sort of collective or communal reading and sharing of texts was also part of the way literate individuals read; see, e.g., Anthony Grafton, *Commerce with the Classics: Ancient Books and Renaissance Readers* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1997), esp. 43-49.

\textsuperscript{380} Riché, *Education…*, 181, quoted in Everett 2003, 237.

\textsuperscript{381} Signatures in the vernacular on Renaissance sculptures are exceedingly rare. In addition to the mixed Latin-Italian example cited above, I am aware of the following two examples: Mino da Fiesole, *Profile of a Lady*, in Florence’s Bargello, signed ET IO • DA • MINO • O AVVUTO • EL LVME on the base; and Niccolò Tribolo, *Assumption of the Virgin*, Cappella delle Reliquie, San Petronio, Bologna (1537), which is signed TRIBOLO.FIORENTINO.FACEVA. There is another work in the Bargello, a Eucharistic tabernacle attributed to the circle of Mino da Fieslo, that is signed OPERA DI MINO, although I question the signature’s authenticity.
The exclusivity and perceived superiority of Latin in the Middle Ages and Renaissance is well-documented and was commented upon as far back as the early fourteenth century. The association of Latin with the Church, with the classical texts of antiquity, and with university studies no doubt contributed to the prestige of the language. Simply entering the Latin curricula, as opposed to the vernacular, was often enough to move a boy of modest social standing into a more rarified strata of society. Sculptors’ use of Latin was thus a means of addressing—and, in a sense, inserting themselves into—a class of citizens they might not ordinarily be associated with. By using Latin, sculptors were making it clear whom they considered to be their peers and their audience. For a group of individuals whose position in society was typically marginal at best this was an important benefit to signing a public monument. Yet it is significant that over the course of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries many sculptors’ signatures, despite the continued use of Latin, did become available to a wider segment of the population. Changes such as shorter signatures, increasingly formulaic signatures, more legible lettering styles, and the disappearance of erudite abbreviations made fifteenth- and sixteenth-century inscriptions open to more people than ever before. It seems that fifteenth-century sculptors,

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383 Grendler 1989, 409. Although the links between Latin and Italy’s vernaculars made for some degree of overlap, the curricula for a Latin and a vernacular education were two different courses. These two paths coexisted throughout most of the Renaissance, with Latin being the more highly regarded of the two.

384 On the trends that made signatures increasingly available, see the chapters on content and lettering in the current dissertation. Even someone as erudite as Petrarch complained about the difficulty of reading the Gothic script, stating it was “vaga…ac luxurians littera, qualis est scriptorum seu verius pictorum nostri temporis, longe oculos mulcens prope autem afficiens ac fatigans, quasi ad aliiu quam ad legendum sit inventa.” Quoted in Dario A Covi, “Lettering in Fifteenth Century Florentine Painting” (Art Bulletin 45, 1963), 1-17; 3, and 3 n17.
although looking for exclusivity, were more concerned than their predecessors with making their names available to the general populace.\textsuperscript{385}

The other advantage of Latin was its perceived permanence and authority. Unlike the variable and shifting vernacular tongues of Italy, Latin represented a degree of stability and security for sculptors who wished to ensure the future legibility of their signatures; the extraordinary number of material remains from antiquity attested to this.\textsuperscript{386} Essentially, Latin was a way of improving the chances that future artists (and scholars) would be able to read these statements of authorship. Artists were aware of ancient inscriptions, and the fact that they could be read and appreciated in modern times no doubt contributed to the idea that their own Latin inscriptions would carry their names to future generations. As early as the late thirteenth and early fourteenth century Paduan scholars were reviving interest in classical—and thus Latin—epigraphy,\textsuperscript{387} and artists of the fifteenth century, including Donatello and Mantegna, are known to have studied ancient inscriptions. The survival of so many Latin inscriptions lent further weight to a language that already carried associations of permanence and stability, thanks to its use in inscriptions recording laws and papal bulls, its appearance in patrons’ inscriptions meant for posterity,\textsuperscript{388} and its status as the international language of diplomatic, legal, religious,

\textsuperscript{385} This apparent interest in better legibility comes on the heels of the humanists’ similar interest in more legible scripts for their manuscripts; Starleen K. Meyer and Paul Shaw, “Towards a New Understanding of the Revival of Roman Capitals and the Achievement of Andrea Bregno,” in Andrea Bregno: Il senso della forma nella cultura artistica del Rinascimento, ed Claudio Crescentini and Claudio Strinati (Florence: Maschietto, 2008), 276-331, esp. 283-84.

\textsuperscript{386} On which, see esp. Phyllis P. Bober, and Ruth Rubinstein, Renaissance Artists and Antique Sculpture: A Handbook of Sources (London: Harvey Miller, 1986); Salvatore Settis (ed.), Memoria dell’antico nell’arte italiana, 3 vols. (Turin: Giulio Einaudi editore, 1986); as well as the online database CENSUS of Antique Works of Art and Architecture known in the Renaissance (http://www.census.de/).


and scientific affairs. Latin thus ensured that current and future generations would not only be able to read and appreciate sculptors’ signatures—a critical issue when taking into account the international audience of much church and pilgrimage art—but also that they would trust in the claims made by such signatures. For in addition to the authority already carried by the written word was the added weight of history and Latinity, which is to say the authority of learned, Latin and ecclesiastic and humanistic culture. In such instances, a statement of authorship by a single sculptor—even on a sculpture that was the result of significant workshop collaboration—effectively rendered the named sculptor the sole author of the work; if what was inscribed in stone or metal said it was so, the force of history, language, and textual authority made it so.

Part IV. The evidence for signatures’ reception

The question of how signatures were actually received, or of whether they were in fact read by anyone outside the sculptor’s workshop, is difficult to answer for many of the surviving examples. Yet in certain instances other textual sources—including other signatures—make it clear that signatures were in fact read, both by artists’ contemporaries and those who came after them. In the following section I will examine some of the evidence to support the idea that signatures had a very real audience, and that they often succeeded in accomplishing what their presumed goal was: the carrying of an artist’s name into succeeding centuries.

Mostert 2008, 40-49, discusses how this authority of the text—the idea that texts can contain only true statements—may have been part of the belief system for semi-literate persons in the Middle Ages. He cites modern research with semi-illiterates that indicates they believe written sentences must be “true”, i.e., they do not think it is possible to write untrue statements. Research of this sort could have interesting implications for the study of Medieval and Renaissance reception of the written word across levels of society and literary abilities.
Giovanni Pisano’s inscription on his Pisa pulpit provides some early support for the notion that sculptors’ patrons and peers were aware of and read artists’ signatures. As scholars have long noted, Giovanni’s signature fails to mention the name of Burgundio di Tado, the operaio of the Pisa Duomo, with whom the sculptor had had a troubled relationship.\(^3\) The problems between Burgundio and Giovanni were bad enough that eventually the commune had to appoint a third party—Nello di Falcone—to take over as administrator of the project. Significantly, Nello is mentioned in Giovanni’s signature, as is Count Federigo da Montefeltro; the relevant portion reads, “The hands, alone in their skill, of Giovanni (son of the late Nicola) carved this work here when thirteen hundred and eleven full years of our Lord had passed, while Federigo, count of Montefeltro ruled over the Pisans, of one accord and yet separate with Nello di Falcone assisting, concerned not only with this work but also with the rules of the craft.”\(^4\) That Burgundio was aware of this omission—and presumably displeased by it—is made evident by the fact that he then placed his own inscription on the exterior of the south aisle of the Pisa Duomo, recording the pulpit’s start and completion and making no mention of Giovanni Pisano.\(^5\) It seems clear in this instance that artist and patron were both vying for

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\(^4\)(HOC OPVS HIC ANNIS DOMINI SCVLPSERE JOHANNIS ARTE MANVS SOLE QVONDAM NATIQVE NICHOLE CVRSIS VNDENIS TERCENTVM MILLEQVE PLENIS JAM DOMINANTE PISIS CONCORDIBVS ATQVE DIVISIS COMITE TVNC DICO MONTISFELTRI FREDERICO HIC ASSISTENTE NELLO FALCONIS HABENTE HOC OPVS IN CVRA NEC NON OPERE QVOQVE IVRA; translation taken from (with minor modifications), Ladis 2001, 14-15 n21.)

authorial credit, and both were aware of the power of inscriptions to make and preserve such claims.

If Burgundio’s inscription suggests that contemporaries at least occasionally read signatures, Giorgio Vasari’s *Lives* offers evidence that inscriptions also worked as vehicles for posterity, and that signatures found an audience long after they had been executed. Vasari’s seminal history of art contains at least forty references to artists’ signatures, including around two dozen full or partial transcriptions. Although not always the case, many of his transcriptions of sculptors’ signatures are noteworthy for their accuracy, meeting or exceeding the quality found in much modern scholarship. He gives a portion of Nicola Pisano’s Pisa pulpit signature as “*Anno milleno centum bis bisqve trideno / Hoc opus insigne sculpit Nicola Pisanus*”, which is correct apart from a slight change in word order for BIS CENTVM BISQVE.393 Giovanni Pisano’s signature on his Pisa Duomo pulpit is also mentioned and a few verses are given, also accurately, although Vasari does not transcribe it in full “in order to be less boring to the reader.”394 His transcription of Orcagna’s signature on the Orsanmichele tabernacle is entirely accurate: “scrisse da basso nel marmo queste parole: ANDREAS CIONIS PICTOR FLORENTINUS ORATORII ARCHIMAGISTER EXTITIT HUJUS, MCCCLIX.”395

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393 Vasari-Milanesi 1906, I, 304; he also omits the final line. The full signature, correctly transcribed, is: *ANNO MILLENO BIS CENTVM BISQVE TRICENO H(OC) OP(VS) INSIGNE SCVLPSIT NICOLA PISA(NVS) LAVDETVR DINGNE TAM BENE DOCTA MANVS.*

394 Vasari does, however, get the date wrong. He writes: “Fu finita quest’opera l’anno 1320 [sic], come appare in certi versi che sono intorno al detto pergamo, che dicono così: *Laudo Deum verum, per quem sunt optima rerum / Qui dedit has puras homini formare figuras; / Hoc opus his annis Domini sculpsero Johannis / Arte manus sole quondam, natique Nicole, / Cursis undenis tercentum, milleque plenis, ecc. Con altri tredici versi, i quai non si scrivono per meno essere noiosi a chi legge, e perché questi bastano non solo a far fede che il detto pergamo è di mano di Giovanni, ma che gli uomini di que’ tempo erano in tutte le cose così fatti.” Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite de’ più eccellenti pittori scultori ed architettori*, ed. Gaetano Milanesi (Florence, G. C. Sansoni, 1906), vol. I, 316-17.

When discussing Orcagna Vasari even includes a comparison of the artist’s signatures in painting versus sculpture, noting, “he used to write in his pictures: fece Andrea di Cione sculptore; and in his sculptures: fece Andrea di Cione pittore; wanting his painting to be known by his sculpture, and his sculpture by his painting.”\textsuperscript{396} This contention is confirmed in at least one work of sculpture, the tabernacle in Orsanmichele, which the artist signed as ANDREAS CIONIS PICTOR.\textsuperscript{397}

Transcriptions of this sort are notably less frequent in Parts II and III of Vasari’s Lives, and in general signatures are mentioned less and less, though they do appear throughout the entire work. Jacopo dell Quercia’s signature in Lucca, from the Trenta Altar, is correctly transcribed, even if its specific location is not accurate (Vasari claims it is on tomb slabs; it is actually beneath a relief of the Virgin and Child).\textsuperscript{398} He is more accurate in his knowledge of where Ghiberti’s signature on the St John the Baptist is placed, which he notes is on the figure’s mantle.\textsuperscript{399} The biography of Donatello opens with a statement about the artist’s signatures, as Vasari writes, correctly, that “Donatello” was how the sculptor chose to sign his works (as opposed to his given name, Donato).\textsuperscript{400} Other fifteenth- and sixteenth-century artists—painters and sculptors—whose signatures are mentioned include Paolo Uccello, Bartolommeo Bellano, Pisanello, Mantegna, Raphael, and Michelangelo. In many of these cases the Vasari simply states that an artist placed his name on a work; perhaps the decreasing length of signatures made their full

\textsuperscript{396} “Il quale usò nelle sue pitture dire: fece Andrea di Cione scultore; e nelle sculture: fece Andrea di Cione pittore; volendo che la pittura si sapesse nella scultura, e la scultura nella pittura.” Vasari-Milanesi 1906, I, 607.
\textsuperscript{397} Cat. 017.
\textsuperscript{398} “…nelle quali lapide sono queste parole: Hoc opus fecit Iacobus magistri Petri de Senis 1422.” Vasari-Milanesi 1906, II, 115.
\textsuperscript{399} “…ed in quella, nel manto, fece un fregio di lettere, scrivendovi il suo nome.” Vasari-Milanesi 1906, II, 232.
\textsuperscript{400} “Donato, il quale fu chiamato dai suoi Donatello, e così si sottoscrisse in alcune delle sue opere…” Vasari-Milanesi 1906, II, 396.
transcription seem less important, or perhaps the increasing amount of information from other sources (including living artists) made them less valuable as a source of data.

Although he does not always give reasons for why artists signed, in the instances where Vasari does offer an explanation it is usually due to a degree of satisfaction or pride. Thus when discussing Nicola Pisano’s Pisa Baptistery pulpit he writes, “And because it seemed to him, as was true, he had made a work worthy of praise, he carved at the foot these verses”.401 Regarding Donatello’s Judith and Holofernes Vasari claims: “and he was so satisfied with this work, that he wanted (which he had not done in others) to place his name on it, as can be seen in these words Donatelli opus.”402 It is strange that although Vasari gets this signature roughly correct, he mistakenly claims that Donatello did not sign other works, contradicting what he claimed in the opening sentence of this biography.

Perhaps most famous is Vasari’s explanation—which reads almost like an apology—of why Michelangelo signed his St Peter’s Pietà, “The force of love of Michelangelo, together with the great effort in this work, were such that on it (which he did not do on another work) he left his name written across a strap that encircles the breast of Our Lady.” In the event that this explanation was not sufficient, he then gives another reason for Michelangelo’s Pietà signature:

…one day Michelangelo, entering inside where it was placed, found there a great number of Lombard foreigners who were praising it greatly; one of the these asked another who had made it, and he responded: “Our Gobbo from Milan.” Michelangelo stayed quiet, although it seemed strange to him that his work should

402 “…e si di questa opera si soddisfece, che volle (il che non aveva fatto nelle altre) porvi il nome suo, come si vede in quelle parole Donatelli opus.” Vasari-Milanesi 1906, II, 406.
One night he shut himself inside there with a little light, and having brought his chisels, carved his name on it.\textsuperscript{403} Again the implication is a desire to be properly credited for one’s work. For Vasari then—an artist himself—satisfaction with one’s work, the recognition that it is a thing well-executed, and a desire to ensure viewers knew who the author of a work was were all reasons to sign, suggesting that future generations—such as himself, from the vantage point of those artists in preceding centuries—were among the intended audiences for sculptors’ signatures.

Occasionally, Vasari suggests that signatures are not to be trusted entirely, another interesting point to consider within the context of audience reception. In the life of Nicola and Giovanni Pisano the author questions an alleged inscription in the Badia of Settimo: “And although one reads on the campanile of said Badià, in a marble epitaph, \textit{Gugliel. me fecit}, it is known nevertheless by its manner that it was governed by the counsel of Nicola [Pisano].”\textsuperscript{404} Although Vasari is wrong about the inscription’s content (it actually refers to a donor, not an architect),\textsuperscript{405} my point remains valid: he was aware that signatures might not always represent true authorship. Another example comes from his section on the Bellini family. In discussing some paintings by Giovanni Bellini in San Francesco della Vigna (Venice), Vasari writes that “in that place there was put another

\begin{footnotesize}  
\footnote{403}{The following is Vasari’s explanation of the signature: “Potè l’amor di Michelagnolo, e la fatica insieme in questa opera tanto, che quivi (quello che in altra opera più non fece) lasciò il suo nome scritto attraverso in una cintola che il petto della Nostra Donna soccigne: nascendo che un giorno Michelagnolo entrando drento dove l’è posta, vi trovò gran numero di forestieri Lombardi, che la lodavano molto; un de’quali domandò a un di quegli chi l’aveva fatta, rispose: Il Gobbo nostro da Milano. Michelagnolo stette cheto, e quasi gli parve strano che le sue fatiche fussino attribuite a un altro. Una notte vi se serrò dentro con un lumicino, e avendo portato gli scarpegli, vi intagliò il suo nome.” Vasari-Milanesi 1906, VII, 151-52. For discussion and criticism of this story, see Aileen June Wang, “Michelangelo’s Signature” (\textit{The Sixteenth Century Journal} 35, 2004), 447-73.}
\footnote{404}{“E sebbene si legge nel campanile di detta Badià, in un epitaffio di marmo: \textit{Gugliel. me fecit}, si conosce nondimeno alla maniera, che si governava col consiglio di Niccola.” Vasari-Milanesi 1906, I, 298.}
\footnote{405}{Milanesi, in Vasari-Milanesi 1906, I, 298 n2, notes that Vasari is in error regarding this inscription. According to Milanesi (citing Manni in the \textit{Discorsi} of Vincenzo Borghini, vol. I, p. 133), the inscription actually reads “\textit{comitis Guielmi tempore fecit}” and refers to a donor, not the architect of the Badià.}
\end{footnotesize}
[painting] with the name of Giovanni, but not so beautiful or so well conducted as the
first; and some believe that this last one for the most part was executed by Girolamo
Mocetto, pupil of Giovanni.” Both of these anecdotes are interesting for the
implications they have for signatures’ reception: one, they represent further confirmation
that certain people read signatures, and two, they imply that the claims of signatures
could be trumped by popular belief or common knowledge. The examples suggest a
world in which even texts that are inscribed in stone or metal are subject to critical
examination by certain segments of their audiences.

As a final point, the strongest and most extensive evidence for signatures’
reception and appreciation comes from the signatures themselves. As scholars like Peter
C. Claussen and Albert Dietl have noted, Medieval sculptors typically followed textual
traditions set by their peers or used earlier *topoi* when signing their works, clear
indication that they saw and read the signatures of other sculptors. Fifteenth- and
sixteenth-century sculptors appear to have copied their peers’ signatures with similar
regularity. Within a few years of Ghiberti signing his works using *opus* and his name in
the genitive, executed in *lettere antiche*, other sculptors were following suit. Many of
them also ceased to insert mentions of fame or skill, again in imitation of what was
current for other leading sculptors like Donatello and Mino da Fiesole. Just under half of

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406 “…in luogo del quale ne fu messo un altro col nome del medesimo Giovanni, ma non così bello nè così
ben condotto come il primo; e credono alcuni, che questo ultimo per lo più fusse lavorato da Girolamo

407 Peter Cornelius Claussen, “Früher Künstlerstolz: Mittelalterliche Signaturen als Quelle der
Kunstsoziologie,” in *Bauwerk und Bildwerk im Hochmittelalter: Anschauliche Beiträge zur Kultur- und
Sozialgeschichte*, eds. Karl Clausberg, Dieter Kimpel, Hans-Joachim Kunst, Robert Suckale (Anabas-
bis zur Zeit Giovanni Pisano” (*Römische Historische Mitteilungen* 29, 1987): 75-125; and ibid., *Die
Sprache der Signatur. Die mittelalterlichen Künstlerinschriften Italiens*, (Italienische Forschungen des
Kunsthistorischen Instituts in Florenz - Max-Planck- Institut, Vierte Folge 6). München: Deutscher
Kunstverlag 2009.
the signatures from the fifteenth century (64 of 127) are signed using the _opus_ + artist’s name formula, indicating the great extent to which sculptors read and copied the inscriptions of their peers. A similar phenomenon occurs at the turn of that century, when sculptors begin using the imperfect _faciebat_; shortly after its initial appearance in the 1490s it set off a wave of imitators and became one of the most popular means of signing a sculpture.

In certain cases both formal and textual elements were imitated, again attesting to the close attention artists often paid to the signatures of their contemporaries. When Cellini placed his signature for the _Perseus_—_BENVENVTVS CELLINVS CIVIS FLORENT FACIEBAT MDLIII_—on a band running across the figure’s chest (fig. 23) it was a means of quoting Michelangelo’s signature on his _Pietà_, located on the Virgin’s strap.\(^{408}\) Even more straightforward is the signature of Giovanni Lippi on his copy (c. 1540s) of Michelangelo’s _Pietà_; _IO LIPPVS STAT EX IMITATIONE FACIEBAT_, on a strap across the Virgin’s chest.\(^{409}\) Clearly the evidence suggests that, like any other element in a work of art, signatures were something to be appreciated and copied by other artists. Thus via direct observation or word of mouth or written sources signatures were read, appreciated, and dispersed to a wide audience, making artists all the more cognizant of the potential benefits to be gained from signing their works.

**Conclusion**

Italy in the later Middle Ages and Renaissance was a world with a rich tradition of writing and literacy, and sculptors’ signatures were part of that literary sphere.

\(^{408}\) Cat. 074.  
\(^{409}\) Cat. 151.
Regardless of sculptors’ own literate abilities—which were likely better than is often assumed—they chose to present themselves as a part of a textual tradition. Their intended audience would have been their peers, including artists and patrons, and their descendants. The presence of comparatively good educational opportunities for the merchant and artisanal classes meant that signatures would have been able to be appreciated by a large portion of the population, and the communal nature of art and texts meant nearly all citizens who participated in daily life had the ability to appreciate and comprehend signatures. Textual sources, including other inscriptions, written accounts, and other signatures, all support the notion that signatures were in fact read and appreciated—and even questioned—both at the time of their production and long after their authors had died.
Chapter IV. Some Remarks on the Status and Identity of Sculptors

Introduction

The status of Medieval and Renaissance sculptors was a complex and mutable phenomenon, varying as much from person to person and place to place as it did over time. Indeed, it is my belief that individual differences were significantly greater than those observed diachronically; that is, when it came to status and renown, an artist like Michelangelo had less in common with most of his peers and workshop members than he did with a sculptor of the caliber of Giovanni Pisano, his predecessor by two centuries. The result is an inability to sustain old views on the evolutionary “rise of the artist” in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Italy, as well as the recognition that the opposite viewpoint—that sculptors were consistently appreciated and celebrated during the Middle Ages and Renaissance—is just as inaccurate. The growing body of literature on Medieval artists and artisans, much of which seeks to correctly restore their creativity, agency, and a sense of identity, has helped to dispel the persistent myth of a Middle Ages that considered painters and sculptors to be nothing more than anonymous mechanical craftsmen. Conversely, several notable writings on the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries have—also correctly—provided criticism and balance to Vasari’s view of the Renaissance as being populated by a series of artistic giants who resurrected the status of the visual arts and broke free from the Medieval tradition. We are thus left with a

410 See, for example, the essays in L’artista medievale, ed. Maria Monica Donato (Pisa: Classe di Lettere e Filosofia, 2003); Andrew Martindale, The Rise of the Artist in the Middle Ages and Early Renaissance (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1972), esp 97-106.
411 Data on the “anonymous” masons and craftsmen provided in Richard A. Goldthwaite, The Building of Renaissance Florence (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980), is one example; also Wallace; Nagel and Wood, to some extent.
picture of Italy that, in some ways, looks very similar over the course of the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries. The following chapter will explore issues of artistic status and identity in Italy in the Middle Ages and Renaissance, with a particular focus on sculptors. My aim is to illustrate that artistic mastery and expertise were appreciated, to varying degrees, throughout the Middle Ages; that in every period a few artists were always praised and given special treatment; that artists were long cognizant of and confident in their creative abilities; and that they were always, to some extent, marginal figures. In short, what emerges is a series of highly celebrated and sought-after master craftsmen or artists who, despite their renown, were always somewhat marginal figures, and who never represented the norm for artists or artisans.

This last point makes the status of the sculptor throughout my period a particularly complicated issue, although it is the goal of the current chapter to unravel some of these difficult issues. I begin by examining the current scholarship and trends in thinking pertinent to these issues. Following this, the remainder of the chapter is devoted to remarks about the social status of sculptors over the three hundred years covered by my study. Finally, the discussion will be expanded to include elements of selfhood and identity that I believe are crucial to our understanding of late Medieval and early Renaissance artistic identity, especially with regard to an examination of their signatures.

**Current Scholarship and Trends in Thinking**

The belief that “modern” notions of artistic status and identity trace back to the Italian Renaissance have their origins in the nineteenth-century writings of Jacob Burckhardt, and there has been no shortage of scholars since then who have taken up related or
similar claims. Modern scholarship that supports this view of the sixteenth century as a pivotal time for artistic status starts with Martin Kemp in his article, “The ‘Super-artist’ as Genius: The Sixteenth-Century View.” Similarly, Joanna Woods-Marsden’s *Renaissance Self-Portraiture: The Visual Construction of Identity and the Social Status of the Artist,* argued that only in the late sixteenth century did artists become comfortable with presenting themselves as artists, *per se.* A related work is Patricia A. Emison’s *Creating the “Divine” Artist: From Dante to Michelangelo,* in which the author traces the rise of artistic giants (like Michelangelo) while simultaneously acknowledging that the artist’s status in the Renaissance became increasingly varied and complex, a point that rightly undermines conventional beliefs of an evolutionary and linear “rise” in status. Though the authors’ methods and evidence differ, all are in concordance with the notion that the sixteenth century was a truly pivotal time for artists’ status and the concept of artistic genius. These beliefs are echoed in the writings of

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412 Jacob Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy,* 98.
415 Patricia A. Emison, *Creating the “Divine” Artist: From Dante to Michelangelo* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 5: “It might be more accurate to say that artists’ reputations became a complicated phenomenon during the Renaissance, than that they rose. The fact that occasionally an artist effected such an extraordinary change in status did not uniformly shift the status of their comrades.”
others who argue there is a rise in the importance of individual identity during the
Renaissance. In recent years all of these claims have come under increasing scrutiny.

Some of the earliest revisionist scholarship in the field of Renaissance art history
dealt with the crucial and often overlooked role that the courts played in the development
of visual culture during the period. A seminal work on the topic, and one with a special
focus on artistic standing, is Martin Warnke’s Hofkünstler: zur Vorgeschichte des
modernen Künstlers, which asserts the importance of court culture in Italy as well as
across Europe in the development and rise of the artist’s status. Warnke calls attention
to the fact that many advances typically associated with Florentine humanistic circles,
such as the inclusion of an artist in a patron’s inner circle, have their origins in the
courts. More recent studies, such as the compilation of essays in Artists at Court:
Image-Making and Identity, 1300 – 1550, have added to the growing body of
information on this important aspect of Renaissance history, further refining our views on
where exactly artists fit within the great courts of early modern Europe. These studies
also highlight the importance of place when addressing questions of artistic status and
appreciation, a factor whose overlooked significance is becoming increasingly

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417 As in, e.g., Jan Bialostocki, “Begegnungen mit dem Ich in der Kunst” (Artibus et historiae I, 1980): 25-
45, who, discussing Medieval signatures, claims: “Doch erscheint nie die Signatur in der ersten Person
formuliert. Es wird immer objektiv berichtet.” (27) The claim is refuted by, among others, Peter Cornelius
Claussen, “L’anonimato dell’artista gotico. La realtà di un mito”, in L’artista medievale, ed. Maria Monica

418 Martin Warnke, Hofkünstler: zur Vorgeschichte des modernen Künstlers (Köln: DuMont, 1985);
published in English as The Court Artist: On the Ancestry of the Modern Artist, trans. David McIntock

419 Warnke, 57, writes, “That Lorenzo de’ Medici should have made the medallist Bertoldo di Giovanni his
familiaris is often cited in support of the hypothesis that a new and exalted conception of the sovereign
artist arose in Florence about 1480. From a court perspective, however, this title was a late imitation of
princely practice, which had known it since the fourteenth century, Giotto being one of the Florentines to
receive the title.” He also notes that Mantegna, working in Mantua, had held this title for over two decades
by this point.

420 Stephen J. Campbell, ed, Artists at Court: Image-Making and Identity, 1300 – 1550 (Boston: Isabella
As mentioned previously, the scholarship of a number of Medievalists is challenging many of the views espoused by Renaissance scholars. Some of the most important research on artists’ status in the Middle Ages has come out of work being done at the Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa, where work is also underway on artists’ signatures. Recently, the Scuola published proceedings from a conference held in 1999, with articles devoted primarily to ideas and concepts surrounding the Medieval artist.\footnote{L’artista medievale, ed. Maria Monica Donato (Pisa: Classe di Lettere e Filosofia, 2003).} Taken together, the articles illustrate that, contrary to Patricia Emison’s claim “that artists’ reputations became a complicated phenomenon during the Renaissance,” artists’ status and reputations were dizzyingly complex phenomena in the centuries leading up to the Renaissance, as well. In the face of these scholars’ findings the old views that position the Medieval craftsman in opposition to the Renaissance artist are no longer tenable. Several notable German scholars, in particular, are redefining our knowledge of artists and artisans in the Middle Ages, with the result that our picture of artists in Early Modern Europe is also changing.\footnote{See, e.g., Peter Cornelius Claussen, “L’anonimato dell’artista gotico. La realtà di un mito”, in L’artista medievale, ed. Maria Monica Donato (Pisa: Classe di Lettere e Filosofia, 2003): 283-97; Albert Dietl, “Iscrizioni e mobilità. Sulla mobilità degli artisti italiani nel medioevo”, in ibid.: 239-50; and Dieter Kimpel and Robert Suckale, Die gotische Architektur in Frankreich 1130-1270 (München: Hirmer, 1985).}

A note on the term “status”

One of the more difficult issues to address is what exactly is meant by the term “status”, especially for a group of individuals whose range includes the anonymous masses of stone-cutters and a figure as monumental as the “divine” Michelangelo. The
status of a sculptor, and the associated connotations, could be very different in the eyes of a fifteenth-century merchant, prince, and humanist author; one might consider status to mean socioeconomic standing, another might think courtly presence is most important, and another might place greatest emphasis on intellectual merit.

In perhaps the simplest and most straightforward sense of status—socioeconomic status—the evidence is relatively clear: artists in general, sculptors included, were of the same rank as other artisans and shopkeepers, like goldsmiths, shoemakers, or tailors. It is not incidental that the artists of this period tended to be children of men employed in the very same categories; Verrocchio, for instance, was the son of a brickmaker; Andrea del Sarto was the son of a tailor. Economically, the men of this class were far below the financially comfortable bankers and traders, but “were many steps above the poverty-stricken manual laborers and wool workers.” Tax records from the period indicate that most were not very well off and would never achieve any great degree of wealth or fame, though many chose to increase what wealth they had through landholdings or other businesses.

As important as these financial considerations are, they do not fully encompass what is meant by artistic status and identity. That sculptors prior to the sixteenth century

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424 Peter Burke, *The Italian Renaissance: Culture and Society in Italy*, 2nd ed (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 47; “the writers tended to be the children of nobles and professionals; the contrast is a dramatic one.” Also see Ames-Lewis 2000, 19 – 20.
427 Kempers 1992, 152. Writing on painters, Kempers 1992, 154, notes: “Ample documentation exists for the status associated with the painting profession between around 1270 and 1350. The evidence of payments received, purchases of houses and land, mentions of sums of money paid for images in death announcements of patrons’ legacies and donations to ecclesiastical bodies makes it quite clear that only a fraction of those practising this profession rose to the higher ranks of society.”
(or even in the sixteenth century) tended not to have the wealth of their patrons and social superiors does not mean that some among them could not rise to positions of significant fame and esteem. In a more abstract sense, in the eyes of some contemporary writers and thinkers, a number of artists could and did aspire to a form of social and intellectual recognition far above that of a “mere” craftsman, far above even their patrons. They could be mentioned by chroniclers, included in courtly circles, and memorialized with their own sculpted monuments. Furthermore, in many cases it appears they possessed a remarkable sense of their own creative agency and considerable confidence in their abilities. It is this notion of status and identity, which may be as broad as it is vague, that is ultimately most relevant to a discussion of what it meant to be a sculptor working in the Middle Ages and Renaissance. Because there is no common currency for this type of status, as there is for economic standing for instance, the issue is more difficult to assess, and will require an examination of related factors, such as the status of a work of art, the role of geographic and temporal factors, and the role of self-conception.

**Part I. The Status of Sculpture**

The available evidence from the Middle Ages and Renaissance suggests that sculpture, especially large scale sculpture, was generally held in high regard, potentially above painting in certain contexts, such as for funerary or civic monuments. Contributing to this prestige was the fact that the medium boasted an unbroken pedigree from ancient times attested by the survival of physical remains and textual sources. Literary references can be found from classical and biblical authors, and material remains survived in abundance
The history and apparent permanence of the medium were no doubt attractive to a variety of artists, commentators, and patrons. Furthermore, the survival of ancient inscriptions provided a textual link to antiquity for contemporary sculptors who signed their works, especially as they did so using increasingly *all’antica* letterforms starting in the fifteenth century.

Works by Medieval and Renaissance artists illustrate an awareness and admiration of antique sculpture. Nicola Pisano, in the second half of the thirteenth century, was already incorporating the forms of surviving antiquities, most notably in his pulpit for the Pisa Baptistry. Such recognizable quotations suggest, to some degree, an appreciation for the material culture of the ancients, as the sources of Nicola’s inspiration could have been recognized by anyone familiar with the antiquities located in that city’s Camposanto. By the fifteenth century ancient medals and coins provided further models for imitation, and along with large-scale surviving antiquities they offered additional confirmation of the value previously accorded to the plastic arts. Sculptors in this period also began actively collecting classical works and fragments; Ghiberti, Donatello, Jacopo della Quercia, Matteo Civitali, and Andrea Bregno are all known to have owned antiquities, and all incorporated varying degrees of antique sources in their work. The survival of such antiquities offered support for the belief in sculpture’s perceived permanence, a quality accorded significant value during the Italian Renaissance and one

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430 Scholars have long noted the importance of the ancient sarcophagus of Hippolytus for numerous elements in this pulpit’s *Adoration of the Magi*. See, for example, L. J. Freeman, *Italian Sculpture of the Renaissance* (New York: The Macmillan company, 1901; republished 2004 by Kessinger Publishing), 40-42; also Moskowitz 2001, 23-31.
that helped increase the prestige associated with the plastic arts. Tullio Lombardo, in a letter of 18 June 1526, writes that:

[…] painting is an ephemeral and unstable thing, while sculpture is much more incomparable and not to be compared in any way with painting, because the sculpture of the ancients can be seen up to our time, while of their painting there is really nothing to be seen.

The importance of being able to see, and even own, works by the ancients was not lost on Italian Renaissance sculptors, for it gave hope to the idea that their own creations might carry their fame into posterity.

Textual sources offer further evidence for the appreciation of sculpture, both ancient and modern. The great fourteenth-century humanist Petrarch noted that “countless statues” from antiquity survived in his day, and his friend and pupil Giovanni Dondi recorded the admiration often accorded to such works. In truth, early modern praise of statuary engaged a lineage of writings on sculpture that stretched back to antiquity. Virgil’s Aeneid contains a rather lengthy passage (some hundred lines) on the imagery found on the “divinely wrought” shield of Aeneas. Pliny, in his Natural History, includes chapters on famous sculptors and their works, and includes a short

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433 Emison 2004, 16, “The Renaissance, though an epoch of great change, was a period in love with the idea of permanence.”
434 Letter to Marco Casalini of Rovigo, quoted in Ames-Lewis 2000, 153. It is best to consider Tullio’s statements with a critical eye, and the reader is warned not to apply his views to the population as a whole. As a cautionary note, Ames-Lewis, 153, points out that by this time Tullio’s statement might “suggest that the arguments advanced by Leonardo in his observations, and by Raphael and others in practice, had prevailed.” For a discussion of these arguments, and their specific relationship to Leonardo’s writings on the paragone, see Farago 1992, esp 3-144.
436 For the text of Dondi’s letter and a translation, see Erwin Panofsky, Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art (Copenhagen: Russah & Company, Ltd, 1960), 208-10. Also see Michael Baxandall, Giotto and the Orators (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), 52-3.
437 For medieval sources on sculpture, see Antje Middeldorf Kosegarten, “Remarks on Some Medieval Descriptions of Sculpture,” Santa Maria del Fiore: The Cathedral and Its Sculpture (Florence, Cadmo 2001) 19-46.
438 Virgil, Aeneid, VIII, vv 625-731; includes a lengthy discussion of the sculpted imagery found on the shield of Aeneas.
discussion of artists’ signatures in his preface. The Bible also contains notable
mentions of sculpted works, in its descriptions of the Tabernacle of Moses, the Golden
Calf, and the furnishings in Solomon’s Temple. Needless to say, all of the preceding
sources were available to writers and philosophers in the Middle Ages.

Equally important, though with a different purpose, were the patristic texts, many
of which warn against the worship of sculpted idols. Comments by eighth- and ninth-
century Carolingian theologians on the Byzantine iconoclastic controversy also mention
sculpted images. If many of the Christian writings are principally concerned with the
potential dangers of sculpture these fears are potent testaments to the power of three-
dimensional imagery. Even Petrarch, despite his apparent ambivalence about the visual
arts, noted precisely these dangers. A section of his De remediis utriusque fortunae
(Remedies for Fortune Fair and Foul) cautions his readers against idolatry or the
excessive admiration of sculpted works, while simultaneously recognizing the pleasure

439 Pliny, Natural History, books XXXIV-XXXVI; see Baxandall 1971, 64. The preface contains the
famous reference to the “faciebat” signatures that were later copied by Renaissance artists (for more on
which see Chapter I of this dissertation): “…I should like to be accepted on the same basis as those
founders of the arts of painting and sculpture who, as you will find in my book, inscribed their completed
works, even those we never tire of admiring, with a sort of provisional signature—Apelles faciebat, for
instance, or Polyclitus faciebat: ‘Apelles has been at work on this’—as if art was something always in
progress and incomplete; so that in the face of any criticisms the artist could still fall back on our
forbearance as having intended to improve anything a work might leave to be desired, if only he had not
been interrupted. There is a wealth of diffidence in their inscribing all their works as if these were just at
their latest state, and as if fate had torn them away from work on each one. Not more than three works of
art, I believe, are recorded as being inscribed as actually finished: fecit.” (Baxandall 1971, 64; see NH,
Praef., 26)
440 See Exodus 25, 18-20; Exodus 32, 4; 1 Kings 6, 23ff; and 1 Kings 7, 13ff.
441 E.g., Tertullian (c 160-220), Arnobius (d c 327), Lactanius (c 250-after 317), St Jerome (340/50-
419/20), and St Augustine (354-430). Per Kosegarten 2001, 20.
443 Petrarch’s views on the visual arts have been given a significant amount of attention in the literature.
See, eg, Baxandall 1971, 53, and passim; Ernest H. Wilkins, “On Petrarch’s Appreciation of Art”
(Speculum 36, 1961), 299-301; Meredith J. Gill, Augustine in the Italian Renaissance: Art and Philosophy
from Petrarch to Michelangelo (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Anne Dunlop, “Allegory,
painting and Petrarch” (Word and Image 24, 2008), 77-91; Maurizio Bettini, Francesco Petrarca sulle arti
figurative: Tra Plinio e sant’Agostino (Livorno: Sillabe, 2002).
that may be gained from looking at them.\textsuperscript{444} Indeed, Petrarch’s longest remark about a work of art concerns a sculpture, a twelfth-century polychromed stucco relief of St Ambrose in Sant’Ambrogio, Milan. He writes:

I gaze upwards at his statue, standing on the highest walls, which it is said closely resembles him, and often venerate it as though it were alive and breathing. This is not an insignificant reward for coming here, for the great authority of his face, the great dignity of his eyebrows and the great tranquility in his eyes are inexpressible; it lacks only a voice for one to see the living Ambrose.\textsuperscript{445}

Yet even here Petrarch seems to betray his ambivalence; scholars have noted that the praise is rather formulaic (eg, the classical trope “it lacks only a voice”),\textsuperscript{446} and, to modern eyes at least, the actual work fails to align with the humanist’s claims of verisimilitude.\textsuperscript{447}

Beyond the associations with the much revered creations of the ancients, there was also the simple factor of cost; in their material and labor requirements sculpted monuments typically necessitated a significant amount of capital. Though a comparison of pricing between various media and across centuries is likely to be fraught with problems,\textsuperscript{448} data on individual monuments illustrate the vast sums sculpture commanded. For his \textit{St Matthew}, Ghiberti is reported to have been paid around 1100

\textsuperscript{444} Petrarck’s Remedies for Fortune Fair and Foul, trans Conrad H. Rawski (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991), vol 1, 134.
\textsuperscript{446} See, eg, Baxandall 1971, 51-52.
\textsuperscript{447} A notable exception is Wilkins 1961, who writes, “There could hardly be a more perfect correspondence in spirit between a work of art and a comment upon it.” (299) Later in the article the author declares Trecento sculpture inferior to Trecento painting (301), so perhaps his judgment should be considered with caution.
\textsuperscript{448} For a brief discussion of these difficulties see D. S. Chambers, \textit{Patrons and Artists in the Italian Renaissance} (London: MacMillan and Co, Ltd, 1970), xxx – xxxii.
florins;\textsuperscript{449} Jacopo della Quercia’s contract for his work on the door of San Petronio in Bologna claimed that he was to receive 3600 florins;\textsuperscript{450} and Michelangelo, nearly a hundred years later, had contracts for between 10,000 and 16,500 florins for the various tomb projects of Julius II.\textsuperscript{451} Similarly, for their new chapel in San Lorenzo, the Medici spent over 10,000 florins between March 1520 and October 1521 alone.\textsuperscript{452} As a point of general reference a good basic salary for a lawyer in the first several decades of the fifteenth century was around 350 florins.\textsuperscript{453} Again, it must be stressed that several factors, including whether the cost of material was factored into the contract and whether what was paid actually reflects contract prices, make the available data questionable. Despite this precaution, the numbers certainly indicate that sculpture was an undertaking of no small expense, a fact corroborated by the types of individuals and groups who typically commissioned sculpted monuments.

The fact that so much sculpture in the late Middle Ages and early Renaissance was associated with some type of building project lends further support to the notion that it was held in high regard. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries sculptors most often found employment creating ornament for the many cathedrals and related building projects in cities like Pisa, Siena, Orvieto, and Florence. This proximity to great architecture would have only enhanced sculpture’s prestige, for architecture had long

\textsuperscript{449} Chambers 1970, 42.
\textsuperscript{450} Chambers 1970, 4.
\textsuperscript{451} Chambers 1970, xxxi, n 2.
\textsuperscript{453} Chambers 1970, xxxiii. For a more detailed analysis of the economic standing and purchasing power of working-class individuals, see Alessia Meneghin, “The flip side of shopping for clothing in late medieval Tuscany. The ‘ricordanze’ of a second-hand clothing dealer, Taddeo di Chelli (1390-1408), and a wage-earner employed by the commune, Piero Puro di Francesco da Vicchio (1413-1465)” (PhD dissertation, University of St Andrews, UK, 2011).
been considered superior to the traditional “representational arts”.\footnote{Note, e.g., Vitruvius’s treatise on architecture: \textit{Vitruvius: The Ten Books on Architecture}, trans. Morris Hicky Morgan (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1914).} The dignity of architecture, and even its status as a liberal art, was rarely questioned; for one it required the use of intellectual skills such as math and geometry, and in addition patrons typically had a direct and substantial interest in their projects, even if only a financial one.\footnote{Ames-Lewis 2000, 4; Emison 2004, 64.} Adding to the profession’s honor were contemporary views of God as a type of architect of the Universe.\footnote{See, for example, Spiro Kostof, “The Architect in the Middle Ages, East and West,” in \textit{The Architect: Chapters in the History of the Profession}, ed. Spiro Kostof (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), 59-95.} Sculpture, by aligning itself with architecture, could thus appropriate some of the glory traditionally reserved for the building arts.\footnote{Ames-Lewis 2000, 4, notes, “Not surprisingly, therefore, architecture was an occupation to which artists aspired, as a means to advance their social status and their acceptance within intellectually sophisticated circles.”}

Evidence in the form of civic and religious patronage also highlights the esteem traditionally accorded to works of sculpture; short of an entire building, there was no greater way for a patron or group of patrons to honor an individual. Examples from the period are abundant, notably in the many tombs dedicated to saints, such as Nicola Pisano’s \textit{Arca di San Domenico},\footnote{Anita Fiderer Moskowitz, \textit{Nicola Pisano’s Arca di San Domenico and Its Legacy}. (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994).} Tino di Camaino’s \textit{Altar of San Ranierus},\footnote{Moskowitz 2001, 102 – 104.} and the \textit{Arca di San Cerbone} by Goro di Gregorio,\footnote{Moskowitz 2001, 114 – 117.} to name only a few. Starting with Arnolfo di Cambio’s \textit{Guillaume de Bray Monument} of the late thirteenth century, monuments to noteworthy individuals begin to appear with greater and greater frequency; cardinals, popes, and secular rulers all commissioned extravagant sepulchral monuments for themselves, a practice which perhaps culminated in the infamous “tragedy” of Michelangelo’s tomb for Julius II, a project that occupied the artist to varying degrees for
some four decades.\textsuperscript{461} The great Angevin tombs of the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries offer numerous other instances of this trend.\textsuperscript{462} Civic projects from the period further underscore the value placed on sculpted monuments, as indicated by the number of fifteenth-century monuments planned by various cities for literary figures from Roman antiquity,\textsuperscript{463} as well as the series of humanist tombs erected during the same period.\textsuperscript{464} The fact that important public commissions from the period were often awarded based on competitions also suggests that patrons were keen to acquire the “best” available works, implying that a means of evaluating artistic merit was either developing or was already commonplace.\textsuperscript{465} In light of the available evidence on such public monuments, the value and honorific qualities of sculpture suggest that contemporary patrons considered it of special quality and significance.\textsuperscript{466}

Part II. The Status of the Sculptors

As the preceding examples illustrate, sculpted monuments from the period could

\textsuperscript{461} On Arnolfo, see Anna Maria d’Achille, \textit{Da Pietro d’Oderisio ad Arnolfo di Cambio: Studi sulla Scultura a Roma nel Duecento} (Rome: Edizioni Sintesi Informazione, 2000); and Angiola Maria Romanini, \textit{Arnolfo di Cambio e lo “Stil Novo” del Gotico Italiano}, 2\textsuperscript{nd} ed. (Florence: Sansoni, 1980); for the tomb project of Julius II see Mary D. Garrard, “The liberal arts and Michelangelo’s first project for the tomb of Julius II” (\textit{Viator} 15, 1984), 335-404; and William E. Wallace, ed., \textit{Michelangelo: Selected Scholarship in English}, vol 4, \textit{Tomb of Julius II and Other Works in Rome} (New York: Garland, 1995).

\textsuperscript{462} For example, the tombs Tino di Camaino sculpted for Catherine of Austria (c 1323), Mary of Hungary (1326), Charles of Calabria, and Mary of Valois (both in the 1330s); Robert of Anjou’s tomb (c 1345) by Giovanni and Pacio Bertini da Firenze; and the early fifteenth-century monument to King Ladislas; see Moskowitz 2001, 180 – 198. There was some debate in the fifteenth century on whether tombs were private or public monuments; Alberti saw them as religious, and therefore public, works; Pontanus, writing at the end of the century, considered them to be private; see Warnke 1993, 194.

\textsuperscript{463} On which see Sarah Blake McHam, “Renaissance monuments to favourite sons” (\textit{Renaissance Studies} 19, 2005), 458-86.


\textsuperscript{465} See Antje Middeldorf Kosegarten, “The Origins of Artistic Competition in Italy (Forms of Competition between Artists before the Contest for the Florentine Baptistry Doors Won by Ghiberti in 1401),” in \textit{Lorenzo Ghiberti nel suo tempo: Atti del convegno internazionale di studi} (Florence, 1980), 167-86.

\textsuperscript{466} Interestingly, Warnke 1993, 193, notes how these public monuments, “which the rulers increasingly used for purposes of public representation, enhanced the status of the sculptors, but also subjected them to special controls, since in Italy their works might become objects of ridicule and inspire satirical verses.”
and often did command a considerable degree of admiration, respect, and praise. At issue is whether the opinions and accolades that could be accorded to great sculpture were transferable to the monuments’ creators, which is another matter entirely. The question of their status is a far more difficult one to answer, and the available evidence suggests that there is no one answer, as will be discussed in this chapter.\textsuperscript{467} The social standing of the sculptor was never a constant. Thus, it is perhaps best to consider first the multiple variables that could affect the sculptor’s status, rather than try to attempt to provide an overarching answer.

One of the most important factors to take into account when examining the status of a sculptor, indeed of any artist during the late Middle Ages and Renaissance, is the artisan’s closeness to the trade of architecture. As mentioned, architecture had long been seen as distinct from and even superior to the other visual arts;\textsuperscript{468} it had the prestige of traditionally being considered a liberal as opposed to a mechanical art.\textsuperscript{469} Vitruvius, in his \textit{De architectu}, the only surviving text from antiquity on art available to Renaissance readers,\textsuperscript{470} noted how knowledge of architecture “is the child of practice and theory;”\textsuperscript{471} the architect, therefore, must

be educated, skilful with the pencil, instructed in geometry, know much history, have followed the philosophers with attention, understand music, have some knowledge of medicine, know the opinions of the jurists, and be acquainted with

\textsuperscript{467} Emison 2004, 7-8, points out the “anomalous social position” of the artist in general, who could sometimes live like a courtier or distinguished citizen despite not having the “requisite family background.”
\textsuperscript{469} Ames-Lewis 2000, 66 – 67. Kosegarten 1978, 170, notes that as early as the twelfth century the architect Buschetto, responsible for the Pisa Duomo, was given a sepulchral monument by the commune that was “fully comparable with certain tombs of nobles in the years around 1100.”
\textsuperscript{470} Emison 2004, 20.
astronomy and the theory of the heavens.\textsuperscript{472}

This sort of broad base of knowledge, no doubt attractive to humanist scholars, ensured that architects were perceived to be engaged in an activity more mental than physical, an important factor in social status, especially in the context of courtly circles.\textsuperscript{473}

For a sculptor in Italy, then, working as an architect was often a relatively secure means of elevating one’s status.\textsuperscript{474} Painters, too, looked to this as a way of climbing the social ladder, though sculptors had the advantage of working in materials and on projects much more intimately associated with the building arts.\textsuperscript{475} Because there was no established guild system for architects (though there was one for masons) building masters of the period had to be pulled from the memberships of other guilds.\textsuperscript{476} As attested to by men like Giovanni Pisano, Arnolfo di Cambio, Brunelleschi, Ghiberti, Michelozzo, Filarete, and Michelangelo, the transition from sculptor to architect was a natural one.\textsuperscript{477} Though most of these figures would attain recognition for their sculpture independent of their architectural work, there can be little doubt that each artist’s

\textsuperscript{472} Vitruvius 1914, I,i,3.

\textsuperscript{473} Woods-Marsden 1998, 3, notes that a profession’s social standing in Renaissance Italy was evaluated “on the basis of its proximity to, or distance from, physical labor.” As early as the thirteenth century Thomas Aquinas was noting this distinguishing feature of the architect: “Take architecture for example: you apply the terms “wise” and “master-builder” [sapiens et architecton] to the artist who plans the whole structure, and not the artisans under him who cut the stones and mix the mortar” (\textit{Summa Theologiae}, Blackfriars ed, 60+ vols, New York, 1964- ; I, ed T Gilby, Ia: I: 6, 22-23); quoted in Franklin Toker, “Gothic Architecture by Remote Control: An Illustrated Building Contract of 1340,” (\textit{Art Bulletin} 67, 1985), 69 n 8, who also provides a brief discussion of the revival of the classical term \textit{architector} in France and central Italy during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries (69-70).

\textsuperscript{474} Ames-Lewis 2000, 4, “Not surprisingly, therefore, architecture was an occupation to which artists aspired, as a means to advance their social status and their acceptance within intellectually sophisticated circles.”

\textsuperscript{475} Warnke 1993, writes, “That Giotto, a painter, should become the cathedral and city architect of Florence was quite exceptional: all his predecessors and successors were sculptors. It was no different at the courts.” Warnke 1993, 189-91, notes how this trend changes around 1500, with more and more court architects coming from the ranks of painters, including Francesco di Giorgio, Bramante, Leonardo, Raphael, Giulio Romano, and Vasari.


\textsuperscript{477} Ames-Lewis 2000, 66-69.
association with building projects helped improve his social standing. It is quite possible that this would have had similar effects for the great number of lesser sculptors working in the same period.

Where an artist worked could also have a profound influence on how he was viewed by his contemporaries. As mentioned previously, the court culture of Italy could provide an ideal environment for an artist looking to elevate his social standing. Though the situation was somewhat more favorable to painters, sculptors too could reap the benefits of working for a princely patron. As Warnke has noted, “No craftsman at court was predestined to remain a craftsman, like his colleagues in the guild.” And even if sculptors and architects did not typically attain the standing accessible to court painters, evidence suggests the court was often still preferable to most other working situations. In 1426, when Jacopo della Quercia was asked by Siena Duomo authorities to convince Giovanni da Siena to return from Ferrara to his native city, Jacopo responded by describing the benefits Giovanni enjoyed as court architect, including a salary of 300 ducats a year, board for eight people, and recognition as an “inventor” rather than a craftsman. Over a century later, in 1537, Cellini requested a pair of horses from the court of King Francis I so that he and a servant could ride to Paris; when representatives of the king questioned his demand for this mode of travel the artist responded by saying “that it was customary for the sons of his art.” Though Cellini was working during the sixteenth century, the period traditionally assumed to be the birthplace of modern artists,

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478 Warnke 1993, 120. I take some issue with the second part of Warnke’s statement, since it implies an absence of social mobility for people working outside of the courts, which in my view was not the case.

479 Warnke 1993, 189: “sculptors tended to remain outside the immediate circle of the prince’s household and were always less likely than painters to be given the title of valet de chamber or familiaris.” He goes on, however, to note that “on occasion sculptors were given the title of ‘court painter’—when the prince was anxious to have the sculptor as close to him as the court painter would normally be.”

480 Warnke 1993, 33.

481 Warnke 1993, 125.
he was taking advantage of a much older tradition that had long bestowed certain favors and permissions on creative figures.\textsuperscript{482}

Though the longstanding concept of a straightforward evolutionary “rise” in artistic status is more myth than reality, the textual and visual evidence from the Middle Ages and Renaissance do undergo changes, and as such must be evaluated differently. The growth of humanism, the revived interest in antiquity, the development of the printing press, as well as other developments, all contribute to a different environment in which to evaluate the ways artists were viewed by their contemporaries. Thus temporal factors, though not important in the ways once assumed, do play a significant role in our understanding of the status of visual artists.

In the face of so many variables it is difficult to comment precisely on how Renaissance sculptors, as a group, were perceived by their contemporaries. In general, for many sculptors who worked on the innumerable projects across the Italian peninsula during this period, it seems their status changed little during this period. The evidence that does exist suggests that they were largely artisans; they came from the artisan class, were trained in it, and then lived, worked, and died in that class.\textsuperscript{483} For most of them, regardless of time or place, the fame of men like Giovanni Pisano or Michelangelo had little effect on their daily lives.

For a select group of sculptors the prospect of wealth, fame, respect, and the other trappings of what falls under the rubric of “status” was a very real and attainable goal. As

\textsuperscript{482} Warnke 1993, 57: “That Lorenzo de’ Medici should have made the medallist Bertoldo di Giovanni his \textit{familiaris} is often cited in support of the hypothesis that a new and exalted conception of the sovereign artist arose in Florence about 1480. From a court perspective, however, this title was a late imitation of princely practice, which had known it since the fourteenth century, Giotto being one of the Florentines to receive the title.”

\textsuperscript{483} Ames-Lewis 2000, 19. Chambers 1970, xxvii, reminds us that “not all artists necessarily sought to become rich and ascend the social ladder; a moral decision may have been involved, or else they may not have looked upon their careers in this light at all.” See also Kempers 1992, 152-55.
is so often the case, the greater amount of surviving evidence permits richer and more complex conclusions with regard to this top tier of artists. The following section will thus be devoted to looking at several examples and cases to illustrate the ways in which these sculptors might have been perceived and recognized by their contemporaries and successors, and what that can say about the status conferred upon this group of so-called “Super-artists”.

Early evidence of pre-Renaissance sculptors who were considered superior to anonymous craftsmen comes in the form of some of the signatures discussed in previous chapters. If these signatures are considered in the context of their production then we must accept that in some sense, even if only for a small circle of artists and patrons, these were often environments that acknowledged and appreciated exceptional sculptural and artistic talent. As scholars like Claussen have noted, the signatures of artists, far from being a modern phenomenon, reached their acme during the Middle Ages.484 The fact that in some instances these signatures may have served to glorify a work’s patron need not diminish the credit given to the artist. As correctly noted by Rona Goffen, “The presence of the maker’s name commemorates [the patron’s] discernment and the value of [the artist’s] gift;”485 the implication is that the creative force behind a given work is a praiseworthy individual in possession of a unique set of skills.

In light of these signatures, and the apparent reciprocity between patron and artist, it seems likely that a sculptor such as Giovanni Pisano was no ordinary craftsman or artisan, a suggestion further supported by his appointment to capomaestro of Siena

484 See, e.g., Claussen 2003, 286.
485 Goffen 2001, 304.
cathedral around 1290. Indeed, by as early as 1285 Giovanni’s skills must have been highly valued by his Sienese patrons, as a document of 1285 states that Ramo di Paganello, one of the city’s most famous artists also working on the cathedral, must “be subservient to [Giovanni’s] wishes”. Despite the stipulation of Ramo di Paganello’s subservience, contemporary records suggest that he, like Giovanni, was also a sculptor of elevated status, both in and outside his native Siena. Prior to being hired to work on the city’s cathedral, Paganello is referred to as “de bonis intalliatoribus, et sculptoribus et subtilioribus de mundo qui inveniri possit. [sic]” in a document of 1281 that sought to reinstate his citizenship (lost because he had seduced a woman). The esteem he was held in by his contemporaries must have continued following his work for Giovanni Pisano, since in 1293 he is mentioned as employed at Orvieto cathedral, earning the substantial sum of ten soldi a day. By comparison, in 1299 Ramo’s former superior, Giovanni Pisano, was only earning eight soldi, three denari, per day at Siena cathedral, and in the early decades of the fourteenth century the average sculptor working at Orvieto could expect to earn two to six soldi a day. Wages in Florence were similar, with master stonecutters in the 1320s receiving six soldi a day in the winter, seven soldi in the summer. Manual laborers, in contrast, earned only about half as much, attesting to the

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486 Moskowitz 2001, 68. Despite his status as capomaestro and his notoriously self-congratulatory inscriptions, in death Giovanni received only a modest inscription on a stone in an outer wall of Siena Cathedral; see Ayton 1969, 191, as well as Silvia Colucci, Sepolcri a Siena tra medioevo e rinascimento: Analisi storica, iconografica e artistica (Florence: Sismel, 2003) 357-61
489 Valentiner 1927, 179; in L. Fumi, Il duomo di Orvieto, 1891, 97.
490 Valentiner 1927, 179 and 180 n 8. The sculptor Nicola di Nuto was another exceptional case; in 1325 he was earning nine soldi a day as a sculptor at Orvieto, which by 1345 was up to twelve soldi a day for his work as lead architect.
comparative value accorded to sculptors at this early date.491

The potential for sculptors to achieve a degree of social rank continued in the opening decades of the following century, as attested to by documentary evidence. The Florentine sculptor Nanni di Banco held a number of important civic appointments during his life; he was Consul of the Stoneworkers’ Guild on two occasions (January to April, 1411, and May to August, 1414) and served as podestà for two small towns in Florentine territory (Montagnana fiorentina from August 1414 to January 1415 and Castelfranco di Sopra from June to December 1416).492 Nanni’s Sienese contemporary Jacopo della Quercia was knighted by Sienese authorities on 1 August 1435 in association with his work on the city’s cathedral.493 In receiving the honor of knighthood Jacopo was not alone; eleven other artists are recorded as being knighted in the fifteenth century, all Italian, including the sculptors Giovanni Dalmata, Dello Delli, Pietro da Milano, Guglielmo Monaco, Giovanni Candida, and Guido Mazzoni.494 Intellectual endeavors were also open to a number of artists from the period. Though it is difficult to determine what was standard practice, artists could and did receive educations that were above what would be expected for ordinary craftsmen. The 1498 inventory of Giuliano and Benedetto da Maiano’s “scrittoio” lists religious books, the Bible, and literary texts such as Livy, Dante, Boccaccio, and Cristoforo Landino’s translation of Pliny, suggesting a familiarity with Latin and the literature of antiquity.495 Other artists, such as Filarete, Mantegna, and

491 Toker, 80 n 26, citing R. Davidson, Storia di Firenze (Florence, 1965), VI, 54.
493 Warnke 1993, 32-33.
494 Ames-Lewis 2000, 63; and Warnke 1993, 156. Interestingly, seven of the twelve recorded knightings were conferred by foreign princes, a point which, with further investigation, may reveal something about the differing perception of Italian artists in and outside the peninsula.
495 Doris Carl, Benedetto da Maiano: A Florentine Sculptor at the Threshold of the High Renaissance (2006); see App. of Docs, A, doc 26, no 72, p 462.
Leonardo, were similarly interested in this type of humanist learning.\footnote{Ames-Lewis 2000, 20-22.}

Contemporary literary sources also highlight the respect given to a select group of sculptors during the Italian Renaissance. Though the most famous example is the epithet of “Il Divino” given to Michelangelo by the poet Ludovico Ariosto in his \textit{Orlando Furioso}, first published in 1516,\footnote{Wallace 1994, 2.} earlier instances of respect and praise for sculptors are by no means rare. The humanist author Bartolomeo Fazio, in his \textit{De viris illustribus} of 1456, associated the class of painters and sculptors with the “more usual classes of distinguished men—Poets, Orators, Lawyers, Physicians, Private Citizens, Captains, [and] Princes.”\footnote{Baxandall 1971, 99.} Though he places painting above sculpture and architecture in his hierarchy of the visual arts, he includes the sculptors Lorenzo Ghiberti, his son Vittore, and Donatello among his list of famous artists.\footnote{Pisanello, who worked as a medalist, is also included, though it is as a painter rather than as a sculptor. See Baxandall 1971, 104-109; the original Latin can be found on 163-68.} The Florentine apothecary Luca Landucci recorded a number of “noble and valiant men” who were alive when he was writing in the second half of the fifteenth century. He included in his list Donatello, Desiderio da Settignano, Antonio Rossellino, and the Pollaiuolo brothers.\footnote{Luca Landucci, \textit{A Florentine Diary from 1450 to 1516}, trans Alice de Rosen Jervis. (New York: Arno Press, 1969), 2-3; also quoted in Emison 2004, 284.} In northern Italy, the humanist Gregorio Correr dedicated three of his poems to the Veronese sculptor Antonio Rizzo (c. 1440-1499), even referring to him by his profession: \textit{Antonium Ricciu Sculptorem}.\footnote{I am grateful to Heather Nolin for this information; see Giovanni Degli Agostini, \textit{Notizie istorico-critiche intorno la vita, e le opere degli scrittori viniziani}, vol. I (Venice, 1752), 132, no. xiv. For information on the texts’ disappearance, see Wiebke Pohlandt, “Antonio Rizzo” (\textit{Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen} n.s., no. xiii, 1971), 163 n165.} And Baldassare Castiglione inserted the Mantuan court sculptor Giancristoforo Romano in his \textit{Il libro del cortegiano} as one of the courtiers contributing
to the book’s discussions.\textsuperscript{502} Such references allude to the friendships often formed between humanist scholars and their peers in the visual arts; the Florentine merchant and humanist Niccolò Niccoli, for example, is reported to have been close friends with Brunelleschi, Luca della Robbia, and Ghiberti.\textsuperscript{503}

Physical evidence lends further credence to the notion that the best of sculptors were held in higher regard than ordinary craftsmen. The most conspicuous displays of sculptors’ status often come in the form of their own commemorative monuments. The late fifteenth-century tomb of the Pollaiuolo brothers in San Pietro in Vincoli, Rome, includes portraits of both artists above an inscription that, though it praises Antonio as a painter, also notes how his “marvelous skill shaped the bronze monuments of two Popes.”\textsuperscript{504} The sculptor Andrea Bregno is commemorated with an elaborate tomb in the left transept of Santa Maria Sopra Minerva in Rome, complete with portrait bust, decorated pilasters, and laudatory inscription.\textsuperscript{505} Not surprisingly, these examples pale in the face of what was eventually done for Michelangelo, whose tomb in Santa Croce represents the culmination of Renaissance sculptors’ commemorative monuments, portraying the artist’s command over the three visual arts of painting, sculpture, and architecture.\textsuperscript{506}

If the surviving funerary monuments indicate the potential respect placed on sculptors by their peers, other physical evidence promotes the notion that the sculptors

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{502} Ames-Lewis 2000, 61.
\item \textsuperscript{504} Ames-Lewis 2000, 97; the full inscription reads: “ANTONIVS PVLLARIVS PATRIA FLORENTINVS•PICTOR INSIGN•QVI DVOR•PONT XISTI INNOCENTI AEREA MONIMENT•MIRO OPIFIC•EXPRESSIT•RE FAMIL•COMPOSITA EX TEST•HIC SE CVM PETRO FRATRE CONDI VOLVIT•VIX ANN•LXXII•OBIT ANNO SAL•M•IID”
\item \textsuperscript{505} Ames-Lewis 2000, 99-101.
\item \textsuperscript{506} Emison 2004, 298.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
themselves had long been proud of their achievements and aware of their role as creative agents. The most notable examples from this period are the insertion of their self-portraits in the peripheral areas of their works, often accompanied by signatures. Though Woods-Marsden considers the images’ self-marginalized placement, typically in the edges or frame of a larger work, “appropriate to the craftsman’s contemporary social standing,” it is undeniable that this insertion is a form of self-presentation unavailable to most other craftsmen, similar to the use of signatures. Surely, the ability of an artist to include a depiction of himself in the fruits of his labor would have heightened his belief that he was creating works that transcended the baser realm of the other mechanical arts.

According to Vasari, Orcagna placed a self-portrait at the extreme right of his relief of the *Dormition and Assumption of the Virgin* on his tabernacle for Orsanmichele, completed by 1360 (fig. 101). Though this is believed to be the earliest surviving example of self-portraiture in a religious narrative it is not the first instance of an artist’s self-portrait; there are numerous earlier cases of artists including such images in their work. Notable examples of artists in Italy portraying themselves on sets of bronze doors are found at San Zeno, Verona (c. 1130s); the cathedral at Trani (c. 1180/90); and the cathedral at Monreale (1185-89). Ghiberti seems to be responding to this tradition at least in part, as he inserted portraits of himself on his two most famous works, the sets of doors for the Florence Baptistery, and even included a portrait of his son on the second

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In both instances he located his head among the other decorative portraits running along the doors’ frames. Though the second set of doors has Ghiberti proudly displaying his balding head, in the first set of doors the artist chose to depict himself wearing a turban, a potential reference to the practice of sculpture, since it was not uncommon for laborers to wear such cloths in order to keep the dust off their heads. Though both doors are signed, only in the second set does the inscription go beyond mere identification, ascribing their creation to the “miraculous art” of Lorenzo Ghiberti, a man whose fame at that point was already secured in Florence and, as we know, would spread throughout Italy over the next half century.

Working at roughly the same time, the sculptor, architect, and author Antonio di Pietro Averlino, better known as Filarete, included not one but two self-portraits in his bronze doors for St Peter’s. The first instance is a plaquette on the reverse of the doors that shows Filarete and six of his assistants, an unusual acknowledgment of workshop contributions. Filarete, identified at right by the inscription ANTONIVS (fig. 32), leads the procession of artisans while holding up a compass, a traditional symbol of geometry and science. The second self-portrait is a profile head of the type typically seen depicting Roman emperors on the Roman *denarius*. As Woods-Marsden notes, this “quasi-medal” is contemporaneous with the earliest “real” medals then being made by

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511 Woods-Marsden 1998, 63; if this is the case it is a very early example of an artist not ashamed to portray himself as an artist.
512 Cat. 201. •LAVRENTII•CIONIS•DE•GHIBERTIS•MIRA•ARTE•FABRICATVM•
513 Krautheimer 1970, 16.
514 On which see King 1990.
515 See cats. 99-101. Filarete’s name appears four times on the doors. On the plaquette the assistants are also identified: ANGNIOLVS . IACOBVS . IANNELLVS . PASSQVINVS . IOVANNES . VARRVS . FLORENTIE; Pope-Hennessy 1996, II, 398.
Pisanello for Leonello d’Este of Ferrara; in a way the artist is thus identifying not only with the Roman emperors of antiquity but also with the great modern court princes.\textsuperscript{517}

A final example comes by way of Pollaiuolo, though in this instance the self-portrait’s existence is entirely conjectural. In addition to the extant signature on his tomb for Innocent VIII from the 1490s, which praises the artist as “famous in gold, silver, bronze and painting,”\textsuperscript{518} it has also been hypothesized that the blank space in the armrest beneath the seated pope’s left hand likely contained a self-portrait medal of Pollaiuolo.\textsuperscript{519} The arrangement of the pope and artist’s image would reflect the “proper place” of each according to the hierarchy of each man’s office and station,\textsuperscript{520} and Fehl notes that such a full and conspicuous placement of signature and portrait “must have required, if not the express permission of Cardinal Cybo who commissioned the work, at least his tolerance.”\textsuperscript{521} It must be imagined that for such a patron to permit this type of self-insertion, the social status of a sculptor of Pollaiuolo’s rank was a long way from that of an anonymous craftsman.

Part III. Status and the Myth of Renaissance Individualism

As the preceding discussion has illustrated, traditional views of a linear rise in sculptors’ status from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance are not supported by the available evidence. To be certain, it is inaccurate to think that men like Nicola or

\textsuperscript{517} Woods-Marsden 1998, 67 – 68.
\textsuperscript{518} Cat. 047. The inscription, on a block to the pope’s right, reads: ANTONIVS / POLAIOLVS A/VR. ARG. AER. PICT.CLAVS / QVI.XYST.SEP/VLCHR.PER.E/GIT.COEPVTM / AB.SE.OPVS / ABSOLVIT; Philipp Fehl, “Death and the Sculptor’s Fame: Artists’ Signatures on Renaissance Tombs in Rome,” Biuletyn Historii Sztuki LXI (1997), 196-217; 203.
\textsuperscript{519} Fehl 1997, 199. Fehl 1997, 197, notes that Pollaiuolo is the “first to sign his name on a tomb in no uncertain terms of praise of his art” in St Peter’s, though it could be said that Bonino da Campione (discussed below) did likewise over a century earlier.
\textsuperscript{520} Fehl 1997, 207.
\textsuperscript{521} Fehl 1997, 203.
Giovanni Pisano were considered “artists” in all the sense of the word as it came to be used in the sixteenth century, especially when the term itself was not used. Prior to the rise of Renaissance court culture and humanistic studies it was impossible to consider a sculptor or architect within those frameworks. Yet it is equally misleading to think that they were of the same rank as tailors or cobblers, or that they were “no different from any of the other craftsmen”. Rather, the best sculptors of the period seem to have occupied a place in society that was all their own, different from other craftsmen and even from other practitioners of the visuals arts. In truth, it seems that all visual artists occupied a marginal position throughout the Middle Ages and Renaissance. For sculptors, their signatures, the great expenses lavished on their projects, their intellectual aspirations, and contemporary writings, even if only by a minority of thinkers, all suggest at least an undercurrent of prestige that predates the rise of the “modern” artist by several centuries.

The persistence of the traditional view is likely tied to the nineteenth-century notion that only in the Renaissance did the “individual”, in the modern sense of the word, truly emerge. The origins of this are found in the writings of Jacob Burckhardt, who, writing around 1860, saw the period as the birthplace of modern man, a time when a new kind of selfhood and identity developed that replaced earlier, “medieval” notions of identity that were largely dependent on a person’s relationship to a group or community. Though this view has been questioned, most notably by medievalists working in the second half the twentieth century, the concept of fifteenth- and

523 Jacob Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, 98.
524 Bruce Holsinger and Rachel Fulton, “Introduction: Medieval Communities and the Matter of Person,” in *History in the Comic Mode* (2007), 2. Interestingly, even in Burckhardt’s own day there were those who put forth the opposite view. Holsinger and Fulton 2007, 2, note that John Stuart Mill, in chapter three of his *On Liberty*, written in 1859, saw a “steady decline in individualism from the premodern era to his nineteenth-century present”.
sixteenth-century Italy spawning some version of modern (or even post-modern) man remains a persistent myth. Though the pendulum continues to swing, and authors like Caroline Walker Bynum have cautioned against considering elements of medieval individualism and selfhood without due regard to contextual factors like group roles and identity, there is little doubt that Burckhardt’s views are no longer tenable. Rather, the men and women of the centuries that precede the Renaissance likely had elements of subjectivity and identity that were not entirely foreign to our own understandings of these concepts.

In light of these more current trends in thinking, whereby individualism is considered to be a complex set of interactions that varies across time and place rather than a concept that emerges spontaneously as an outgrowth of Renaissance humanism, traditional views tying the emergence of the artist to the emergence of modern man can no longer be considered viable. It is necessary to recognize that concepts such as artistic status and identity are very likely to be just as complex and relational as broader notions of selfhood. The presence of so many sculpted signatures from the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries indicates that, far from giving birth to a sense of

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525 John Jeffries Martin, Myths of Renaissance Individualism (2004), notes how authors such as Stephen Greenblatt, in his Renaissance Self-Fashioning: from More to Shakespeare (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), have proposed that the Renaissance was actually crucial in the emergence of the post-modern self. Martin 2004, 12-13, who disagrees with both views, contends that they arise from scholars’ tendency to relate the Renaissance to their own time and circumstances.

526 Caroline Walker Bynum, “Did the Twelfth Century Discover the Individual?”, in Jesus as Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), 82-109. Bynum, 85, states that her “purpose is therefore to place the often discussed discovery of the individual in the context of another equally new and important twelfth-century interest to which scholars have paid less attention: a quite self-conscious interest in the process of belonging to groups and filling roles.” Also see Holsinger and Fulton 2007, 4.

artistic pride and identity, the High Renaissance was actually heir to these concepts.

Furthermore, the Italian peninsula, and specifically Tuscany, seems to have been an area primed to accept its own unique brand of individualism, often independent of class or social status. The best example of this comes by way of sainthood in the Middle Ages in Italy, especially when compared to the rest of Europe. More than any other country, Italy, and primarily the communal Italy that included the Po Plain, Tuscany, Umbria, the Marches, and Latium, developed a brand of sainthood far less aristocratic and class-oriented than that found elsewhere. While saints from north of the Alps tended to come from the ruling classes, those in Italy often came from far more modest social origins. Furthermore, the peninsula was home to an increasing number of lay men and women who, if not officially canonized, were venerated as saints by civic and religious authorities as well as the growing urban populations; examples include Omobono of Cremona (d 1197), Luchesio of Poggibonsi (d 1250), Rose of Viterbo (d 1251), Zita of Lucca (d 1278), and Enrico of Bolzano (d 1315). The focus in Italy was thus often on these “self-made” individuals, who, through their own efforts and the grace of God, achieved the highest levels of sanctity. In light of related factors—such as the often vibrant economic life at various levels of society—it appears the region of central Italy had a degree of social fluidity not typical for the rest of the peninsula or continent.

529 Mary Harvey Doyno, “‘A Particular Light of Understanding’: Margaret of Cortona, the Franciscans, and a Cortonese Cleric,” in History in the Comic Mode (2007), 69.
530 Vauchez 1997, 186-87.
531 For more on this market economy in the later Middle Ages, see, for example, Alessia Meneghin, “The flip side of shopping for clothing in late medieval Tuscany. The ‘ricordanze’ of a second-hand clothing dealer, Taddeo di Chelli (1390-1408), and a wage-earner employed by the commune, Piero Puro di Francesco da Vicchio (1413-1465)” (PhD dissertation, University of St Andrews, UK, 2011). Also see her forthcoming article, “Nursing Infants and Wet-Nurses in Fifteenth-Century Florence: Piero Puro di Francesco da Vicchio and his Wife, Santa di Betto da San Benedetto” in The Fifteenth Century (Boydell
Though it would be inaccurate to draw too strong a parallel between saints and sculptors, at the very least there seems to be a correlation between a society willing to accept saints from the lower strata of society and one that contributed so much to the development of the artist as a distinct and unique personality worthy of praise and admiration.

Again, the presence of so many sculpted signatures from the Middle Ages through the fifteenth century, well before the so-called birth of the artist in the sixteenth century, supports this interpretation. These signatures, regardless of how formulaic, highlight sculptors’ desire to claim authorship and receive credit for their work, even if they lacked the trappings of court culture that came to be associated with “artists” in the High Renaissance. And no doubt viewers at the time were aware of the fact that few, if any, great sculpted monuments were the work of any one man; rather, references to a single sculptor or his labor imply “that the conception of the work belongs to the master, and that his authorship consists in this intellectual act as much or more than in the manual execution.”\(^{532}\) Thus men like Ghiberti, Donatello, Pollaiuolo, and their predecessors were perceived as powerful creative personalities, sculptural auteurs who saw their hands and the hands of their workers as extensions of an internal, creative self.

**Conclusion**

As respected and praised as Medieval and Early Renaissance sculptors may have been, it is clear that with the appearance and rise of Michelangelo the status of the artist was irrevocably changed,\(^ {533}\) if only for a select number of masters (and perhaps not

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\(^{532}\) Goffen 2001, 308.

\(^{533}\) Wallace 1994, 1, “More than any previous member of his profession, Michelangelo was instrumental in
entirely for the better). Patricia Emison notes that

By the time of the death of Michelangelo […] there was only the possibility of
correlation to Michelangelo, who was known as learned, in anatomy if not
necessarily in geometry; as a poet in his own right and a commentator on Dante;
and as the most famous of Florentines, recipient of the most lavish citizen funeral
in memory, accorded the most extravagant tomb in Santa Croce, and the subject
of not one biography but two.534

And yet it must be remembered that Michelangelo, like Titian and Leonardo and
Raphael, whose reputations in various circles very probably equaled (or perhaps
exceeded) that of the great sculptor, is not a representative case of artistic status in
sixteenth-century Italy. Similarly, the evidence for many conclusions on sculptors’ status
in the Italian Renaissance must also be considered with a highly critical eye, as so much
of it concerns men who were far from typical. Still, there can be no doubt that Giovanni
Pisano, Orcagna, Donatello, Ghiberti, Mino da Fiesole, and Pollaiuolo, among others,
were significant forces in the developing complexity that surrounded the social standing
of sculptors during this period. Their contextual circumstances were equally important,
and any social change is tied to an infinite number of factors, but in many instances it was
these artists’ boldness, creativity, and ambition that fostered and stimulated the
development of an environment primed to receive and celebrate a figure as illustrious as
the “divine” Michelangelo.

advancing the status of the artist, from craftsman to genius, from artisan to gentleman.”
Chapter V. The Renaissance Sculptor’s Signature in Context

Introduction

Sculptors’ signatures occupy a marginal position in the history of art, straddling the boundary often set up by modern scholarship between textual and physical artifacts. As manifestations of writing, signatures can, to a degree, be reduced to their textual elements; the transcriptions in the text and appendices of this dissertation make this clear. Yet considering sculptors’ signatures as straightforward texts divorces them from the often important visual components. These elements, such as placement, lettering style, abbreviations, and relation to the work or image space, often cannot be fully conveyed even through the most accurate transcriptions. Furthermore, insofar as carved and cast signatures are material artifacts made by individuals, they are part of the larger sphere of visual and artistic culture, a sphere made up of objects that—despite the promises of ekphrasis—tend to defy adequate transmission via strictly textual means. There is a human component to them that resists strict analysis via textual or statistical examination.

To understand signatures properly requires a recognition of their literary content as well as their individual visual characteristics, with due respect given to the human component that went into their creation. To push the bounds of these areas further, the signatures call for examination within the context of their connections to the larger realms of literary and visual production in which they appear; that is, their relation to

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535 The examination of Medieval signatures within their proper literary context, and with regard to the literary precedents to which they were heir, has been done to great effect by Albert Dietl in his Die Sprache der Signatur: Die mittelalterlichen Künstlerinschriften Italiens, 4 vols. (Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2009); see, e.g., his chapter on Daedalus topoi in Medieval signatures (186-208); also see his article “In arte peritus. Zur Topik mittelalterlicher Künstlerinschriften in Italien bis zur Zeit Giovanni Pisanos” (Römische Historische Mitteilungen 29, 1987): 75-125.
other texts, including but not limited to other signatures, and their relation to the works of art on which they appear and the broader world of visual culture. Thus in the following chapter I will draw together the various threads examined in the previous chapters, and provide a picture of sculptors’ signatures in the Italian Renaissance that accounts for their difference, similarities, developments, and relationships to visual culture of the period. Doing so will involve an analysis of signatures as texts and as objects, and as the products of their environment and specific circumstances as well as of individual artists.

Signatures and Artists in the Middle Ages and Renaissance

Behind every signature is an artist or artists, both real and created. Real in the sense that living, breathing sculptors and craftsmen were responsible for executing the letters left in stone and metal, and created in the sense that signatures can assign responsibility for a work of art to artistic personas who are independent of the actual craftsmen. The “Donatello” named on many of that artist’s works, for instance, is potentially as much a fiction as he is a real person, as his name and reputation existed independently of him and the teams of people who worked under his name.536 There was, of course, a real Donatello, yet there was also the Donatello crafted via his signature and later through the writings of his contemporaries and successors. The signatures of Donatello and of his fellow sculptors carried artists’ personas beyond the confines of their particular location in time and place. When Vasari wrote about Donatello in the

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sixteenth century the surviving signatures contributed to the image of the Florentine sculptor that endured long after he died, just as documentary sources and sculptures did. So too does this evidence continue to shape and define the image of Donatello—and others—that is still with us.

At first glance, signatures from the Italian Renaissance appear less interesting as a class of objects that can tell us something about the sculptors—real and created—than their Medieval counterparts. Certainly from a strictly textual standpoint this seems to be the case; as scholars like Claussen have noted, the heyday of artists’ signatures as a literary form (or genre, even) was during the Middle Ages. He notes: “Contrary to the prejudice, still widespread, that the signature is the result of modern artistic individuality, the inscription of the artist knew its flowering and maximal public effectiveness in the Middle Ages.” This is not to say that bold artistic statements were the norm during the Middle Ages, even for Italy, an area rich in epigraphic inscriptions by sculptors. There are plenty of unsigned monuments from the period, and Claussen notes that many of Europe’s great gothic cathedrals lack any sort of artist signature. But the signatures and inscriptions that do exist—and there are many—are often extraordinary in their praise and ambition.

The well-known examples by Lanfranco, Wiligelmo, and Giovanni Pisano are among the artist inscriptions most often cited as evidence of artistic self-awareness, owing to the significant praise they heap on their works’ creators. Lanfranco is lauded

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537 See, e.g., Claussen 2003, 286.
as “famous for his ingenuity” in an inscription tablet on the Duomo in Modena that commemorates the cathedral’s construction. On the façade of the same cathedral another inscription signs the glory of the sculptor Wiligelmo: INTER SCVLTORES QVAN/TO SIS DIGNVS ONORE CLA/RET SCVLTVRA NV(N)C WILIGELME TVA (“Among sculptors how greatly are you worthy in honor, Now, oh Wiligelmo, your sculpture shines forth”). And Giovanni Pisano’s signature on the Pisa Duomo Pulpit, discussed in previous chapters, goes on at considerable length in two separate inscriptions to credit that artist’s unsurpassed skill and criticize his detractors. These three examples are representative among scores of other signatures from the period which attest to a thriving literary tradition of artists’ inscriptions. Terms like celebratus, peritus, and summus, as well as many others, are all used in Medieval signatures and inscriptions to heap praise upon the period’s artists.

The signatures of sculptors from the Renaissance, after about 1400, are comparatively simple, even boring in their simplicity and homogeneity. The opus + name formula, for instance, which accounts for only one example of signatures collected from the fourteenth century (Giovanni Pisano’s Madonna and Child of c. 1305/6), constitutes over half the examples from the fifteenth century. And faciebat, starting around 1500, becomes similarly popular. The tropes of explicit self-aggrandizement, lengthy passages of Latin, sometimes in verse, erudite literary allusions—all of these elements of Medieval signatures disappear almost entirely. Increasingly, the texts of

540 A full transcription and translation is given in Dietl 2009, cat. A364.
542 Cat. 157.
543 For a full listing of terms and phrases, see Dietl 2009, Tab. V-VII (261-67).
544 Cat. 155. The sculpture is signed: DEO GRATIAS † OPVS / IOH(ANN)IS MAGISTRI NICOLI / DE PISIS.
signatures are distilled to their most basic elements: OPVS MINI, or PACES GAZINVS BISSONIVS FACIEBAT, to cite the commonly seen forms of *opus* + name and the use of *faciebat*. There are many exceptions, of course, but the trend toward simplification and standardization is undeniable. Yet in spite of this simplicity and homogeneity sculptors’ signatures are still an extraordinarily rich and valuable source of information on the world of art, artists, and patrons in the Italian Renaissance. First, when viewed critically, the development of popular tropes and norms, even simple ones, can be highly informative; second, within this apparent homogeneity, the outliers and exceptions become even more interesting and potentially informative, both in relation to their own cases and compared to the standards of the period; and lastly, the development of a new visual vocabulary, in the form of creative lettering, lineation, and placement, provided a new means of epigraphic expression unavailable to artists of the Middle Ages.

Furthermore, until artists began writing their own biographies (or having them written for them), their signatures were the only writings they created for public consumption, and they are typically the only writings from them to have survived at all. It is the aim of the following chapter to explore these and related issues to illustrate how sculptors’ signatures in the Renaissance could still carry meaning and import both despite and because of their often straightforward textual content.

**The Fifteenth Century: Trends and Developments**

A quick look at many of the signatures from the fifteenth century suggests that something significant took place in the years following 1400. Self-laudatory inscriptions,
once popular in the Middle Ages, are a tiny minority of cases in the fifteenth century; the term *Magister* disappears almost entirely; signatures shorten considerably, often appearing as two simple words, such as OPVS MINI. Compared to fourteenth-century examples, even those from the end of the century, these changes can appear radical. And though these fifteenth-century signatures represent important developments, they can also be viewed as the final expression of a trend toward simplification that had already been underway in the preceding century.

Notwithstanding some exceptional cases, most signatures of the fourteenth century are relatively straightforward and unassuming. The majority of them consist of identifying information, such as name, place of origin, and familial relation, combined with statements of creation. Mentions of skill or praise of any kind are the exception. The works of Nino Pisano provide illustrative examples, as most are signed in a fashion similar to the NINVS MAGITRI ANDREE DEPISIS ME FECIT on the *Bishop Saint* from around mid-century (San Francesco, Oristano, Sardinia). A lunette signed on the portal of S Domenico’s west façade (Trogir [Traù], after 1372) by the Venetian sculptor Nicola Dente, although slightly longer, provides a similar amount of information: MAISTE(R) NICOLAV(S) / DE(N)TE DITO CERVO D(E) VENECIA FECIT / HOC OPVS (Magister Nicolas Dente, called Cervo, from Venice, made this work). The sculptor known as “Magister Paulus”, working in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth century, is among the last to preserve this style in its true Trecento form, using Gothic lettering and the term “Magister”; his *Tomb of Bartolomeo Carafa* (Santa Maria del

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545 Cat. 249.
546 Cat. 246. Dietl 2009, cat. A749; my translation is based on his: “Der Magister Nicolaus Dente, genannt Cervo, aus Venedig, hat dieses Werk gefertigt.“
Priorato di Malta, Rome, c. 1405) is signed MAGISTER PAVLVS FECIT, on an inscription tablet with an epitaph for the deceased. This combination of stock elements is similar to what many sculptors from previous centuries were doing; the difference is that the tropes are simpler, and the main source for artists is now other signatures, rather than literary sources.

It is interesting that the first two artists to use signatures that are a radical departure from their fourteenth-century counterparts are figures traditionally considered more transitional than revolutionary. Ghiberti and Niccolò Lamberti, the earliest fifteenth-century sculptors I know of to use the *opus + name* format, are often thought as representative of an enduring “International Gothic” style rather than a truly Renaissance one.

Ghiberti, on his *St John the Baptist* for Orsanmichele (c. 1412-15; fig. 58), signed the hem with OPVS LAVRENTII FLORENTINI; Niccolò Lamberti, on his *St Mark* originally for the façade of Florence Duomo (c. 1408-15), signed the pedestal with OPVS / NICH/OLAI. Around a decade later Ghiberti used the same format on his first set of doors for the Florence Baptistery—OPVS LAVREN / TII FLORENTINI—and fellow Florentine sculptors like Donatello, Mino da Fiesole, and Andrea da Firenze soon followed suit.

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548 Cat. 206.
549 Dietl 1987, 123 and passim.
550 John W. Pope-Hennessy, *An Introduction to Italian Sculpture*, 3 vol. (London: Phaidon Press, 1996), for example, included Ghiberti in his volume on Gothic sculpture. Not surprisingly, this is a position that has been reconsidered, and interest in Ghiberti was recently renewed when the panels from his *Gates of Paradise* were cleaned and presented to the public on both sides of the Atlantic. See the essays in Gary M. Radke, ed., *The Gates of Paradise: Lorenzo Ghiberti’s Renaissance Masterpiece* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007). On Lamberti, see, e.g., George R. Goldner, *Niccolò and Piero Lamberti* (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1978), 45-46.
551 Cat. 199.
552 Cat. 243.
553 Cat. 200.
Prior to the fifteenth-century this sort of signature was exceptionally rare on sculpture; out of over 800 examples collected by Dietl, he lists only six inscriptions that use the construction *opus* + name.\(^{554}\) The last sculptor I know of to have done so before the fifteenth century was Giovanni Pisano, on his *Madonna and Child* (c. 1305-06) in Padua, which includes OPVS / IOH(ANN)IS MAGISTRI at the base (fig. 45).\(^{555}\) By comparison, in the fifteenth century it is the most common signature type I have found. Just over half of signatures (65 out of 127) use this formula in the Quattrocento, and although it later declines in popularity following the rise of *faciebat*, it still accounts for some 25 examples in the sixteenth century (just under a third). The rarity of this type of signature is somewhat unusual given its appearance in at least three paintings by Giotto (or his workshop) from c. 1300-1330 and likely in other Trecento paintings.\(^{556}\) Yet not until a century later did the topos become appropriated by sculptors.

Although its initial appearance in the fifteenth century is not linked to sculptors traditionally thought of as forerunners of a revived classical style, the ultimate source for the *opus* signatures was likely ancient sculpture. The renowned colossal sculptural pair from antiquity known as the *Dioscuri* that still stands in Rome is signed OPVS FIDIAE and OPVS PRAXITELES, as recorded in the Renaissance.\(^{557}\) The inscriptions (which were additions from Late Antiquity and not from the statues’ second-century execution)

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555 Cat. 155.
556 Interestingly, Giotto’s authorship of the three paintings is also disputed. The paintings are the *Stigmatization of St Francis* (c. 1295-1300; Louvre, Paris; orig. S Francesco, Pisa), signed: OPVS IOCTI FIORENTINI; the *Polyptych with Madonna and Child* (c. 1330; Pinacoteca; Bologna), signed OP(VS) MAGISTRI IOCTI D(E)FLORE[NT][I]; and the *Coronation of the Virgin* (c. 1330; Baroncelli Chapel, S Croce, Florence), signed: O/PVS MA/GISTR/I IOCT/I. For more on Giotto and attribution problems, see the essays and bibliography in *The Cambridge Companion to Giotto*, ed. Anne Derbes and Mark Sandona (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).
were recognized as signatures in the fourteenth century, when the figures were mentioned by Petrarch. \textsuperscript{558} As noted by Pfisterer, the survival of these inscriptions was likely responsible for the appearance of this trope in the signatures of fifteenth-century artists.\textsuperscript{559} Presumably Ghiberti could have seen these signatures in Rome, possibly during a trip made sometime before 1416,\textsuperscript{560} in his own writings he mentions seeing a signature of Lysippus on a statue in Siena.\textsuperscript{561} Alternatively, Donatello would have seen the Dioscuri during his trip to Rome with Brunelleschi in the early fifteenth century,\textsuperscript{562} and perhaps it was through him that Ghiberti learned of this allegedly ancient signature.

Significantly, OPVS DONATELLI (sometimes with Florentini) is the only form used by Donatello to sign his works.\textsuperscript{563}

\textsuperscript{558} The Dioscuri are mentioned in Rerum familiarum libri, I, 1, 37; V, 17, 5; VI, 2, 13, and XVIII, 5, 4; De remediis utriusque fortunae, I, 41, and II, 88; Canzoniere CXXX; Seniles II, 3, and Africa VIII, 910. The preceding list is provided in Ulrich Pfisterer, “Phidias und Polyklet von Dante bis Vasari. Zu Nachruhm und künstlerischer Rezeption antiker Bildhauer in der Renaissance” (Marburger Jahrbuch für Kunstwissenschaft 26, 1999): 61-97, esp. 66 and n31. Also see Maurizio Bettini, Francesco Petrarca sulle arti figurative: Tra Plinio e sant’Agostino (Livorno: Sillabe, 2002), 28-29. See Ulrich Pfisterer, Donatello und die Entdeckung der Stile 1430-1445 (Munich: Hirmer Verlag, 2002), Appendix D, 598-602 for a more extensive list of Medieval and Renaissance references to Phidias and Praxiteles. Prior to Petrarch it seems the inscriptions were not recognized as signatures. The Mirabilia Urbis Romae, the earliest version of which dates to 1143, incorrectly identified the figures themselves as philosophers named “Fidias” and “Praxiteles”. On this error, see Ernst Robert Curtius, European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages, trans. Willard R. Trask (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953), 405-406. On the Mirabilia Urbis Romae and sculpture, see Antje Middeldorf Kosegarten, “Remarks on Some Medieval Descriptions of Sculpture” in Santa Maria del Fiore: The Cathedral and Its Sculpture (Florence: Cadmo, 2001), 19-46, esp. 31-32. The Mirabilia is available, ed. and trans. Francis Morgan Nichols, from Italica Press, NY, 1986 (2nd ed.). Pfisterer 1999.


\textsuperscript{560} Julius von Schlosser, Lorenzo Ghibertis Denkwürdigkeiten (I commentarii). Zum ersten Male nach der Handschrift der Biblioteca Nazionale in Florenz vollständig herausgegeben und erläutert (Berlin 1912): “Vna ancora [stata] fu trouata, simile a queste due, fu trouata nella città di Siena, della quale ne feciono grandissima festa et dagli intendenti fu tenuta marauigiosa opera, et nella basa era scripto el nome del maestro, el quale era excellentissimo maestro, el nome suo fu Lisippo; et aueua in sulla gamba in sulla quale ella si posaua uno alfino.” (63) This is mentioned in Dietl 2009, 12 n4. Chiara Scappini informed me that this statue was the alleged “Venus” on the first Fonte Gaia.


\textsuperscript{562} The painted signature on his wood St John the Baptist in the Frari in Venice (cat. 094), which uses the name “DONATI”, is most likely a later addition. See Sperling 1985, 124.
The widespread use of *opus* + name by Quattrocento Tuscan sculptors suggests that the topos was an expression of group identity for these artists, at least initially. Ghiberti, Niccolò Lamberti, Donatello, and Andrea da Firenze were among the early adopters. They were followed by Agostino di Duccio, Antonio Rossellino, Mino da Fiesole, Matteo Civitali, and others. In the first half of the fifteenth century it is by far the most common signature among the examples I have gathered. The ubiquity of the form highlights the great importance placed on antiquity by all sculptors from the period, not just those thought of as classicizing by modern standards, and the desire for in-group identification that was at least partially dependent on associations with classical antiquity. Whatever the relationship between these artists’ individual styles and antiquity, in their mode of self-presentation via signatures they overwhelmingly chose to appropriate an ancient trope.

Furthermore, the use of this form by these early Renaissance sculptors in Tuscany seems to mirror some contemporary trends observable in other elements of the visual and intellectual culture of the period. For example, the significant decline in the number of early fifteenth-century signatures that feature a verb of creation, such as *fecit* or *sculpsit*, suggests a possible reevaluation of how sculptors thought of themselves in relation to their creations. Although it is dangerous to read too deeply into inscriptions consisting of only a few words, it is tempting to see the increase in *opus* signatures as the manifestation of sculptors presenting themselves as men whose creative output is the result of their intellectual prowess rather than their manual dexterity.\(^\text{564}\) This however does not

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\(^{564}\) Rona Goffen, “Signatures: Inscribing Identity in Italian Renaissance Art” (*Viator* 32, 2001): 303-70, 310, argued that fourteenth-century viewers would have understood this concept, as well, recognizing that a signature referred as much (or more) to the “conception of the work of art, its science and doctrine” as it did to its manual execution.
necessarily imply support for the mythical “rise” of the modern artist in the fifteenth century, nor does it suggest any change in the way sculptors executed their works; rather, it suggests that ideas about what was important in the consideration of authorship and its relationship to the creative process were changing. Scholars have already noted how mentions of an artist’s “hand” had long been understood in a broader and more metaphorical sense to refer to the artist’s creative faculties in general;\textsuperscript{565} with the use of \textit{opus} signatures it appears that such stand-ins became unnecessary. Associations via \textit{opus} now carried the necessary implications of a sculpture’s conception and execution.

By the second half of the fifteenth century the \textit{opus} + name format had diffused widely to artists from outside the Tuscan milieu, notably to sculptors from or working in northern Italy. Andrea Bregno, Pietro Lombardo, Andrea da Fusina, Sperandio, and Moderno are just a few of the sculptors who appropriated what had once been a characteristically Tuscan means of signing a work. In doing so, they were employing a signature type that was now laden with even more import than it had had at the beginning of the century. The reference now was not just to classical antiquity, although certainly that sense was retained; also included was a modern sense of community and identity with the period’s most famous and sought after sculptors, the Tuscans. Three of the early exponents of this trope—Ghiberti, Donatello, and Mino da Fiesole—were all sculptors whose fame stretched beyond their specific region. Donatello and Mino da Fiesole, in

\textsuperscript{565} Goffen 2001, 308: “It is as though ‘hand’ were understood as a metaphor for ‘mind,’ the implication being that the conception of the work belongs to the master, and that his authorship consists in this intellectual act as much or more than in the manual execution.” This idea was also noted by Dietl 1987, 94, in the context of Medieval signatures. Dietl also mentions that the inclusion of references to an artist’s hand in Medieval signatures may be a means of exhibiting the proper fulfillment of a contract that specified a particular artist execute a work himself (as overseer, “by his hand”); in this sense the signature may have had something like a legal function, as well (94-96). For a specific examination of phrasing related to an artist’s “hand” in the fifteenth century, see, e.g., Charles Seymour, Jr., “‘Fatto di sua mano’: Another Look at the Fonte Gaia Drawing Fragments in London and New York”, in \textit{Festschrift Ulrich Middeldorf}, ed. Antje Kosegarten and Peter Tigler (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter & Co., 1968): 93-105, esp. 98.
particular, are notable for the instrumental roles they played in bringing a “Renaissance”
idiom to sculpture in Rome.\textsuperscript{566} The ability to align oneself not only with the great masters
of antiquity but with those from the present as well must have increased the appeal of
signing in such a characteristically “Tuscan” manner.

Occasionally, the signatures of fifteenth-century artists change in such a way as to
suggest their exposure to diverse influences. Niccolò dell’Arca, on his terracotta eagle
over the entrance to S Giovanni in Monte (1478, Bologna) and the \textit{Madonna di Piazza}
(1478, Palazzo del Comune, Bologna), signed using NICOLAVS F(ECIT) long after the
popularity of \textit{opus} + name had superseded signatures with verbs of creation in central and
northern Italy.\textsuperscript{567} It is thus tempting to see these as representative of that artist’s possible
training in southern Italy or Dalmatia as opposed to Tuscany.\textsuperscript{568} Whatever their source or
reasoning, these signatures contrast markedly with that found on his \textit{Lamentation} group
(c. 1462-90? S Maria della Vita, Bologna; fig. 74), which is signed OPVS NICOLAI DE
APVLIA.\textsuperscript{569} In both content and formal characteristics this signature is suggestive of
Tuscan models. The use of \textit{opus} + name is the obvious textual referent, and the
placement of it on a scroll unfurled along a pillow implies a specific familiarity with
Donatello’s signature, also on a pillow, on his \textit{Judith and Holofernes} (fig. 31). Niccolò

\textsuperscript{566} See, e.g., Shelley E. Zuraw, “Mino da Fiesole’s First Roman Sojourn: the works in Santa Maria
Maggiore”, in \textit{Verrocchio and Late Quattrocento Italian Sculpture}, ed. Steven Bule et al (Florence:
Press, 1993).
\textsuperscript{567} Cat. 240.
\textsuperscript{568} On this artist, see the essays in Grazia Agostini and Luisa Ciammitti (eds.), \textit{Niccolò dell’Arca:
Seminario di studi} (Bologna: Nuova Alfa Editoriale, 1989)
\textsuperscript{569} Cat. 242.
further quotes that work by making extensive use of nested lettering, as had also been
done by Donatello.\textsuperscript{570}

Despite the popularity of signatures that employed the formula \textit{opus} $+$ name, the
trope was still able to carry individual significance in addition to its importance for group
identity. In comparison to their counterparts from the Middle Ages, fifteenth-century
sculptors had less room to be creative through textual or literary means due to their
truncated inscriptions. They did, however, have other means of differentiating themselves
through their signatures. Donatello and Niccolò dell’Arca used creative lettering
arrangements to construct highly personal signatures. In these cases the nesting of letters
and ligatures result in a written artifact whose importance is based as much on its visual
appearance as on its textual content. The placement of these signatures, in the image
space, are also expressions of creativity unavailable to sculptors from previous
centuries.\textsuperscript{571} Matteo Civitali is another sculptor who made use of new formal options
within an established \textit{opus} tradition to create a unique signature form;\textsuperscript{572} the \textit{OPVS}
\textit{MATTHAEI CIVITAL} that appears on several works consistently features ligatures of

\textsuperscript{570} It is worth considering the important role that the available space may have played in the decisions
sculptors made about their lettering. Certainly, limited space or the competing demands of tight spaces and
 desi res for large, legible letters can affect the appearance of signatures and the use of nested lettering. Yet
even if it was a necessity, which I do not think it often was, the means of execution was still a highly
individualized and personal act of creation.

\textsuperscript{571} Louisa C. Matthew, “The Painter’s Presence: Signatures in Venetian Renaissance Pictures” (\textit{The Art
Bulletin} 80, Dec 1998), 616-648, notes that texts in general were able to convey increasing significance and
information in the Renaissance, due to factors like placement, incorporation in the image space, and the
vehicle upon which the texts appeared (e.g., a scroll) (see esp. 617-21).

\textsuperscript{572} Massimo Ferretti, “Tre Temi da Approfondire” in \textit{Matteo Civitali e il suo tempo}, 165-89, 187 n1, notes
that Matteo Civitali uses \textit{opus} in all his signatures.
AE and AL, creating a sort of trademark that anticipates the printers’ marks of later fifteenth- and sixteenth-century printing presses.

It is interesting to note that the changes seen in sculptors’ signatures from the fifteenth century are also seen in broader epigraphic trends from the period. As lengthy signatures composed in verse went out of fashion so too did carved epitaphs in verse. By the middle of the fifteenth century the verse epitaph, once popular on tomb monuments, was almost entirely replaced by prose epitaphs, which became the dominant form for the next hundred years. Contemporaneously, artists and epigraphists began composing and executing inscriptions with an eye toward their visual presentation. Greater attention was given to creating an interesting and visually appealing arrangement of writing, via features like Roman lettering and centered lines of text, and occasionally these elements made important contributions to an inscription’s meaning. These parallel developments in sculptors’ signatures and Quattrocento epigraphy underscore the significant interplay and exchange between the artists and humanists of the period. Furthermore, the related developments support the notion that artists, in addition to signing for other artists and for posterity, were signing in response to and for their humanist peers.

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573 Examples include the Tomb of Pietro da Noceto (1472; cat. 215) and the Altar of Saint Regulus (c. 1484; cat. 216), both in Lucca Cathedral. See the appendix for other works by Matteo signed in this manner.
574 Matthew 1998, 627. She also notes this trend of standardization within Venetian painters’ workshops, as well.
575 John Sparrow, Visible Words: A Study of Inscriptions in and as Books and Works of Art (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 13-23. Sparrow notes that the epitaph for Pope Nicholas V (d. 1455) was the last papal one to be written in verse. A similar situation is seen in Venice, where not a single Doge is commemorated in verse after 1450, as well as in the epitaphs of jurists in Bologna who were lettori in the city’s University. Sparrow attributes this change to an increasing cooperation between the texts’ composers and executors (i.e., sculptors, carvers, architects of the monument), as well as to the greater influence of classical inscriptions, such as the prose elogia on Roman tombs and memorials.
Briefly, then, the above discussion of sculptors’ signatures in fifteenth-century Italy shows the influence of fourteenth-century developments as well as the significant changes unique to the period. The trend toward shorter signatures already underway in the fourteenth century culminated in the simple form of *opus* + name in the fifteenth century. The Late Antique inscriptions on the *Dioscuri* in Rome were the likely source of this trope’s initial appearance in Florence, which was subsequently popularized by the highly respected sculptors associated with the Tuscan artistic milieu. The trope seems to have distanced the artist somewhat from the manual act of creation, implying a sense of ownership or authorship independent of an artist’s hand. Furthermore, the signature’s popularity provided a means of personal expression that conveyed a strong sense of group identity as well as a connection to antiquity. The presence of differing signature forms in different areas of Italy lends further support for a regional component to the identity created through signatures. In the case of artists who sought greater individual expression, developments in the presentation and arrangement of letters offered a new means of creating a unique statement of authorship within a narrow range of textual options. As will be illustrated in the next section, all of these trends undergo additional change and development in the sixteenth century.

**From the Quattrocento to the Cinquecento: *faciebat* signatures**

The most significant development in sculptors’ signatures in the late-fifteenth and early sixteenth century is the appearance of *faciebat*. Following its emergence in a handful of sculptures from the 1490s it becomes a highly popular means for sculptors—
as well as others—to sign their works.\textsuperscript{577} For Central and Northern Italian sculptors it is
the most common signature trope that I have found in the examples from the first half of
the sixteenth century, although other traditions persist, and signatures continue to vary
from place to place and even work to work for some artists.\textsuperscript{578}

It is not clear who was the first sculptor to use the imperfect \textit{faciebat} in a
signature.\textsuperscript{579} The most likely scenario is that it originated in a small number of artists
working in Florence and Northern Italy. Whether these developments were related or
independent of one another is unclear, although they were all certainly responding to the
mention of this signature trope in Pliny’s introduction to his \textit{Natural History}.\textsuperscript{580} Why
sculptors only did so at the end of the fifteenth century, as opposed to earlier, is not easily
answered. Certainly artists and humanists were aware of Pliny’s \textit{Natural History} long
before they began using his recommended signature form; Ghiberti even pulled
extensively from Pliny in composing his \textit{I Commentarii}.\textsuperscript{581} Yet neither he nor his
contemporaries ever used \textit{faciebat} when signing. It seems that for artists working in the
early fifteenth century the material remains of antiquity—notably in the form of the
\textit{Dioscuri}—were more trusted and relied upon for inspiration than textual sources.

\textsuperscript{577} Some of the earliest uses of \textit{faciebat} are by the North Italian painter Macrino d’Alba, who signed a
number of works in the 1490s with the term. Early examples include his \textit{Madonna and Child} (tempera on
wood, Frankfurt am Main, Städelisches Kunstinstitut), c. 1493-1494, with a \textit{cartellino} bearing the words
MACRINVS / FACIEBAT (see Giovanni Romano, ed., \textit{Macrino d’Alba, protagonista del Rinascimento
piemontese} [Savigliano: Editrice Artistica Piemontese, 2001], cat. 1); \textit{Madonna and Child} (main panel of
triptych; Turin, Museo Civico d’Arte Antica), 1494-5, signed MACRINVS / FACIEBAT / 1495; and the
\textit{Madonna and Child} (main panel of triptych; Certosa di Pavia, Santa Maria delle Grazie), 1496, signed
MACRINVS D. ALBA / FACIEBAT 1496 (see Kandice Rawlings, “Liminal Messages: The \textit{cartellino} in

\textsuperscript{578} Jacopo Sansovino, for example, used both \textit{opus} + name and \textit{faciebat} signatures.

\textsuperscript{579} I am very grateful to Dr Sarah Blake McHam for discussing many of the points in this section with me.

\textsuperscript{580} See Chapter I of this dissertation for more discussion of this.

\textsuperscript{581} Janice L. Hurd, “The Character and Purpose of Ghiberti’s Treatise on Sculpture” in \textit{Lorenzo Ghiberti nel suo tempo} (Florence: Olschki, 1980): II, 293-315; see esp. 298-99 and the Appendix, 310-15, for details
on Ghiberti’s use of Pliny and other classical sources. For Ghiberti’s \textit{I Commentarii}, see Julius von
Schlosser, \textit{Lorenzo Ghibertis Denkwürdigkeiten (I commentarii). Zum ersten Male nach der Handschrift
der Biblioteca Nazionale in Florenz vollständig herausgegeben und erläutert} (Berlin 1912).
Although perhaps the significant decline in the use of “fecit” signatures in the early fifteenth century can be attributed to sculptors’ partial acceptance of Pliny’s advice, for in his introduction he notes the extreme rarity of that term in antiquity, as it was used only when artists felt complete satisfaction with their work.  

One of the interesting points about sculptors’ use of *faciebat* is its contrast with the more removed means of signing via *opus* + name, which does not state any process of creation or explicit means by which a work is joined to a name. The older trope might have been used in an effort by sculptors to distance themselves from the manual execution of a work, and thus it is tempting to see the rapid spread of *faciebat* as a sign of artists who were once again keen to promote their manual skills. But it is just as likely that *faciebat* conveyed an intellectual sense of creation, much as references to the “hand” of an artist had done previously. For one, Pliny used it in a metaphorical sense to “sign” his *Natural History*, the composition of which was an intellectual endeavor. Perhaps this association alone was enough to wipe *faciebat* clean of any manual elements. There is also the possibility that the verb *fare* “might have the understood value of ‘cause to be done’” in addition to its more usual sense of “to do”.  

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582 “I think there are but three works of art which are inscribed positively with the words “such a one executed this;” of these I shall give an account in the proper place. In these cases it appears, that the artist felt the most perfect satisfaction with his work, and hence these pieces have excited the envy of every one.” From *The Natural History of Pliny*, ed. and trans. John Bostock and H.T. Riley (London: Bell & Sons, 1893), 9.  
583 Seymour 1968, 98, writes about this possibility with regard to a contract with Jacopo della Quercia for the *Fonte Gaia*: “This finding could lead to the tentative conclusion that the words ‘fare o far fare’ applied to the drawings of the Fonte Gaia specified in the first contract of 1408 amounted to not so much a *choice* on the artist’s part (as one would normally interpret the phrase) as to an *equivalence* in legal procedure. In other words, to ‘do’ might have the understood value of ‘cause to be done’.” This idea that the phrase “fatto di sua mano” had complex and varying meanings in the fifteenth through seventeenth centuries is further discussed in Lisa Pon, *Raphael, Dürer, and Marcantonio Raimondi: Copying and the Italian Renaissance Print* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), esp. 84-85; also see Richard E. Spear, *The “Divine” Guido: Religion, Sex, Money and Art in the World of Guido Reni* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1997), 253-55.
The most likely scenario in my view is one that recognizes the potential validity of both possibilities. For some artists it seems the use of *faciebat* was indeed a proud statement of a work’s personal and manual execution (regardless of whether this was true). Michelangelo’s famous signature on his St Peter’s *Pietà* is one such example, made even more personal through the inscription’s placement and creative formal characteristics.\(^{584}\) So too the tomb of Don Pedro Henríquez de Ribera, (1520; University Church, Seville, orig. in charterhouse of Seville), signed by Antonio Maria de Carona with an inscription noting the work’s specific place of execution: ANTHONIVS MARIA DE APRILIS DE CHARONA / HOC OPVS FACIEBAT IN IANVA.\(^{585}\) Niccolò Tribolo, in his *Assumption of the Virgin* in the Cappella delle Reliquie (1537; S Petronio, Bologna), rendered his association with the work more personal and less removed by signing with the imperfect in the vernacular: TRIBOLO FIORENTINO FACEVA.\(^{586}\) And Gian Girolamo Grandi used the imperfect *sculpebat* to make the manual element of his contribution even clearer on his tomb of Fra Girolamo Confalonieri, for the former church of the Crociferi in Padua (1549; moved to S Maria Maddalena; now destroyed): IO HIER GRANDVS PAT. SCVLPEBAT.\(^{587}\)

Even as some artists were striving to instill a personal and manual element to their works’ signatures, many others were employing signatures that seemed to deny or downplay the human aspect of production. Jacopo Sansovino, for example, signed so

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\(^{584}\) For more on this signature, see Aileen June Wang, “Michelangelo’s Signature” (*The Sixteenth Century Journal* 35, 2004), 447-73, and accompanying bibliography, 447 n2.


\(^{586}\) Cat. 244.

many works via the *faciebat* trope that his signatures appear less like autographs and more like mechanical seals or stamps. His mentor Andrea Sansovino signed with even greater consistency, as all his known signatures employ *faciebat*. Sixteenth-century sculptors like Bandinelli and Cellini also made repeated use of *faciebat*. Furthermore, despite variations in style, all of these sculptors used Roman capitals with relatively straightforward textual arrangement and composition; i.e., none of the nested letters observed in some fifteenth-century sculptors’ signatures. In this respect the signatures are almost a reversion to earlier trends from the Middle Ages, where the signature is something reducible to its basic textual or literary content.

**Book culture and the art of printing**

Given the timing of these developments it is worth considering the potential impact of the rise of printing on sculptors’ signatures. The first printed book in Italy is generally believed to have been a Latin grammar (a *Donatus*, no longer extant) printed in 1465 at a monastery at Subiaco, south of Rome, by two German clerics, Conrad Sweynheym and Arnold Pannartz. In 1468 they moved their operation to Rome, although that city was very quickly overtaken by Venice as the major publishing center in Italy. By the end of the fifteenth century Venice was a dominant force in printing not just

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in Italy but in all of Europe, boasting well over two hundred presses.\(^{590}\) The publication of so many texts in Latin and the vernacular was further stimulation for the humanist movement already underway, and opened up the book market to a far wider audience than it had ever known.

It seems likely that at least some sculptors would have been receptive to the fast-growing new media of print.\(^{591}\) The increasingly standardized, almost mechanical appearance of sixteenth-century sculptors’ signatures in Central and Northern Italy may have been—in part—a response to the new formats of textual presentation and mechanical reproduction made available by the printing press.\(^{592}\) In this way the use of precisely executed Roman letters became a means of effacing the hand of the sculptor, emphasizing his role as a creative executor, much as a printed work removes the text from its manual composition by either its author or a scribe. It thus seems as though a subtle interaction, or even paradox, takes place given the content and appearance of these signatures: their wording often refers to ongoing, even manual, creation (faciebat), while their appearance diminishes the manual (in the sense of a signer’s “hand”) element often associated with a signature and with sculpture.

Also worth considering is how the advent of printing influenced the formal characteristics of late fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century sculptors’ signatures. It is exceptionally rare to see signatures from this period displaying the sort of nested letters and ligatures that occasionally appear in fifteenth-century signatures. While this may

\(^{590}\) Rawlings 2009, 68; also Ullman 1963, 148.

\(^{591}\) On the speed with which this new means of presenting and distributing texts was accepted and propagated, and an examination of the circumstances of the involved parties, see Rudolf Hirsch, *Printing, Selling and Reading, 1450-1550* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1974).

\(^{592}\) Of course, the influence can go both ways, and scholars like John Sparrow have examined the way epigraphy interacted with the advent of printing in sixteenth-century (and later) Europe; see Sparrow 1969, passim, esp. 101-34.
have been a response to increasing sensitivity to the standards of ancient epigraphic practice, the development of moveable type may have also had some effect. Perhaps the standardization and reproducibility provided by the printing press influenced these sculptors to reduce their signatures to their basic, textual elements, aligning their epigraphic texts with those being printed on paper.\textsuperscript{593} Unusual lettering arrangements that make use of superscript notations, non-alphabetic symbols, and uncommon ligatures are elements not easily reproduced in printing. Making a signature conform to what was common in contemporary printing practice might have been a way of ensuring the possibility of easy distribution and dissemination; potentially this would have been a means for a sculptor to reach an audience far larger than any he could have imagined previously. Even if this was not part of sculptors’ thinking, the influence of how printed words appeared on the page seems a likely source of influence for artists working at this time.\textsuperscript{594}

**Sculptors’ signatures in the periphery**

Many of the changes and developments of the fifteenth and sixteenth century discussed here are only relevant for areas traditionally considered “centers” of the Italian Renaissance; i.e., Central and Northern Italy. The importance of context and geography for signatures, both of which seem to have strongly circumscribed the options for signing

\textsuperscript{593} Sparrow 1969, 90, argued that the rise of printing influenced the field of inscriptions and epigraphy in general, as it provided a means of preserving and publicizing inscriptions. Printing also spawned a new genre: the “literary” inscription, created specifically for book form; see pp. 101-34.

a work, are highlighted by looking to Southern Italy, where the claims made in the preceding pages do not apply. The presence of different signatures in areas like Campania, Sardinia, and Sicily illustrate how important a sculptor’s training and environment—notably in the form of other signatures—were in determining the appearance and content of his signature.

Signatures from the Gagini family of sculptors who worked primarily in Sicily and Southern Italy illustrate the difference seen in areas outside the traditional fold. Antonello [Antonio] Gagini (1478–9 – 1536) was trained by his father, Domenico Gagini, in his workshop in Sicily.\textsuperscript{595} Despite his father’s origins and work in Northern Italy, the signatures employed by Antonello betray no real familiarity with the developments taking place in that area. Instead, his signatures are typically rooted in an alternate tradition, distanced from the practices of mainland Italy. The signature on his Madonna and Child in S Bernardino da Siena (1505; marble; Amantea), for example, uses the term \textit{Magister}: MANVS AVTEM MAGISTRI ANTONI / DE GAGINO SCVLTORIS DIE X SBRS M CCCCC V. CM.\textsuperscript{596} This was long after it had disappeared in Central and Northern Italy. The contemporaneous Madonna degli Angioli (marble; Collegiata della Maddalena, Morano Calabro) is signed with a speaking inscription—ANTONI. D. GAGINS ME SCVLPSIT—well after this format had fallen out of fashion.\textsuperscript{597} He does so again on his marble Annunciation in S Agata (1519, Castroreale): ANTONIVS DE GAGENIS PANORMITA ME SCVLPSIT (fig. 94).\textsuperscript{598}

\textsuperscript{595} On Antontello, see Hanno-Walter Kruft, \textit{Antonello Gagini und Seine Söhne} (Munich: Bruckmann, 1980). For his father Domenico, see Hanno-Walter Kruft, \textit{Domenico Gagini und Seine Werkstatt} (Munich: Bruckmann, 1972).
\textsuperscript{596} Cat. 032.
\textsuperscript{597} Cat. 033.
\textsuperscript{598} Cat. 039.
Other examples from Antonello look similarly outdated compared to the trends in Central and Northern Italy. In a number of sculptures he signs using the trope of *opus + name*, doing so at a time when this was no longer common on much of the Italian peninsula. Furthermore, an early signature shows him to be crediting his lineage in a fashion reminiscent of Medieval signing practices. The *Madonna della Scala*, in the Palermo Duomo (1503; marble, Palermo Duomo, Sacristy), is signed OP(VS) ANTONELLI GAGINI PANHORMITANI DOMINICO SCVLTORE GENITI XII DIE NOV. 1503. Later signatures, from the 1520s, conform more closely to the spartan formula employed by Tuscan sculptors of the previous century. The *St Nicholas of Bari altar retable with reliefs* (1523; marble, S Niccolò, Randazzo) is signed OPVS ANTONII GAGINII PANORMITA MDXXIII; the *St Catherine of Alexandria* (1524; marble, S Caterina, Mazara del Vallo) features a similar signature: OPVS ANTONII GAGINI PANORMITAE.

Interestingly, and in my view significantly, Antonello never uses *faciebat* in his signatures, and his sons conform to the signature practices of their father, eschewing that trope as well. Perhaps these specific humanistic and classical pretentions were unnecessary or even undesirable for sculptors working in Sicily and Southern Italy, where more traditional monarchies were in power through the Renaissance. Certainly Antonello must have been aware of other developments. It is likely that he would have encountered *faciebat* signatures at some point while working in Rome in the early

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599 Cat. 029.  
600 Cat. 036.  
601 Cat. 041. But Kruft 1980, cat. 57, thinks this is primarily a workshop piece despite the signature.
sixteenth century under Michelangelo, yet the sculptor chose never to use the form. It seems that, apart from the matter of choice, it was also a case of what was contextually appropriate or popular. That is, in some sense Antonello would not have wanted to sign with *faciebat* given the local signature traditions of his primary places of work in Sicily and Calabria. The fact that he referred to himself as *Magister* in at least one signature, long after it had gone out of fashion, is suggestive of a different artistic world from Central and Northern Italy. The persistence of an older, more pre-Renaissance tradition, well into the sixteenth century, seems to be further confirmed by one of his sons’ signatures. Giandomenico Gagini signed his *Madonna della Grazia* (1542; S Michele Arcangelo, Mazara del Vallo) with a “speaking” inscription of the type most commonly seen in the fourteenth century: HOC OPVS ME FECIT M.DOMENICO DE GAGINI PANORMITANO M.542.

By comparison, Antonello’s contemporary and relative in Northern Italy, the sculptor Pace Gagini, signed with the trope that was in fashion for his region: *faciebat*. His seated portrait of Francesco Lomellini in Genoa’s Palazzo S Giorgio (1508) is signed PACES GAZINES BISSONIVS FACIEBAT. It is likely he would have been exposed to this format through not only his environment but also through work with his collaborator and uncle, Antonio della Porta [Antonio Tamagnino]. Della Porta indicated his own awareness of contemporary Central and Northern Italian practice in his

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603 A Madonna and Child in S Bernardino da Siena, Amantea, from 1505, is signed MANVS AVTEM MAGISTRI ANTONI / DE GAGINO SCVLTORIS DIE X SBRS M CCCCC V. CM (cat. 032); another Madonna and Child, from 1504, also seems to be signed with M(AGIST)RI[ANT]ON[I] . IO (cat. 30), although the signature is partially destroyed, making precise identification of its content difficult.
604 Cat. 123.
605 Cat. 255.
signature for the now severely damaged portrait bust of Acellino Salvago (1500), which was signed OPVS ANT TAMAGNINI. Shortly thereafter, with the introduction of *faciebat* by his peers in the North, Antonio della Porta changed his signature to reflect the trend. A *Virgin and Child* statuette made for the parish church of Ruisseauville, Pas-del-Calais (1506), is signed by Antonio and his nephew Pace with ANTONIVS TAMAGNINVS DE PORTA / ET PAXIVS DE GAZINO MEDIOLANESIS FACIEBANT.

In other cases, it seems that a work’s medium was an important or contributing factor in determining socially appropriate signing practices for sculptors. The brothers Bongiovanni and Giovanni Bassiano Lupi, from Lodi, signed a sculpted and painted wood polyptych in Borgonovo Val Tidone with BONIOHANES ET IOHANES BASSIANANVS / FRATRES DE LVPIIS DE LAVDE / PINXERVNT ET INTAIAVERNVT 1474. The signature looks back toward an older signature tradition, and its strong statement of the work’s manual creation (*pinxerunt et intaiauerunt*) seems to defy prevailing trends in sculpted signatures. In this case, perhaps the work’s more traditional format or the brothers’ training determined their manner of signing. A few years later, the brother Bongiovanni signed a work on his own, taking credit for all aspects of production. The polychromed altarpiece (1480; S Maria del Palladino, Rivolta d’Adda) is signed BONIOHANES DE LVPIIS DE LAVDE INTALIAVIT PINXIT ET

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607 Cat. 048. The bust, located in the Bode Museum in Berlin, was seriously damaged in World War II, although it is still on display. The signature is provided thanks to text and images in C. Justi, “Marmorbüste des Genuesen Acellino Salvago von Antonio della Porta Tamagnini” (*Jahrbuch der Königlich Preussischen Kunstsammlungen* 13, 1892): 90-92
608 Cat. 254.
609 Cat. 077.
610 On these brothers, see Augusta Ghidiglia Quintavalle, “Il politico di Borgonovo Val Tidone e un problema da affrontare l’arte di Bongiovanni e Giovanni Bassiano Lupi” (*Arte Lombarda* XVI, 1971): 45-54, who tries to determine each brother’s contribution based on an examination of their works and their signatures.
DORAVIT MCCCCLXXX.⁶¹¹ Again, the content strongly recalls signatures from the fourteenth century or before. It seems factors in addition to geographic location were at play here; the status of these works as somewhat “peripheral” or minor, in the context of Renaissance classicism, seems to have influenced these brothers.

The significant point here is the importance of culturally and contextually defined norms for signature practices. This is not to downplay signatures’ importance as individual artists’ personal statements of authorship; rather, it is to highlight the parameters within which these sculptors could often work in order to convey that authorship. In all of the cases presented here there can be little doubt that the sculptors were aware of other signature possibilities; Antonello Gagini, for example, must have come into contact with faciebat signatures. Yet his training or his work in the south conditioned the way he chose to portray himself via his signatures. And in the North his contemporaries chose their signatures within a different set of circumstances and norms. Not surprisingly, Renaissance sculptors’ signatures, like the works on which they appear, tend to respond to prevailing cultural and artistic trends.

An interesting component to this phenomenon is the degree to which it continues what was also standard practice in the Middle Ages. In some sense it recalls the situation described by Claussen in an article on Gothic artists, who noted the need for sculptors to navigate tensions between the desire for fame and the cultural norms that called for humility and modesty.⁶¹² Furthermore, the use of common tropes, such as faciebat, mimics what Dietl referred to as a “rhetorically affected vocabulary and repertoire of motifs […] as projections of standardized, leading conceptualizations of artistic

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⁶¹¹ Cat. 076.
practice." Although the content was greatly simplified the practice in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries is essentially the same: sculptors signed with what was appropriate and what presented them to their readers in terms understood to signify artistic ability. Across the centuries, from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance (and likely later), sculptors had to contend with issues of self-presentation and promotion within the parameters of acceptable behavior; only occasionally did one among them break rank to create something truly original, and even then it must still be a product of its time.

**Sculptors’ signatures and authorial presence**

It is only natural that a consideration of sculptors’ signatures must raise issues of authorial presence. Specifically, does the presence of a signature in sculpture suggest the mediating presence of an author, as is often the case in works of literature and painting? As can be expected, the answer varies, although in certain cases it seems clear that sculptors were asserting their presence as strongly as possible given the values and traditions of their period, as well as the limitations of their medium.

In literary and textual works, the presence of a signature or autograph has long been considered a mark of an author’s personal attention or presence. The presence of a signature or statement of authorship associates that work with a particular person who, it is assumed, takes responsibility for what is written. In ancient Rome, where most writing

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613 Dielt 1987, 77; “Das zu diesem Zweck eingesetzte, rhetorisch geprägte Vokabular und Motivrepertoire verweist auf ihren primären Charakter als Projektionen normierter Leitvorstellungen künstlerischer Tätigkeit.”

by the upper class was done by a professional scribe, a letter-writer would often insert a line of greeting in their own hand to add a personal touch. 615 In cases of intimate friends or relations authors might even compose the entire letter in their own hand, occasionally noting that they had done so. The recognition of the autograph or of the handwriting was also recognition of the writer’s presence, and of their act of writing and composing. 616 In literature the means of signing may differ, in that an author’s presence is suggested explicitly or implicitly through the text rather than through handwriting or a signature, but the effect is the same. 617 Signatures, autographs, statements, authorial voices: all imply the generation of a text and its origins in a particular person (real or imagined) rather than from “la nuit des temps”. 618

In painting and sculpture the signature can operate similarly, 619 although in the case of sculpture a signature lacks the ability to convey the personal touch and immediacy of an author in the same way that handwriting can. 620 Yet the presence of a signature can tell the viewer something about the artist’s presence, his act of creation, and his responsibility for what the viewer is seeing. It can also become a key with which we can unlock the artist’s intentions, or what he meant to convey through his work. 621 Furthermore, the signature reminds us that what we are seeing is not authorless,
anonymous imagery; the signed work of art calls attention to the work as something seen through the eyes of another. The signed image is an image that has been mediated, interpreted, and presented to us by another; in some sense, the signature provides the presence of the author/sculptor long after he has passed.

As significant as the presence of a signature is for the viewer, it needs to be seen or recognized for it to function in the ways described above. Questions of audience then become fundamental, as I underlined in chapter three. In most cases, it appears that sculptors were not signing primarily for the populace at large, but rather for their peers in artistic, scholarly, and literary circles. These are the individuals who could reasonably be expected to read their signatures and appreciate them as statements made by fellow authors. And the evidence, provided by the ways in which artists consistently copied the signatures of their peers, illustrates that they were in fact reading and reacting to fellow artists’ statements of authorial presence. This form of in group dialogue is mirrored in the few contemporary writings from artists or art appreciators. In the late fourteenth century Cennino Cennini wrote his Il libro dell’arte for fellow artists.622 Similarly, Krautheimer illustrated that Ghiberti, in the mid-fifteenth century, composed his unfinished treatise with the intention of it being a didactic tool for other artists.623

Signatures’ lettering further made it clear that sculptors were addressing primarily an audience of their artist and humanist peers. As much as the use of Roman letterforms in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries was a sign of nodding to prevailing trends, it was also a choice that took audience into account when selecting lettering style, something

with which men of the period would have been familiar. Since the late thirteenth century letter-writers were supposed to have command of at least three different types of script for different types of letters (and thus different audiences/recipient). In the second half of the sixteenth century the Italian writing master Giovanni Cresci noted that different types of correspondence could require different types of scripts, and in some cases scripts were reserved for different languages; e.g., one script for vernacular, another for Latin. The situation for writing on sculpture in the form of epigraphy and signatures was likely no different, and lettering was used to signify, among other things, the presence of an author who made a choice about lettering and a reader to whom that choice was directed. Just as the content of Ghiberti’s treatise made his audience clear, so too did Renaissance sculptors specify the audiences of their signatures through formal and textual characteristics.

Given this component to lettering, content, and audience, it is probable that part of the reason behind the use of ancient letterforms and tropes in the Renaissance was to address the metaphorical audience of antiquity. In doing so, sculptors were signifying their correspondence with the artists to whom they aspired. This sort of imaginary dialogue developed by fifteenth-century sculptors was not without precedent; not surprisingly, its origins are in the roots of humanistic thought. Petrarch, in the previous century, wrote letters to ancient authors like Cicero, claiming, “I wrote to him as a

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624 Ganz 1997, 293.
626 Dario Covi notes how important context and subject matter are for painted inscriptions. See Covi 1986.
friend of my own years and time, regardless of the ages which separated us.”

Signing a work with OPVS DONATELLI or SANSVINVS • FLORENTINVS / FACIEBAT in Roman capitals seems to be doing much the same thing. In many cases these artists were using signatures as another means of collapsing the distance between their own period, the value of which was not guaranteed, with that of antiquity, which was enshrined in the minds of Renaissance artists and humanists.

This sort of dialogue with antiquity provides an interesting comparison to some twelfth-century signatures and artist inscriptions. Several sculptors from the period proudly declared their art to be “modern” and implied a slightly different juxtaposition with the “ancient”. The sculptor Guillelmus, on his pulpit from 1158-61 and originally in Pisa Cathedral, signed: hoc Guillelmus opus praestantior arte modernis//quattuor annum spatio [temporibus fecit]//sed do(mi)ni centum decies sex mille duobus.

(Guillelmus, distinguished in modern art, made this work in a period of four years, finishing in the year of our lord 1162). As Dietl has illustrated, the use of the term modernus, in this and other cases, implies a comparison with and victory over the art of antiquity. In other instances twelfth-century signatures and inscriptions compared their artists to Daedalus for their skill or ingenuity, lofty praise since Daedalus was considered the inventor of sculpture and architecture and the ideal representation of artistic achievement. Occasionally the comparison was even improved upon by claiming the modern artist’s superiority to his antique model.

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629 Dietl 1987, 89-90.
630 Dietl 1987, 90.
century signatures, antiquity is a foil with which to interact; only the details of the
interaction have changed.

The use of classical signature tropes in the Quattrocento and later should further
suggest a revision in how we perceive some sculptors, such as Ghiberti, who are not
thought of as properly classical. The antiquity that exists for modern viewers is not the
same as the one that existed for Renaissance sculptors,632 and it is clear that there was
room for styles and objects considered un-classical or even anti-classical by our
standards. As illustrated in chapter two of the present dissertation, standards for
“classical” lettering varied during the fifteenth century. And Baxandall has noted, for
example, the great amount of praise early fifteenth-century humanists addressed to
Pisanello, not an artist immediately associated with the standards of humanism and
revived classicism.633 But as with phenomena like Medieval copies, which do not
conform to modern notions of copies,634 the standards were likely different from what we
expect or assume. Thus even someone as “un-classical” as Niccolò Lamberti could have
expressed his artistic dialogue with the ancients through the use of a specific signature
type.

But what could the real audiences have made of these signatures in the context of
what we know about sculptural practice in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries?635 Nearly
all sculptural works, especially large scale ones, are collaborative efforts. Certainly the
primary audience for sculptors’ signatures, which was composed of other artists, would

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632 For more on this, see Alexander Nagel and Christopher S. Wood, Anachronic Renaissance (New York:
Zone Books, 2010).
633 Michael Baxandall, Giotto and the Orators: Humanist observers of painting in Italy and the discovery of
634 The seminal work on which is Richard Krautheimer, “Introduction to an ‘Iconography of Mediaeval
635 As Rona Goffen asked, “what then does ‘authorship’ mean in times when no artist worked alone, when
all his works were collaborative efforts?” (Goffen 2003, 303).
have been aware of this fact. No serious viewer of the *Gattamelata*, for example, would have thought that it was solely the work of Donatello; nor would anyone believe that Jacopo Sansovino personally executed all of his figures for the San Marco loggia, despite their being signed as such.  

And then there is the case of Pace Gagini and his uncle Antonio dell Porta (Tamagnino), both of whom were paid for a seated figure of Francesco Lomellini (1508; Palazzo S Giorgio, Genoa), although only Pace’s name appears in the signature: PACES GAZINVS BISSONIVS FACIEBAT.

In these instances, and indeed in the majority of sculptors’ signatures, it seems apparent that the readers of signatures recognized the name of the inscribed individual as the *auteur* who took responsibility for a particular work. The situation seems to be the same across the centuries, as Dietl has noted how, long before the Renaissance, metaphors of and references to mechanical or manual acts of creation could be appropriated to signify the artist’s transformative and conceptual powers. Despite changes in socially appropriate norms for content, length, appearance, and so on, signatures from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries do essentially the same thing. Whether it is through the use of *opus* + name, transmitted in physical form from antiquity, or through *faciebat*, taken from Pliny, artists used Classical and manual tropes to present themselves as persons of creative power whose “hands” extended from their minds to the hands of all who worked for them. Their target audience, composed of other such artists as well as those who aspired to be among their ranks, understood this, and likely marveled as much at their ability to command vast workshops as at their skill with hammer and chisel.

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636 Cat. 183-186.
637 Cat. 255.
638 Dietl 1987, 94, also see 95.
The fact that sculptors were consistently addressing other artists and humanists via their signatures may help to explain why the Renaissance signatures lose their self-laudatory content. Decorum and social mores also likely played a role, and fourteenth-century factors which are as yet unclear must have been influential given the trend’s origins in that century, but I believe another aspect was the rise of literature on artists.639

Prior to the fifteenth century, signatures and artist inscriptions were among the only places sculptors could hope to be enshrined in writing. The beginnings of art historical literature in the Quattrocento changed this, as artists began to be mentioned in literary and textual sources. Ghiberti’s treatise is from this century, as is Manetti’s biography of Brunelleschi, which may be considered the first true artist’s biography.640 In 1456 the humanist author Bartolomeo Fazio included painters and sculptors—such as Ghiberti and Donatello—in his De viris illustribus, alongside “Poets, Orators, Lawyers, Physicians, Private Citizens, Captains, [and] Princes.”641 The North Italian humanist Gregorio Correr dedicated three of his poems to the Veronese sculptor Antonio Rizzo (c. 1440-1499), even referring to him by his profession: Antonium Riccium Sculptorem.642 Baldassare Castiglione made the sculptor Giancristoforo Romano one of the courtiers in his Il libro

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639 Print culture in general seems to have influenced or altered notions of authorship; see, e.g., Cynthia J. Brown, “Text, Image, and Authorial Self-Consciousness in Late Medieval Paris” in Printing the Written Word: The Social History of Books, circa 1450-1520, ed. Sandra Hindman (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991): 103-42.
640 Catherine M. Soussloff, The Absolute Artist: The Historiography of a Concept (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 43-44. Soussloff claims it is the “first text in the genre of the biography of the artist because it can be characterized by models, topics, tropes, and structure that pertain uniquely to the genre” (43) and later that it “contains virtually all of the elements that can be associated with the better-known biographies by Vasari of a century later.” (44)
641 Pisanello, who worked as a medalist, is also included, though it is as a painter rather than as a sculptor. See Baxandall 1971, 104-09; the original Latin can be found on 163-68.
642 I am grateful to Heather Nolin for this information; see Giovanni Degli Agostini, Notizie istorico-critiche intorno la vita, e le opere degli scrittori viniziani, vol. I (Venice, 1752), 132, no. xiv. For information on the texts’ disappearance, see Wiebke Pohlandt, “Antonio Rizzo” (Jahrbuch der Berliner M useen n.s., no. xiii, 1971), 163 n165.
And of course by the mid-sixteenth century Vasari’s Lives completely transformed the ways artists and sculptors could hope to be immortalized through literature. Perhaps the presence of ever more options for textual expression caused a decrease in primacy given to signatures, as sculptors realized that inscriptions, rooted in stone or metal in a single copy, were no longer the best or the only option for self-promotion.

Given the relationship between artistic literature and sculptors’ signatures, it is worth looking for the same phenomenon in the fourteenth century. As noted, the Trecento is the period when sculptors’ signatures become increasingly basic and standardized compared to the examples from the preceding centuries. Although the fourteenth century does not feature the growth in literature on artists seen in the fifteenth or sixteenth centuries, art and artists do receive increasing mention in literary sources (notably Giotto). Perhaps more importantly, the period was also undergoing a general flowering of written production and communication. Furthermore, the fourteenth century is the period when ideas in humanism and classicism were beginning to take root in Italy. New forms of artistic competition were being used by patrons and commissioners, which meant the development of new ways to write about art and artists. It is likely that both factors—as well as others—played a role in sculptors’ changing signature practices, as they realized the emerging potential of other forms of leaving their mark for posterity.

Thus starting in the fourteenth century and continuing into the fifteenth and sixteenth the

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643 Ames-Lewis 2000, 61
644 As in Dante’s Divine Comedy, Purgatorio, 11, 94-96: “Credette Cimabue tener lo campo nella pittrura / ma ora ha Giotto il grido, / sicchè la fama di colui è scura”. Discussed in Antje Middendorf Kosegarten, “The Origins of Artistic Competitions in Italy (Forms of competition between artists before the contest for the Florentine Baptistery doors won by Ghiberti in 1401)” in Lorenzo Ghiberti nel suo tempo (Florence: Olschki, 1980): I, 167-86.
645 See Chapter III in the present dissertation, as well as accompanying bibliography.
646 On this, and the influence of these developments on the fifteenth century, see Kosegarten 1980.
expanded role of a one form of textual communication left a significant and lasting mark on another form of writing, and sculptors increasingly sought to insert themselves into a cultural, artistic, and literary sphere potentially more durable and permanent than even stone or bronze.
APPENDIX

Sculptors’ Signatures

The signatures in this appendix are listed alphabetically according to the sculptor’s first name. For sculptors who consistently worked and signed with a nickname I have chosen to categorize them under that name; thus the Mantuan sculptor Pier Jacopo di Antonio Alari-Bonacolsi appears under the much more familiar name “Antico”. Artists whose names are known to us only as “Magister X” are filed under “Magister”.

Biographical information for the artists (i.e., birth and death years) comes from Grove Art Online/Oxford Art Online, with occasional supplementation from specific sources listed in the entries.

Transcription rules are similar to those found in the body of the text. All signatures are transcribed in MAJUSCULES (capital letters), the only exception being signatures that appear in direct quotes from other authors who do not use majuscules (e.g., some older authors transcribed inscriptions or signatures in Italic text).

For letter choices I have opted to use the forms as they appear in their original state. Thus the modern letter J is transcribed in its original form as I; e.g., IOANNES instead of JOANNES. Similarly, the modern letter U has been transcribed in its original V form; thus OPVS instead of OPUS.
Letters that appear in (parentheses) indicate expanded abbreviations or omissions; e.g., OP(VS) indicates the expansion of OP to its full form, *opus*. Letters that appear in [brackets] indicate lost or unclear elements that have been reconstructed or hypothesized; e.g., [MAGISTER PAVLVS D]E GVALDO FECIT refers to a damaged inscription that has been reconstructed by a modern scholar; only the E GVALDO FECIT survives.

A single slash / between words indicates a line separation or division; a double slash // indicates separation by a significant structural or visual element. Thus MAGR / DEODAT // FECIT / HOC OP indicates that the lines MAGR and DEODAT are separate from the lines FECIT / HOC OP; in this instance a circular window element separates the signature.

Roman numerals are transcribed in their original form (e.g., MCCCXXX), and thus the use of Arabic numerals (e.g., 1484) indicates that the artist did so, as well.

In some cases—though not all—I have also included relevant secondary inscriptions.
ADRIANO FLORENTINO [Fiorentino]
(fl. 1485-1500)

Cat. No. 001
female figure bronze statuette
Paris, Collection E. Foule

HADRIANVS ME F(ECIT)

In: Bode 1980, 10, pl. XVIII

Cat. No. 002
Satyr
Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum

underneath base:

ADRIANVS FLOR FACIEB

Notes: The signature was hidden for centuries, and only rediscovered in 1970. It appears to have been engraved in the original model. Depending on the statue’s dating it may be one of the earliest—or the earliest—surviving instance of the use of “faciebat” in the Renaissance.

In: Bacchi and Giacomelli 2008, cat. 48; Leithe-Jasper 1986, cat. 3, 58-60
AGOSTINO (DI ANTONIO) DI DUCCIO
(b Florence, 1418; d ?Perugia, after 1481)

Cat. No. 003
Reliefs with story of San Gemignano, marble
Modena, Duomo
1442

AVGVSTINVS DE FLORENTIA F. 1442

Fig. 1

In: Pope-Hennessy 1996, II, 388

Cat. No. 004
Tempio Malatestiano, interior
Rimini
1449-51

OPVS AVGVSTINI FLORENTINI LAPICIDIAE

In: Pisani 2009, 34; Pope-Hennessy 1996, II, 390
AGOSTINO DI GIOVANNI
(fl Siena, 1310; d before 27 June 1347)

Cat. No. 005
Virgin Annunciate, wood
Pisa, Mus. N. Civ. S Matteo
1321
painted Gothic lettering at base

[†•] A(NNO) • D(OMINI) • M[C]CCXXI • AG/VSTINV • CHO(N)DA(M) •
GIO/VAN(N)I • E(T) STEFANVS • ACOLTI • / DE • SENI[S] •
FE?[CE?/RVNT…….]

Notes: the painter Stefano Acolti (STEFANVS ACOLTI DE SENI[S]) is also mentioned in the inscription.

In: Dietl 2009, cat. A485; Bartalini 2005, 215, and figs. 248, 249; Carli 1960, 52

Cat. No. 006
The Tarlati Monument, marble (with Agnolo di Ventura)
Arezzo cathedral
1330
Inscription running across base:

† HOC OPV(S) FECIT MAGISTE(R) AGVSTINV(S) [ET] MAGISTE(R)
ANGELV(S) DE SEN(IS) • M•CCC•XXX

Fig. 35

In: Pope-Hennessy 1996, I, 245
ALFONSO LOMBARDI
(b Ferrara, c. 1497; d Bologna, 1 Dec 1537)

Cat. No. 007
Relief, scenes from Life of St Dominic, marble
Bologna, Arca di S Domenico, S Domenico
1533
on block at center, on which sit the Madonna and Child:

ALPHONSVS • / DE • LOMBARDIS / FERRARIENSIS • F •

Fig. 2
AMBROGIO BREGNO [Ambrogio da Milano?]
(d before 1504)

Cat. No. 008
Tomb of Bishop Lorenzo Roverella
Ferrara, San Giorgio fuori le mura, Ferrara
1475

MCCCCLXXV AMBROSII MEDIOLANENSI OPVS

In: Crescentini 2008, 148
ANDREA [dell’Aquila?]
(15th c)

Cat. No. 009
Madonna and Child relief, marble
Rome, Ospedale di S Giacomo
c. 1450s/70s (?)
at base of relief:

OPVS • A(N)DREA

Notes: Valentiner 1937, 529, assigns this to Andrea dell’Aquila and dates it to the end of
the 1405s.

Fig. 3
ANDREA BREGNO (Andrea di Cristoforo)
(b Osteno, near Lugano 1418; d Rome, sept 1503)

Cat. No. 010
Borgia Altar
Rome, Santa Maria del Popolo (now in sacristy)
1470s (Meyer and Shaw, 293)
base of tympanum:

\[
\text{DV(M) ANDREAS HOC OPVS COMPONIT M(ORTEM) • A(N)TONII}
\]
\[
\text{DILECTI PARCA REPE(N)TI IND(O)LVIT CVSTODVM IN / CVRIA}
\]
\[
\text{MORITVR QVI VIX(IT) ANN(OS) VII M(ENSES) VIIII D(IES) XXIII}
\]
\[
\text{HOR(AS) X MCCCC LXXIII (DIE) XVIII OTOBRIS}
\]

Notes: in October of 1473, Bregno’s son Marcantonio died at the age of seven. The signature is a memorial inscription to his son.

Fig. 4

In: Pöpper 2008, 392

Cat. No. 011
Piccolomini Altar
Siena, Duomo
1485

\[
\text{OPVS ANDREAE / MEDIOLANENSIS}
\]

Fig. 5
ANDREA DA FIRENZE
(b Florence, 1388; d Florence c. 1455)

Cat. No. 012
Tomb of Simone Vigilante, Bishop of Senigallia (d 1428) (dismembered in 18th century)
Ancona, San Francesco alle Scale
an inscription read:

‘the work of Andrea of Florence who also executed the tomb of King Ladislas’

In: Buglioni 1795

Cat. No. 013
Tomb of Ruggiero Sanseverino (d 1433)
Chapel of S Monica of the oratory of SS Filippo e Giacomo attached to S Giovanni a Carbonara

OPVS ANDREAE DE FLORENTIA

In: Abbate 1998, 167
ANDREA DA FUSINA
(fl 1486; d Milan, 1526)

Cat. No. 014
Monument of Daniele Birago
Milan, Santa Maria della Passione
c. 1495-1500
at base:

    ANDREAE • FVSINE • OPVS • MCCCLXXXXV

Fig. 93

In: Agostino Busti detto Il Bambaia, 1483-1548, 14; Agosti 1990, 173, 188, and fig. 145
ANDREA DEL VERROCCHIO  
(b Florence, 1435; d Venice, ?30 June 1488)

and ALESSANDRO LEOPARDI [Leompardi]  
(fl 1482–1522)

Cat. No. 015  
Colleoni Monument  
Venice, Campo di SS Giovanni e Paolo  
1480-96  
finished by Leopardi; signed on girth of the horse:

    ALEXANDER LEOPARDVS V F OPVS

Fig. 6  

In: Pope-Hennessy 1996, II, 388
ANDREA LOMBARDO (?)

Cat. No. 016
Door of Sant’Antonio Abate
Tossicia

HOC • OP • FECIT / A[N]D[R]EAS • LOMAD / 1471

In: Arnoldi 1994, 146-47
ANDREA ORCAGNA [Andrea di Cione]
(b Florence, 1315–20; d Florence, 1368)

Cat. No. 017
Tabernacle
Florence, Orsanmichele
1359
inscription at base of Burial of the Virgin (rear of tabernacle):

    ANDREAS CIONIS PICTOR FLORE(N)TIN(VS) / ORATORII
    ARCHIMAGISTER EXTITIT HVI(VS) • MCCCLIX

Fig. 7

In: Pope-Hennessy 1996, I, 253; Vasari-Milanesi 1906, 606
ANDREA PISANO
(b Pontedera, c. 1295; d ?Orvieto, 1348–9)

Cat. No. 018
Bronze doors
Florence, Baptistery
completed and installed in 1336
inscription running along top of doors:


“Andrea, [son] of Ugolino di Nino, of Pisa, made me, in the year of the Lord 1330”

fig. 8

In: Pope-Hennessy 1996, I, 248

Cat. No. 019
Silver Crucifix, reliquary of the Cross (with associates)
Massa Marittima Cathedral
c. 1330

† HOC MEVS ET GADDVS CEVS ANDREASQ(VE) MAGISTRI • PISIS
FECERVNT ARGENTI AVRIQ(VE) MINISTRI

Notes: It is not entirely certain that the ANDREAS refers to Andrea Pisano. Also mentioned in the signature are the following figures: Meo di Tale (MEVS), goldsmith in Pisa (d. 1349); Gaddo di Giovanni da Cascina (GADDVS), Pisan goldsmith (d. 1349); and Francesco di Colo (CEVS), Pisan goldsmith.

In: Dietl 2009, cat. A350
ANDREA (DAL MONTE) SANSOVINO
(b Monte Sansovino, c. 1467; d Monte Sansovino, 1529)

Cat. No. 020
Madonna and Child, marble
Genoa, cathedral, Chapel of St John the Baptist
c. 1503
on base:

SANSVVINVS • FLORENTINVS / FACIEBAT

Fig. 9

Cat. No. 021
St John the Baptist, marble
Genoa, cathedral, Chapel of St John the Baptist
c. 1503 (?)
on base:

SANSVVINVS • FLORENTINVS / • FACIEBAT

Cat. No. 022
Tomb of Cardinal Ascanio Sforza, marble
Rome, Santa Maria del Popolo
c. 1505

ANDREAS / SANSOVINVS / FACIEBAT

Fig. 10

Cat. No. 023
Tomb of Cardinal Girolamo Basso della Rovere, marble
Rome, Santa Maria del Popolo
c. 1507

ANDREAS / SANSOVINVS / FACIEBAT

Fig. 11
Cat. No. 024
Madonna and Child with St Anne, marble
Rome, Chiesa di Sant’Agostino
1510-12
at base:

• ANDREAS • DEMONTE SANSOVINO • FACIEBAT •

Fig. 12
ANGELO DI NALDUCCIO

Cat. No. 025
Virgin Annunciata (1369) and Angel Gabriel (1370), polychrome wood
Montalcino, Museo Diocesano
1369-70

on base of Angel Gabriel:

QVESTO • AGNIO/LO • FECE • FARE • L’AR/TE • DE CALZOLARI / *
ANGIELVS • SCVLPSIT • ET / PINSIT • AL TEN/PO DI TOFO • BARTALINI
/ RECTORE MCCC • LXX •

“This angel the guild of the shoemakers had made. Angelo sculpted and painted
it at the time when Tofo Bartalini was rector 1370.”

on base of the Virgin:

[ANNO DOMINI] M • C[CC]/•LXVIII • L’AR/TE DE C[A]/LZOLARI /
FECERO • […]ARE • QV/ESTA • FIGVRA • AL TE[M]P/O D’AGNO[LI]/NO
RETOR[E].

“AD 1369 the guild of shoemakers had this figure made at the time of the
rectorship of Agnolino”

In: Dietl 2009, cat. A371
ANSERAMUS DA TRANI

Cat. No. 026
Tympanum
Terlizzi, Chiesa del Rosario in Terlizzi
c. 1240-50

TRANVM / QVEM GENVIT / DOCTOR SCOLPEN / DO PERITVS /
ANSERAMVS / OP[VS] P[OR]TE FELICIT[ER] IMPLET

“Anseramus, from Trani, who as an experienced doctor of sculpture happily brought about this work of the portal” (trans. Dietl 1987, 81-82)

In: Dietl 1987, 81-82, and 82 n26
ANTICO [Alari-Bonacolsi, Pier Jacopo di Antonio]
(b ?Mantua, c. 1460; d Gazzuolo, 1528)

Cat. No. 027
pair of medals to celebrate the wedding of Gianfrancesco Gonzaga, Conte di Rodigo and Lord of Bozzolo, with Antonia del Balzo
1480

ANTI

(Abbreviated form of “Antico”)

In: Bode 1980, 27

Cat. No. 028
Dioscuri (Restoration)
Rome, Monte Cavallo, Quirinale
c. 1495? / c. 1515?
Inscription on back of pier supporting the horse on the right-side group (the group signed “OPVS PRAXITELIS” on the front):

ANTICVS MANTVANVS • R^{F}

“Antico from Mantua restored this”

Notes: “RF” here is likely “refecit”. The signature was discovered by Arnold Nesselrath, who was examining the group on scaffolding.

In: Nesselrath 1982, 353-57
ANTONELLO [ANTONIO] GAGINI
(b Palermo, 1478–9; d Palermo, between 31 March and 22 April 1536)

Cat. No. 029
Madonna della Scala, marble
Palermo Duomo, Sacristy
1503
on base:

    OP(VS) ANTONELLI GAGINI PANHORMITANI DOMINICO SCVLTORE
    GENITI XII DIE NOV. 1503

In: Kruft 1980, cat. 79, P. 386, figs. 9-10

Cat. No. 030
Madonna and Child, marble
Rabat (Malta), Santa Maria di Gesù
1504
at base, partially destroyed:

    M(AGIST)R(I)[ANT]ON[I] . . IO 1504 CI[VI]S MESSANEN

In: Kruft 1980, cat. 113, p. 412, fig. 16

Cat. No. 031
Madonna della Grazia, marble, new paint
Mesoraca (Calabria), Chiesa della Madonna della Grazia
1504

    HOC OPVS SCVLPSIT M.P. ANTONELLVS D. GAGINO C. MESSANE DIE
    30 JANUARII 1504

Other inscriptions:

    HOC FECIT FIERI FRATER NICOLAVS CA[M]PANARO D. TERCIO
    ORDINE

In: Kruft 1980 cat. 58, p. 379, fig. 22
**Cat. No. 032**

Madonna and Child, marble
Amantea (Calabria) S Bernardino da Siena
1505
at base of statue, below relief of “Visitation” scene:

```
MANVS AVTEM MAGISTRI ANTONI / DE GAGINO SCVLTORIS DIE X
SBRS M CCCCC V. CM
```

Other inscriptions: the following is above the signature:

```
HOC OPVS F(IERI) F(ECIT) NOBILIS NICOLAVS D’ARCHOMANO CIVIS
MANTI
```

**In:** Kruft 1980, cat. 8, p. 367 figs. 23, 24

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**Cat. No. 033**

Madonna degli Angioli, marble
Morano Calabro (Calabria), Collegiata della Maddalena
1505
at base:

```
ANTONI. D. GAGINS ME SCVLPSIT EX MNE DIE XV NOVEMBRIS
MCCCCCV
```

Other inscriptions:

```
PETRVS ET SIMONELLA DE LA TERTIA F. F. STELLA MARIS
SVCCVRRE CADE[N]TI
```

**In:** Kruft 1980, cat. 70, p. 383, fig. 25

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**Cat. No. 034**

Altar retable, marble
Nicosia, Santa Maria Maggiore
1512

```
HOC OPVS EXCVSSVM PER CELEBERRIMVM ANTONIVM DE GAGENIS
PROCURATORIBVS V. PRESBITERO IOANNE MENIA NO. IOANNE DE
ALEXI ET NICOLAO CHANCARDO M CCCCC XII DIE VERO XX
OCTOBRIS P. IND.
```
Cat. No. 035
Pietà, marble
Soverato Superiore (Calabria), Chiesa Arcipretale (SS Addolorata?)
1521
at corner base:

HOC OP(VS) ANT / ONII GAGINII / PANORMITAE / MCCCCCXII

In: Kruft 1980, cat. 129, p. 417, figs. 297-300

Cat. No. 036
St Nicholas of Bari altar retable with reliefs, marble
Randazzo, S Niccolò
1523

OPVS ANTONII GAGINII PANORMITA MDXXIII

In: Kruft 1980, cat. 114, pp. 412-13, figs. 209-11

Cat. No. 037
St Vito, marble, painted (renewed?)
S Vito, Burgio
1522
on base:

OP(VS) ANTONII GAGINI PANORMITAE

Other inscriptions:

HOC OPVS FIERI FECIT CONFRATERNITAS S. VITI DE TERRA BVRGI
MDXXII

In: Kruft 1980, cat. 17, p. 369, fig. 356

Cat. No. 038
St John the Baptist, marble, remains of gold (red on the coat is new)
Castelvetrano, Sicily, San Giovanni Battista
1521-22
at base of figure:

OPVS ANTONII GAGINI PANHORMITAE MDXXII

In: Kruft 1980, cat. 26, p. 371, figs. 361-64

Cat. No. 039
Annunciation, marble
Castoreale, S Agata
1519

ANTONIVS DE GAGENIS PANORMITA ME SCVLPSIT M CCCCCXVIII

Other inscriptions: on base of Virgin’s throne:

CASTRENSI POPVLO / MATER ET ADVOCATA SVM

Fig. 94

In: Kruft, cat. 30, P. 372, figs. 306-08

Cat. No. 040
St James
Trapani, Museo Civico Pepoli
1522

on base:

ANTONIVS DE GAGINO PANORMITA SCVLPSIT EXISTENTIBVS
MAGN. IOANNE PETRO DE FERRO, GERARDO DE SIGERIO ET
MAGISTRO IACOBO DE VRTICI RECTORIBVS MCCCCCXXII. X IVLII

In: Kruft 1980, cat. 142, p. 421-22, figs. 367-70

Cat. No. 041
St Catherine of Alexandria, marble
Mazara del Vallo, S Caterina
1524

OPVS ANTONII GAGINI PANORMITAE
Other inscriptions:

SORV ANTONINA DE IVNTA FIERI FECIT MDXXIII

Notes: Kruft thinks this is a workshop piece despite the presence of the signature.

In: Kruft 1980, cat. 57, p. 379, fig. 331
ANTONINO GAGINI
(b before 1514; fl until 1574)

Cat. No. 042
St John the Baptist, marble
S Giovannni Battista, Erice
1538

COMPLETA IMAGO IN XV DIE MENSIS IVNII XII INDICIONIS
MDXXXVIII ANTONINVS DE GAGINIS SCVLPSIT

In: Kruft 1980, 429-30, figs. 454, 455, cat. 7
ANTONIO BABOCCIO DA PIPERNO
(1351–c. 1435)

Cat. No. 043
Tomb of Margherita di Durazzo (d 1412)
Salerno, north aisle of Cathedral (orig. in S Francesco)
Base of sepulcher:

ABAS ANTONIVS BABOSVS MAGISTRO DE PI(PE)RNO FEC(IT) / CV(M)
AL(E)SSIO D(E) VICO SVO LABORANTE

In: De Gennaro [n.d.], 35

Cat. No. 044
Tomb of Ludovico Aldomorisco
Naples, San Lorenzo Maggiore

signed and dated 1421 in gothic script

In: Navarro 1999, 97-103
ANTONIO DA COMO [Giovanni Antonio Bregno?]  

Cat. No. 045  
Column base  
Cori (Lazio), Chiesa di Sant’Oliva  
1480  

ANT • DA • COM[O • OP]  

In: Crescentini 2008, 148
ANTONIO DEL POLLAIUOLO
(b Florence, c. 1432; d Rome, 14 Feb 1498)

Cat. No. 046
Tomb of Pope Sixtus IV (d 1484)
Rome, St Peter’s
1493
signature tablet at head of tomb:

OPVS ANTONI POLAIOLI / FLORENTINI ARG AVRO / PICT AERE CLARI
/ ANDO MCCCCLXXXIII

Fig. 13

In: Fehl 1997, 198

Cat. No. 047
Tomb of Pope Innocent VIII
Rome, St Peter’s
on face of vertical block to pope’s right:

ANTONIVS / POLAIOLVS A/VR ARG AER PICT CLARVS / QVI XYST
SEP/VLCHR PER E/GIT COEPTVM / AB SE OPVS / ABSOLVIT

“Antonius Polaiuolus, famous in gold, silver, bronze and painting, he who
finished (peregit) the sepulchre of Sixtus here by himself brought to an end the
work he had begun” (trans. Fehl 1997, 203)

and plaque at pope’s right foot with Florentine lily:

OPVS ANTONII DEFLORENTIA

In: Fehl 1997, 202-03
ANTONIO DELLA PORTA [Antonio Tamagnino]
(b Porlezza, nr Como, fl 1489–1519)

Cat. No. 048
Portrait bust of Acellino Salvago, Genoese politician and banker
Bode Mus., Berlin (severely damaged in WWII)
1500

†OPVS ANT TAMAGNINI

Other inscriptions: at front:

†HIS MD / ACELINI SAIVAIGI IMAGO

In: Justi 1892, 90-92

Cat. No. 049
Statuette of Virgin and Child
parish church of Ruisseauville, Pas-de-Calais (France)
1506
at base:

ANTONIVS • TAMAGNINVS • DE • PORTA • / ET • PAXIVS • DE • GAZINO • MEDIOLANESIS • FACIEBANT

Notes: Signed by both Pace and Antonio della Porta (his uncle); the signature is painted rather than carved (per Roth)

In: Roth 1980, 21; Kruft 1970, 406-07, 414 n35, and fig. 20

Cat. No. 050
Tomb of Raoul de Lannoy and Jeanne de Poix
parish church of Folleville, Picardy (France)
1507
Signed below effigy of Jeanne de Poix

ANTONIVS DE PORTA / TAMAGNINVS MEDIOLANENSIS FACIEBAT // ET PAXIVS NEPOS SVVS

Other inscriptions: effigies hold scrolls/banners with:
ABLVE • NRA • DELICTA
ÆTERNA: VITA • NOBIS DA •

In: Justi 1892, 18
ANTONIO DI PIETRO AVERLINO

(see FILARETE)
ANTONIO LOMBARDO
(b ?c. 1458; d Ferrara, ?1516)

Cat. No. 051
Miracle of the New-Born Child, relief for Chapel of St Anthony
Padua, S Antonio
1500-04

ANTONII LOMBARDI O P F

Fig. 14


Cat. No. 052
Relief of Venus and Apollo, carvings for Alfonso I d’Este for Camerini di Alabastro of
the Castello, Ferrara
now in Museo Nazionale, Florence
Tablet inscribed:

AL D III

In: Pope-Hennessy 1996, II, 426

Cat. No. 053
Relief with two eagles, one of number of carvings for Alfonso I d’Este for Camerini di
Alabastro of the Castello, Ferrara
Inscription ending:

AL D III

In: Pope-Hennessy 1996, II, 426
ANTONIO MARIA DE CARONA
(Carona, c. 1500 – Genova, c. 1550)

Cat. No. 054
Tomb of D. Pedro Henríquez de Ribera
University Church, Seville (Spain) (orig. in charterhouse of Seville)
1520

ANTHONIVS MARIA DE APRILIS DE CHARONA / HOC OPVS FACIEBAT
IN IANVA

In: King 1921, 287, fig. 4; Justi 1892, 68-90, esp. 4
ANTONIO RIZZO  
(documented 1465 – 1499/1500)

Cat. No. 055  
Adam and Eve, marble  
Venice, Palazzo Ducale  
Eve, signed on base:  

ANTONIO RIZO

Fig. 15

In: Pope-Hennessy 1996, II, 420
ANTONIO ROSSELLINO
(b Settignano, 1427–8; d Florence, 1479)

Cat. No. 056
Giovanni Chellini
1456
inscribed at center within slightly hollowed base

OPVS ANTONII

Other inscriptions: also in base:

MAG(ISTE)R IOHAN(N)ES MAG(IST)RI ANTONII DE S(ANC)TO MINIATE
DOCTOR ARTIVM ET MEDICINE MºCCCCLVI

Fig. 16

In: Pope-Hennessy 1996, II, 374
ARNOLFO DI CAMBIO
(b Colle di Val d’Elsa, nr Siena; fl 1265; d Florence, ?8 March 1302)

Cat. No. 057
Tomb of French cardinal Guillaume de Bray (d 1282), marble
Orvieto, San Domenico

On inscription tablet, below longer inscription:

HOC • OPVS • FECIT • ARNOLFVS •

Notes: the following is on the same tablet, above the signature:

SIT • X(RIST)O • GRAT(VS) • HIC • GVILLE(L)M(VS) • TVMVLAT(VS) •
DE • BRAYO • NAT(VS) • MARCI • TITVLO • DECORATVS • / SIT • PER •
TE MARCE • CELI • GVILLE(L)M(VS) • IN • ARCE • / QVESO • NO(STR) •
PARCE • D(ERV)S • O(MN)IP(O)T(EN)S • SIBI • PARCE • / FRA(N)CIA •
PLA(N)GE • VIRV(M) • MORS • ISTIV(S) • T(IBI) • MIRV(M) •
DEFECTV(M) • PARIET • Q(VI)A • VIX • SIMILIS • SIBI • FIET / DEFLEAT
• HVNC • MATHESES • LEX • ET • DEC(RE)TA • POESIS / NEC • NON •
SINDERESIS • HEV • M(IHI) • Q(VE) • THEMESIS / BIS • SEX • CENTENVS
• BINV(S) • BIS • B(I)S•Q(VE) • VICEN(VS) • ANN(VS) • ERAT • X(RISTI) •
QVA(N)DO MORS • AFFVIT • ISTI / OBIIT • TERCIO • K(AL)ENDAS) •
MAI

“May William, who is buried here, be well pleasing to Christ. Born de Braye, adorned with the title of Mark, may he through thee, Mark, come to the citadel of heaven. I pray, may the Lord Almighty spare him not sparingly. O France, mourn this man; to thee his death will be a heavy blow, for there will scarcely be another like him. Mourn him, law of learning (or science) and decrees of poetry, and thou too, law of reason, - woe is me – and justice. It was the twelve hundred and (?) eighty-second year of Christ when death came to him. He died on the third day before the kalends of May. Arnolfo made this work.” (trans. Pope-Hennessy 1996, I, 240)

Notes: The monument has been altered significantly, and it is likely the tablet’s current location does not reflect the original placement.

Fig. 17

**Cat. No. 058**

Ciborium, marble  
Rome, San Paolo fuori le mura  
1285

†HOC OPVS / FECIT ARNOLFVS // CVM SVO SOCI/O PETRO •

(“Arnolfo made this work, with his associate Pietro”)

Other inscriptions:

† ANNO MILLENO CENTVM BIS / ET OCTVAGENO QVINTO SUM/MED(V)S QV(IBVS) HIC ABBAS BARTHOLO/MEVS FECIT OP(VS) FIERI SIBI / TV DIGNARE MERERI

Notes: the identity of the “associate Pietro” is unclear; scholars have suggested both Pietro di Oderisio (Petrus Oderisii/Oderisi) and Pietro Cavallini, although there is no evidence to support either.

**Fig. 18**

In: Toker 2009; Dietl 2009, cat. A561; Moskowitz 1998

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**Cat. No. 059**

Ciborium, marble  
Rome, Santa Cecilia  
1293

† HOC OPVS • / FECIT • / ARNOLFVS • / ANNO • D(OMI)NI Mº • CCº • / LXXXXIII / • M(ENSE) • NOVE(M)BER (!) / D(IE) • XX •

Notes: on the pedestal of the front left-hand column, although this is now hidden by Baroque alterations

In: Toker 2009; Dietl 2009, cat. A562; Claussen 1981, 31; Hermanin 1902
BACCIO BANDINELLI [Bartolomeo Brandini]
(b Giule in Chianti, 17 Oct 1493; d Florence, 7 Feb 1560)

Cat. No. 060
Life-size Copy of Laocoön, marble
Florence, Uffizi
c. 1525

BACCHIVS BANDINELLVS FLORENTINVS SANCTI IACOBI EQVES
FACIEBAT

Fig. 20

Cat. No. 061
Orpheus, marble
Florence, Palazzo Medici
C. 1519

BACCHIVS BANDINELLVS FACIEB•

Fig. 21

In: Poeschke 1996, fig. 174

Cat. No. 062
Hercules and Cacus, marble
Florence, Piazza della Signoria
1527-34
In two panels on base:

BACCVS / BANDEL / FLORENTINVS FACIEBAT / M D / XXXIII

Fig. 19

Cat. No. 063
Bacchus, marble
Florence
C. 1549
BACCIVS BANDINELLVS FLORENTINVS EQVES FACIEBAT

**Cat. No. 064**
Adam and Eve, marble
Florence, Boboli Gardens
1551

BACCIVS BANDINELLVS • F • M • D • L • I

**Cat. No. 065**
Prophets, marble
for Choir Screen, Florence Duomo, 1555

BBF / 1555

Notes: occurs on three prophets

In: Poeschke 1996, fig. 185
BAMBAIA [Busti, Agostino]
(b ?Busto Arsizio, c. 1483; d Milan, 11 June 1548)

Cat. No. 066
Tomb of Gian Marco and Zenone Birago (destroyed)
Milan, Chapel of the Passion, S Francesco Grande
1522
Had an inscription with the sculptor’s name and the date 1522

AVGVSTINI BVSTI OPVS

Notes: Vasari saw the marble tomb in the Chapel of the Passion in S Francesco Grande, Milan, but it was dismantled when the chapel was destroyed in 1606

In: Vasari-Milanesi 1881, vi, 515 n1
BARTOLOMEO AMMANATI
(b Settignano, nr Florence, 18 June 1511; d Florence, 13 April 1592)

Cat. No. 067
Tomb of Marco Mantova Benavides
Padua, Eremitani
1544-46
signed on block under figure of Labor:

BARTH AMANNAT FLORENTIN FACIEBAT

Cat. No. 068
Hercules
Padua
1544
signed on club:

BARTHOLO / MEI AMMA / NATI FLOR / OPVS

Other inscriptions: at base:

HERCVLES BVPHILOPONVS / BESTIARIVS QVI TRISTITIAM / ORBIS
DEPVLIT OMNEM / PERAMPLO HOC SIGNO / MANTVAE CVRA
REFLORESCIT

In: Davis 1976, 32-47

Cat. No. 069
Apollo
Padua
1546 (?)
on sash:

BARTH AMMANATI FLOR
BARTOLOMMEO BELLANO
(c 1437 – 1496/7)

Cat. No. 070
Seated bronze of Pope Paul II
for Perugia, 1466 – 7; now LOST
inscribed:

HOC BELLANVS OPVS PATAVVS CONFLAVIT HABENTI / IN TERRIS
PAVLO MAXIMA IVRA DEI / 10 OCTOBRES 1467

In: Pope-Hennnessy 1996, II, 414
BARTOLOMEO BUON
(c. 1400-10 – c. 1464-7)

Cat. No. 071
Porta della Carta
Venice, Doge’s Palace, monumental entrance
1438 (contract)

OP . BARTOLOMEI

Fig. 22
BENEDETTO BRIOSCO
(b Milan, c. 1460; d ?Milan, after April 1514)

Cat. No. 072
Madonna and Child
on front of Visconti tomb, Pavia, Certosa

c. 1495
painted signature:

BENEDITVS DE BRIOSCO • DE • MLNO • FECIT

Notes: uncertain if signature is original, since statue seems to have been partially gilt

In: Norris 1977, 240
**BENEDETTO DA MAIANO**
(b Maiano, nr Florence, 1442; d Florence, 24 May 1497)

**Cat. No. 073**
Pietro Mellini bust
1474
incriptions beneath:

BENEDICTVS MAIANVS FECIT

Other inscriptions:

PETRI MELLINI FRANCISCI FILII IMAGO HEC AN 1474

*In:* Pope-Hennessy 1996, II, 381

*Also see Cat. No. 208*
BENVENUTO CELLINI
(b Florence, 3 Nov 1500; d Florence, 13 Feb 1571)

Cat. No. 074
Perseus, bronze
Florence, Loggia
1545-53
on band around chest:

BENVENVTVS CELLINVS CIVIS FLORENT FACIEBAT MCLIII

Fig. 23
BERTOLDO DI GIOVANNI
(b ?Florence, c. 1430–?1440; d Poggio a Caiano, nr Florence, 28 Dec 1491)

Cat. No. 075
Statuette of Bellerophon and Pegasus
Vienna, Court Museum
Early 1480s (?)

EXPRESSION ME BERTHOLDVS CONFLAVIT HADRIANVS

Notes: in addition to Bertoldo, the signature also mentions the caster, Andriano Fiorentino

In: Pope-Hennessy 1996, II, 402; Draper 1992, 176-86, cat. 18; Bode 1980, 7 and plate IX
BONGIOVANNI LUPI
(fl. c. 1474-1500?; from Lodi)

Cat. No. 076
ancona with Nativity, polychromed wood
S Maria del Palladino, Rivolta d’Adda (near Lodi)
1480

BONIOHANES DE LVPIS DE LAVDE INTALIAVIT PINXIT ET DORAVIT
MCCCCLXXX

In: Quintavalle 1971, 46, figs. 17-19
**BONGIOVANNI** and **GIOVANNI BASSIANO LUPI**
(fl. c. 1474-1500?; from Lodi)

**Cat. No. 077**
Sculpted and painted wood polyptych
Collegiata, Bargonovo Val Tidone
1474

BONIOHANES ET IOHANES BASSIANVS / FRATRES DE LVPIS DE LAVDE / PINXERVNT ET INTAIAVERVNT 1474

In: Quintavalle 1971, 45 and figs. 1, 2

Also see Cat. No. 076 for Bongiovanni
BONINO DA CAMPIONE  
(fl 1357; d ?1397)

Cat. No. 078  
Tomb of Folchino degli Schizzi (d 1357)  
Cremona cathedral  
Below sarcophagus:

MAGI • BONINO • DECAMPILIONO • ME • FE •

Fig. 24

Cat. No. 079  
Tomb of Cansignorio della Scala  
Verona, Santa Maria Antica  
1370-76  
first inscription:

HOC.OPVS, FECIT.ET.SCVLPSIT.BONINVS.DE.CAMPIGLIONO.  
MEDIOLANENSIS.DIOCESIS.  

“Bonino da Campione of the diocese of Milan designed and carved this work.”  

second inscription:

VT FIERET PVLCRV(M) POLLE(N)S NITIDV(M)Q(VE) SEPVLCRVM  
VERE BONINVS ERAT SCVLPTOR GASPARQ(VE) RE(CVLTOR)  

“That this tomb should be beautiful, mighty and handsome, Bonino was the sculptor and Gaspare the realtor.”  

Notes: the identification of “Gaspare”, and his role as “recultor”, has been discussed by several scholars. Mellini 1992, 180, believes the reference is to a scholar, shield painter, and heraldry expert known as Gasparo Squaro de’ Broaspini. More recently, Napione 2009, 256-61, has argued that the individual was someone who worked in the capacity of a “restorer” of the tomb. See the sources below for further information.

BONINO DA MILANO
(d 1429)

Cat. No. 080
Tomb of St Dominius
Split (Croatia), Cathedral
1427

M. BONINVS DE MILANO FECIT ISTAM CAPELLAM ET SEPVLTVRVM

In: Nygren 1999, 264
BORGINO DEL POZZO

Cat. No. 081

Choir, high altar, Altarantependium
Monza (Lombardy), Duomo of S Giovanni Battista
1350-57


In: Dietl 2009, cat. A387
CIOLO DI NERIO DA SIENA and MARCO DA SIENA

Cat. No. 082
Madonna and Child, marble
Piombino, Palazzo Communale
c. 1310
on the base:

HOC OPVS FECERVNT MAGISTRI CIOLVS ET MARCVS DE SENA

In: Castelnuovo 1992, 245 cat. 52, fig. 52
CRISTOFORO SOLARI [il Gobbo]
(b Milan, c. 1468–70; d Milan, May 1524)

Cat. No. 083
Flagellation
for Milan Duomo, south sacristy
c. 1505 (?)

CHRI GOBI MLNO OPVS

Cat. No. 084
Job (or Lazarus; Milan, Mus. Duomo)
for Milan Duomo
c. 1505 (?)
on the pedestal:

CHRI GOB
DEODATUS COSMATUS

Cat. No. 085
Ciborium, marble
Rome, Santa Maria in Cosmedin
c. 1300

† DEODAT(VS) • ME FEC(IT)

In: Dietl 2009, cat. A571; Hutton 1950, 48; Clausse 1897, 405

Cat. No. 086
Altar of Mary Magdalene (fragments), marble
Rome, San Giovanni in Laterano
1297
on pediment:

MAGR / DEODAT // • FECIT • / HOC • OP

Fig. 25

In: Dietl 2009, cat. A570

Cat. No. 087
Reliquary Shrine (now destroyed)
Rome, Santa Maria in Campitelli
c. 1300 (?)

MAGISTER DEODATVS / FECIT HOC OPVS

Fig. 26

In: Dietl 2009, cat. A572; Cassidy 1992, 201 n94 and fig. 14; Ciampini 1690, 181, tab. XLIV, fig. 3

Cat. No. 088
Main portal, stone
Teramo Cathedral (Abruzzo)
1332

† MAG(ISTE)R • DEODATV(S) • // DE VRBE • FECIT • HOC OPVS

Other inscriptions (mosaic):

AN(N)O • D(OMIN)I • Mº • CCCº • XXXºIIº // HOC • OPVS • F(A)C(TV)M • FVIT

In: Dietl 2009, cat. A731
DOMENICO DA TOLMEZZO
(c. 1448-1507?)

Cat. No. 089
Madonna and Child, painted wood
Udine, S Gottardo, Dilignidis
1486
at base, on two sides:

• OPVS • DOMINICI • / • DE • TVMECIO • // • 1486 •

Other inscriptions: at front of base:

• S • MARIA MATER • DEI •

In: Bergamini 2004, 258-60, fig. 7
DONATELLO [Donato di Niccolo di Betto Bardi]
(b Florence, 1386 or 1387; d Florence, 13 Dec 1466)

Cat. No. 090
Habakkuk, marble
Florence
c. 1427-36
inscribed on front plinth:

   OPVS • DONATELLI

Fig. 27

In: Sperling 1985, 118; Covi 1963; Meiss 1960

Cat. No. 091
Jeremiah, marble
Florence
c. 1423-35
inscribed on front plinth:

   OPVS • DONATELLI •

Fig. 28

In: Pope-Hennessy 1996, II, 350; Sperling 1985, 118; Covi 1963, 8; Meiss 1960, 101

Cat. No. 092
Pecci Tomb
Siena Duomo
1426

   OPVS DONATELLI

Fig. 29

In: Goffen 2001, 321; Covi 1963, 8; Meiss 1960, 101

Cat. No. 093
Tomb slab of Giovanni Crivelli
Rome, Santa Maria Aracoeli
1432-33
upper left rim:

OPVS DONATELLI FLORENTINI

In: Janson 1963, 102, pl. 41b; Covi 1963, 8; Meiss 1960, 101

Cat. No. 094
St John the Baptist, painted wood
Venice, Frari
1438
painted lettering at base:

MCCCCXXX / VIII / OPVS DONATI DE / FLO/RENTIA

In: Sperling 1985, 124

Cat. No. 095
Gattamelata
Padua, Piazza del Santo
c. 1447-53
Front of plinth:

OPVS DONATELLI / • FLO •

Fig. 30

In: Bergstein 2002; Sperling 1985, 185-86; Meiss 1960, 102

Cat. No. 096
Judith and Holofernes
Florence, Palazzo della Signoria
c. 1455 (?)
On cushion b/t hands of Holofernes:

• OPVS • DONATELLI • / • FLO •

Two other inscriptions; first, on front:
“Kingdoms fall through luxury, cities rise through virtue. Behold the proud neck severed by a humble hand.” (trans. Pope-Hennessy 1993, 280)

second inscription on back read:

SALVS PVBLICA. PETRVS MEDICES COS. FI. LIBERTATI SVMVL ET FORTITVDINI HANC MVLIERIS STATVAM QVO CIVES INVICTO CONSTANTIQUE A[N]I[MO] AD REM. PVB. REDDERENT DEDICAVIT.

“The public weal. Piero son of Cosimo de’ Medici dedicated the statue of this woman to liberty and to the fortitude with which the citizens, with resolute and unvanquished spirit, bring to the public good.” (trans. Pope-Hennessy 1993, 276-80.

Notes: Second inscription was removed after statue was taken over by the Operai of the Palazzo Vecchio

Inscription around top of pedestal records installation of group after its transfer from Palazzo Medici:

.EXEMPLVM.SAL.PVB.CIVES.POS.MCCCCXCV. (Pope-Hennessy, 1993, 347, n19)

Fig. 31

In: McHam 2001; Pope-Hennessy 1996, II, 359; Sperling 1985, 189; Meiss 1960, 102
“DVO SOTII FLORENTINI” (Giovanni di Martino and Pietro di Nicolò Lamberti?)

Cat. No. 097
Justice Capital
Venice, Doge’s Palace, at north-east corner (see Sperling 1985, 141)
Formerly on abacus:

DVO SOTII FLORENTINI INCISE

Notes: the signature’s existence has been questioned by several scholars. Wolters 1976, 251, and Fogolari 1930, 438 n1, believe it is apocryphal and doubt it existed. Goldner 1978, 275 n88 thinks this doubt is unreasonable. Goldner 1978, 223-24, notes it was first published by Zanotto, I, 1853, p. 219; Goldner dates it to c. 1425-28 and assigns it to Giovanni di Martino (primarily) and Pietro Lamberti.

In: Goldner 1978, 223-24; Wolters 1976, 251; Muraro 1961, 270 n31; Fiocco 1930-31, 1041-48; Fogolari 1930, 438; Zanotto 1853, I, 219
FILARETE (Antonio di Pietro Averlino)
(c. 1400 – 1469?)

Cat. No. 098
Bronze statuette of Hector on Horseback
now in Madrid
1456
inscription on inner side of base:

     OPVS ANTONI / 1456

In: Pope-Hennessy 1996, II, 398

Cat. Nos. 099-101
Bronze door for St Peter’s
Rome
begun 1435, erected 1445
Filarete’s name appears in 4 places on door, once w/ date completed:

No. 099

     ANTONIVS PETRI DE FLORENTIA FECIT DIE VLTIMO IVLII MCCCCLV

Plaquette on reverse of doors with image of Filarete and his workshop.
From left to right, names of six assitants:

No. 99b

     ANGIOLVS IACOBVS IANNELLVS PASSQVINVS IOVANNES VARRVS FLORENTIE

Then, figure leading holding compass:

     ANTONIVS ET DISCIPVLI MEI

Figs. 32 and 32b

Other inscriptions:
By camel rider’s head:

     PIOVI
Below camel:

DROMENDARIVS

By ass rider’s head:

PETEVT I VS [?]

Below ass:

AFC CI [?]

Above the group:

CETERIS OPERE PRETIVM FASTVS (MVM)MVS VE MIHI HILARITAS

“For others the honor/fame and the money, for me the joy” (trans. Woods-Marsden 1998, 55)

No. 100

On front of doors, on border above image with emperor:

OPVS ANTONII DEFLORENTIA

Notes: four symbols appear in this signature. Before the inscription are a cross within an oval and a fleur-de-lis; after the inscription is a fleur-de-lis and what looks to be either a dragon or an eagle.

Fig. 33

No. 101

In medal held by two winged putti, below scene of Crucifixion of St Peter:

OPV/S / ANTO/NII

Fig. 34

Cat. No. 102
Ulysses and Iro, bronze plaque
c. 1445
Inscription above figs:

ANTINOOC IPOS OΔVCEVC

Notes: Greek

In: Ames-Lewis 2000, 22

Cat. No. 103
Self-portrait medal
c. 1460-65

ANTONIVS AVERLINVS ARCHITECVTS

Other inscriptions:

PRINCEPS VT SOL AVGET APES SIC NOBIS COMODA

In: Welch 1995, 147
FRANCESCO DA MILANO

**Cat. No. 104**
Arca of St Simon, gilded silver
Zadar (Croatia), San Simone
c. 1377
on back of casket:

HOC OPVS FECIT FRANCISCVS DE MEDIOLANO

**In:** Nygren 1999, 475-77
FRANCESCO DA SANGALLO  
(b 1 March 1494; d 17 Feb 1576)

**Cat. No. 105**
St. John Baptizing, bronze  
Now in Frick Museum, originally for baptismal font of S. Maria delle Carceri at Prato  
probably c. 1535-38  
on back of base:  

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FRANC S. GALLO / FACIE
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**Cat. No. 106**
Self-Portrait (profile bust in relief)  
Fiesole, Santa Maria Primerana  
1542  

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EIVS INTERCESSIONE LIBERATVS FRANC SANGALLIVS IVLIANI FILI CIVIS FLOR FACIE ADNS MDXXXXII
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**Cat. No. 107**
Tomb of Bishop Angelo de’ Marzi Medici  
SS. Annunziata  
1546  

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FRANCISCVS IVLIANNI SANGALLI FACIEB• •M•D XLVI
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In: Poeschke 1996, fig 189

**Cat. No. 108**
Monument to Paolo Giovio  
Florence, San Lorenzo  
1560  

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FRANCI IVLIANI SANGALLI FACIE…(?)
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FRANCESCO DA SANT’AGATA
(16th c)

Cat. No. 115
boxwood statuette of Hercules
London, Wallace Collection

OPVS. FRANCISCI. AVRIFICIS. P. (patavini)

In: Bode 1980, 34, fig. 33
FRANCESCO DI SIMONE FERRUCCI [Fiesolano; da Fiesole]
(b Fiesole, 1437; d Florence, 24 March 1493)

Cat. No. 116
Tomb of Alessandro Tartagni
Bologna, San Domenico, Bologna
c. 1480 (?)

OPERA FRANCIS SIMONIS FLOREN

Notes: One of the few sculpted signatures from the Renaissance in Italian rather than Latin.

Fig. 95

In: Arnoldi 1994, 172
FRANCESCO LAURANA [de la Vrana] (b Vrana, nr Zara [now Zadar, Croatia]; d Marseille, before 12 March 1502)

Cat. No. 109
Virgin and Child (from Noto Antica)
Noto (Syracuse), Chiesa del Crocifisso
1471
At the base, with coat of arms of the city of Noto (on the right of and left outside):

FRANCISCVS LAVRANA ME FECIT MCCCCLXXI

In: Damianaki 2000, 10, 19; Kruft 1995, cat. 19; Patera 1992, 62

Cat. No. 110
Medal of Jeanne de Laval
now in Staatl. Museen Berlin
1461
at base of reverse of medal:

FRANCISCVS • LAV/RANA • FECIT

Other inscriptions: above is emblem/motto of Jeanne, in scroll:

PER / NON / PER

Date below the “non”:

• M • CCC • / • LXI •

In: Kruft 1995, cat. M1

Cat. No. 111
Medal of the Jester Triboulet
Paris, Bib. Natl
1461
on reverse, with lion:

FRANCISCVS / LAVRANA / • F •

Other inscriptions: dated above lion:
• M • / • CCCC • / • LXI •

In: Kruft 1995, cat. M2

**Cat. No. 112**
Medal of René von Anjou and Jeanne de Laval
Berlin, Staatl. M.
1463
at base on reverse:

FRANCISCVS • LAVRANA / • FECIT •

Date above:

• M • / • CCCC • / • LXIII

In: Kruft 1995, cat. M3

**Cat. No. 113**
Medal of Ferry II de Vaudemont
Glasgow, Hunterian Collection
1464
at top of reverse:

FRANCISCVS • LAVRANA • FECIT

Other inscriptions: by horse’s head:

• M • / • CCCC • / • LXIII •

In: Kruft 1995, cat. M4

**Cat. No. 114**
Medal of Giovanni Cossa, Count of Troy
Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlung
1466
running around border of reverse:

FRANCISCVS • LAVRANA FECIT / ANNO DNI • M • CCCCLXVI •
In: Kruft 1995, cat. M6
FRANCESCO SOLARI
(fl 1464–70)

Cat. No. 117
Relief of the Virgin and Child
Milan, S Angelo
   c. 1465 (?)
at base of relief:

   FRANCISCVS • DE • SOLARIO SCVLPIVIT [?]

Notes: “solario” and “sculpivit” separated by space, part of infant Christ’s foot seems to touch or almost touch “sculpivit”

Fig. 36
GANO DI FAZIO
(fl 1302; d before 1318)

Cat. No. 118
Monument of Tommaso d’Andrea
Collegiata of Casole d’Elsa
c. 1303
inscribed on the border of the sarcophagus:

† • CELAVIT GANVS OPVS HOC INSIGNE SENENSIS • LAVDIBVS
IMMENSIS EST SVA DIGNA MANVS

In: Dietl 2009, cat. A143
GIACOMO DA CAMPIONE

Cat. No. 119
Tabernacle, north sacristy portal
Milan, Duomo
completed by 1395

“Jacobs filius zer Zambonini de Campiliono fabricavit hoc opus”

In: Meyer 1905, 259
GIACOMO RODARI
(fl 1487-1509)

(see TOMMASO [TOMASO] RODARI)
GIAN [GIOVANNI] CRISTOFORO ROMANO
(b Rome, c. 1465; d Loreto, 31 May 1512)

Cat. No. 120
Tomb of Gian Galeazzo Visconti
Pavia, Certosa
1492-97
on the middle of the inferior fascia of the architrave:

    IOANNES CHRISTOPHORVS ROMANVS FACIEBAT

Fig. 37

In: Norris 1977; The Carthusian Monastery of Pavia (n.d.), 78
GIANGIOVANNI] GIROLAMO GRANDI
(b ?Vicenza, 1508; d Padua, 23 March 1560)

Cat. No. 121
Drunkeness of Noah
left of west pilaster, outside of chapel of St Anthony, Santo, Padua
1546
at base, on slab figure of Noah (?) is resting on:

HIE P FACIEBAT

In: McHam 1994, fig. 151, 67-9

Cat. No. 122
Monument to Fra Girolamo Confalonieri
for the former church of the Crociferi, Padua (1549; moved to S Maria Maddalena; destroyed)

IO HIER GRANDVS PAT. SCVLPEBAT 1549

In: Pietrucci 1858, 142-43; Rossetti 1780, pp. 257-58
GIANDOMENICO GAGINI
(b 1503; fl until 1560)

Cat. No. 123
Madonna della Grazia, marble
S Michele Arcangelo, Mazara del Vallo
1542

HOC OPVS ME FECIT M.DOMENICO DE GAGINI PANORMITANO M.542

Other inscriptions:

RDA D.S.CATHERINA DE GVGLIELMO ABBATISSA.CONCEPTIO
BEATAE MARIAE VIRGINIS

In: Kruft 1980, 425-26, fig. 448, cat. 3
GIOVANNI ANGELO MONTORSOLI
(b Montorsoli, nr Florence, ?1507; d Florence, 31 Aug 1563)

Cat. No. 124
Tomb of Jacopo Sannazaro
Naples, Santa Maria del Parto
c. 1536-40
at base of tomb:

• F • IO • ANG • FLO • OR • S • FA

Fig. 38

In: Poeschke 1996, fig. 200

Cat. No. 125
Pietà, marble
Genoa, S Matteo
c. 1543-47
on block that Virgin’s right foot rests on:

IO • A(N)G1 • / FLOREN • / OPVS •

Fig. 39

In: Manura 1959
GIOVANNI ANTONIO AMADEO  
(b Pavia, c. 1447; d Milan, 28 Aug 1522)

**Cat. No. 126**  
Portal, Madonna and Child adored by Certosi, marble  
Pavia, small cloister in Certosa  
late 1460s

IOHANNES•ANTONIVS•DEMADEO / FECIT•OPVS•

**In:** Morscheck 1978, 211, and fig. 152; Giovanni A. Amadeo. Maestri della scultura...1966

**Cat. No. 127**  
Small relief, marble  
Florence, in sacristy of Misericordia  
late 1460s

ANTONI[O] . DEAMADE/O

**Fig. 40**

**In:** Morscheck 1978; Middeldorf 1956, 136-42

**Cat. No. 128**  
Portrait medallion  
Milan Cathedral  
c. 1510

IO ANTONIVS HOMODEVS VENERE FABRICE MLI ARCHITECTVS

Notes: This is more likely a dedicatory inscription in honor of Amadeo, rather than a true signature. The spelling of the name (with an ‘H’) is at odds with all the other signatures of this sculptor.

**Fig. 41**

**In:** Pope-Hennessy 1996, II, 407
Cat. No. 129
Monument of Medea Colleoni
Bergamo, Cappella Colleoni
c. 1470-75 (?)
Inscription across bottom of sarcophagus:

IOVANES ANTONIVS DEAMADEIS FECIT HOC OPVS

Notes: the tomb was originally located in the church of Basella.

In: Pope-Hennessy 1996, II, 408; Schofield, Shell, and Sironi 1989, 545; Morscheck 1978, fig. 163; Valeri 1904, 57-67

Cat. No. 130
Arca dei Martiri Persiani marble,
Cremona
1482

I. A. AMADEO F(ECIT) H(OC) O(PVS)


Cat. No. 131
Shrine of St Arealdo [Arialdo], on St Jerome in the Desert panel, marble
Cremona Cathedral
1484
at base of relief on ledge:

• ZO • ANTONIO AMADEO • F • OPVS • 1484

Other inscriptions: the St Francis panel from this shrine also gives the name of the patron:

ISAACH DE RESTALI

In: Nygren 1999, 312-14; Morscheck 1978; Valeri 1904, 140

Cat. No. 132
Arca di San Lanfranco, marble
Pavia, Church of S Lanfranco
1498-1508
on large inscribed tablet above lower casket, below longer inscription:

IOANNES ANTONIVS HOMODEVS FACIEBAT

Notes: Malfatti 1993, 225 n6, mentions the possibility that the signature was added later, not by Amadeo. This is—along with the inscription on Milan Cathedral—features the unusual spelling of the sculptor’s name as HOMODEVS.

In: Nygren 1999, 380-84; Malfatti 1993, 224-25; Morscheck 1978, 222, and fig. 167; also Valeri 1904, 262-66
GIOVANNI BOLDÙ

Cat. No. 133
Self-portrait medal
1458
On reverse:

OPVS IOANIS BOLDV PICTORIS VENETVS XOGRAFI / M CCCC LVIII

obverse, incorrect Greek transliteration:

ΙωΑΝΗC ΜΠΩΑΝΤΟV ΖωΓΡΑΦΟV ΒΕΝΑΙΤΙA

In: Ames-Lewis 2000, 22 and fig. 130

Cat. No. 134
Self-portrait medal
1458

OPVS IOANIS BOLDV PICTORIS VENETI / M CCCC LVIII

In: Ames-Lewis 2000, 22 and fig. 130
GIOVANNI DA CAMPIONE
(fl 1340-60)

Cat. No. 135
Baptistery
Bergamo
1340

M°CCC° • XL • IOHANES

In: Dietl 2009, cat. A83; Pope-Hennessy 1996, I, 256

Cat. No. 136
North portal
Bergamo, Santa Maria Maggiore
1351

† • M° • CCC° • LI • MAGIST(E)R • / IOHANES • / • DE • / CAMPLEONO /
CIVIS • / P(ER)GAMI • / FECIT • / HOC • / OPVS •

Fig. 42

In: Dietl 2009, cat. A84; Meyer 1905; Scott 1899, 184

Cat. No. 137
Equestrian statue of St Alexander
Bergamo, now in S Maria Maggiore
1353

† MAG[IST(ER) • I]O[H]AN(E)S • FILIVS • MAGISTRI • VGI • DE •
CAMPLEONO • FECIT • HOC • OPVS / M° CCC • LIII •

In: Dietl 2009, cat. A86; Scott 1899, 184

Cat. No. 138
South portal
Bergamo, Santa Maria Maggiore
1360
† • M • CCC • LX • / MAGISTER • IOHAN/ES • FILIVS • C(ONDAM) •
D(OMI)NI • / VGI • DE CAMPILIO • / FECIT • HOC OPVS •

In: Dietl 2009, cat. A85; Meyer 1905, 259-60
GIOVANNI DA MILANO

Cat. No. 139
Tomb of San Colombano
Bobbio, crypt of basilica of San Colombano
1480
inscription on book held by angel in a relief on one of the short sides of the tomb:

    HOC OPVS / FECIT M. / IOHANNES / DE PATRIIA / RCIS // MIDOLA/NO
    1480 / DIE VLT/MO MEN/SIS MARCHI

In: Nygren 1999, 287
GIOVANNI DA NOLA [MARIGLIANO; Mariliano; Marliano; Merigliano; Miriliano; Giovanni da Napoli]
(b Nola, c. 1488; d Naples, 1558)

Cat. No. 140
Tomb of Raimondo Folche de Cardona [Don Ramón de Cardona] (d 1522)
S Nicolás, Bellpuig, Catalonia (Spain)

IOANNES NOLANVS FACIEBAT

In: King 1921, 280
GIOVANNI DALMATA [Giovanni di Traù; Ioannes Stephani Duknovich de Tragurio; Ivan Duknović]
(b in or near Traù, Dalmatia [now Trogir, Croatia], c. 1440; d after 1509)

Cat. No. 141
St John the Evangelist, marble
Trogir Cathedral (Croatia)
prob. 1490s

S IOANNIS EVANGELISTA IOANNIS DAMATAE F

Notes: Balamaric 1998, 292, believes the “F” should be read as “factum”. This is in contrast to Röll 1994, 135, who considers the “DAMATAE” genitive to be an error, thus rendering the “F” a verb of creation (e.g., fecit). Röll also notes the signature’s discovery by Fisković (1971/72 and 1950).


Cat. No. 142
Monument of Pope Paul II, relief of Hope,
Vatican, Grotte
1474 (?)

IOHANNIS DALMATAE OPVS

GIOVANNI DI AGOSTINO (Giovanni d’Agostino)

Cat. No. 143
Tabernacle relief
Siena, Oratory of San Bernardino
1330s
at base:

IHOS • MAGIST(R)I • AGOSTINI • DESE[N]IS ME FECIT

In: Bartalini 2005, 305, fig. 360
GIOVANNI DI BALDUCCIO
(b ?Pisa; fl 1317/18–49)

Cat. No. 144
Tomb of Guarniero degli Antelminelli
Sarzana, San Francesco
c. 1327-28

HOC OPVS FECIT IOANNES BALDVCCII DE PISIS

In: Spannocchi 2008, 256

Cat. No. 145
Pulpit
San Casciano, Santa Maria del Prato
c. 1330

• HOC • OPVS • FECIT • IOH(ANNE)S • BALDVCCII • MAGISTE(R) D(E) PISI[S]

In: Dietl 2009, cat. A648

Cat. No. 146
Arca of St Peter Martyr, marble
Milan, S Eustorgio
1339

MAGISTER IOHANNES BALDVCCII DE PISIS SCVLPSIT HANC ARCHAM ANNO DOMINI MCCCXXXVIII


Cat. No. 147
Architrave from main portal, marble
Milan, Santa Maria di Brera, Milan (fragments in Milan, Castello Sforzesco)
1347
[† M • CCC •] XLV[II] • TEM[P]ORE • PRELATIONIS • FRATRIS •
[GVGLIELMI • DE • CORBETTA • PRELATI • HVIVS • DOMVS •
MAGISTER IOHANNES BALD]VCII • DE PISIS • HEDIFICAVIT • HANC
• PORT[AM] •

In: Dietl 2009, cat. A333
**GIOVANNI DI COSMA**
(late 13th c)

**Cat. No. 148**
Tomb of Cardinal Consalvo Rodriguez, bishop of Albano (d 1299), marble
Rome, S Maria Maggiore, Rome
c. 1299
on slab below effigy:

\[† \text{HOC OP(VS) FEC(IT) IOH(AN)ES MAG(I)STRI COSME CIVIS ROMANVS}\]

Other inscriptions: line directly above signature, on the same slab:

\[† \text{HIC DEPOSITVS FVIT QVONDA DNS GUNSALVVS EPS ALBANEN ANN}.
\text{DNI . M . CC . LXXXVIII}\]

**Fig. 43**

In:

**Cat. No. 149**
Tomb of Guillaume Durand the Elder, bishop of Mende (d 1296), marble
Rome, S Maria sopra Minerva
c. 1296

\[† \text{IOH(ANE)S FILIVS MAG(I)STRI • FEC(IT) • HOC • OP(VS)}\]

“Giovanni, son of Master Cosmatus, made this work”

**Fig. 44**

In: Hutton 1950, 48

**Cat. No. 150**
Tomb of Cardinal Stefano dei Surdi, marble
Rome, Santa Balbina
c. 1290s
below effigy:

\[† \text{IOHS • FILIVS • MAG(I)STRI • COSMATI • FECIT • HOC • OPVS}\]
In: Pope-Hennessy 1996, 1, 60, fig. 55; Hutton 1950, 45
GIOVANNI DI MARTINO DA FIESOLE
(fl 1430s)

(see PIERO DI NICCOLÒ LAMBERTI)
GIOVANNI LIPPI (Nanni di Baccio Bigio)
(b Florence, 1512–13; d Rome, Aug 1568).

Cat. No. 151
Copy of Michelangelo’s Pietà
Florence, Santo Spirito
early 1540s
inscribed on strap of Virgin:

IO LIPPVS STAT EX IMITATIONE FACIEBAT
GIOVANNI PIETRO DA RHO
(b 1464/5; fl Milan, 1481–1513)

Cat. No. 152
Low relief for Casa Fassati, now Parravicini, marble
Cremona, via Dritta S. Vincenzo
In corner of relief of St Anthony abbot, inscription-bearing tablet:

    OPVS • IO • PE / TRI • DE • RAV / DE • DE • MLO

Notes: In wall of first landing of stairway

In: Valeri 1904, 305-06
GIOVANNI PISANO
(b Pisa, c. 1245–50; d Siena, before end of 1319)

Cat. No. 153
Fontana Maggiore, relief panel, marble
Perugia
1277-78
on frame of relief of one of pair of eagles (partially preserved)

B(ON)I IOH(ANN)IS ET SCVLTOR(IS) HVI(VS) OP(ER)IS

Notes: Also see Cat. No. 248

In: Moskowitz 2005, 110; Dietl 1987, 91

Cat. No. 154
Madonna and Child, marble
Pisa Baptistry (now Museo dell’Opera del Duomo)
After 1306
Base below figure:

† SVB P/ETRI CVRA FVIT H(EC) PIA S/CVLPTA F/IGVRA // NICOL(I) / NATO • SCVLPTORE IOH(ANN)E / VOCATO

Notes: full length standing fig; badly disfigured now

In: Dietl 2009, cat. A496; Carli 1977, 145 and fig. 156

Cat. No. 155
Madonna and Child, marble
Padua, Cappella Scrovegni
c. 1305
on base:

DEO GRATIAS † OPVS / IOH(ANN)IS MAGISTRI NICOLI / DE PISIS •

Fig. 45

In: Dietl 2009, cat. A426; Spannocchi 2008, 225; Carli 1977, 145
**Cat. No. 156**
Pulpit, marble
Pistoia, Sant’Andrea
1301

Carved inscription below narrative reliefs:

† L//AVDE D//EI TRI//NI REM C//EP//TAM COPVLO FINI • CVRE PRESENTIS
SVB PRIMO M//ILLE TRIC//ENTIS // • PRINC//EPS E(ST) OP(ER)IS
PLEBAN(VS) VEL DATOR ERIS • ARNOLD(VS) DICTVS QVI SE//MP(ER) //
SIT BEN//EDICT//VS • A//NDRE//AS VN(VS) VITELLI […] QVOQ(VE) TIN(VS)
• NAT(VS) VITALI BENE NOT(VS) NOMINE TALI • DISPE(N)SATO//RES // HI
DICTI S//V(N)T MELIO//RES • SCV//LPSIT IOH(ANN)ES QVI RES NO(N) EGIT
INANES • NICOLI NAT(VS) SENSIA MELIORE BEATVS • QVE(M) GENVIT
PISA // DOCTV(M) SVP(ER) OM//NIA VISA

“In praise of the triune God I link the beginning with the end of this task in thirteen
hundred and one. The originator and donor of the work is the canon Arnoldus, may
he be ever blessed. Andrea, (son?) of Vitello, and Tino, son of Vitale, well known
under such a name, are the best of treasurers. Giovanni carved it, who performed no
empty work. The son of Nicola and blessed with higher skill, Pisa gave him birth,
endowed with mastery greater than any seen before.” (trans. Pope-Hennessy 1996, I,
235)

Notes: gives pulpit’s date of completion (1301) and names of donor and financial
supervisor; also names Giovanni as carver

**Fig. 46**

**In:** Dietl 2009, cat. A523; Pope-Hennessy 1996, I, 235

**Cat. No. 157**
Pulpit, marble
Pisa Duomo
1302-10

first inscription, running below narrative reliefs:

LAVDO DEVVM VERVM PER QVEM SVNT OPTIMA RERVVM QVI DEDIT HAS
PVRAS HOMINEM FORMARE FIGVRAS. HOC OPVS HIC ANNIS DOMINI
SCVLPSERE JOHANNIS ARTE MANVS SOLE QVONDAM NATIQVE
NICHOLE CVRSIS VNDENIS TERCENTVM MILLEQVE PLNIS JAM
DOMINANTE PISIS CONCORDIBVS ATQVE DIVISIS COMITE TVNC DICO
MONTISFELTRI FREDERICO HIC ASSISTENTE NELLO FALCONIS
HABENTE HOC OPVS IN CVRA NEC NON OPERE QVQVE IVRA EST
PISIS NATVS VT IOHANNES ESTE DOTATVS ARTIS SCVLPVTvre PRE
CVNCTIS ORDINE PVRE SCVLPENS IN PETRA LIGNO AVRO SPLENDIDA
TETRA SCVLPERE NESCISSET VEL TVRPIA SI VOLVISSET. PLVRES
SCVLPTORES: REMANENT SIBI LAVDIS HONORES CLARAS SCVLPTRAS
FECIT VARIASQVE FIGVRAS QVISQVIS MIRARIS TVNC RECTO JVRE
PROBARIS CRISTE MISERERE CVI TALIA DONA FVERE. AMEN.
(trans. 1) “I praise the true God, the creator of all excellent things, who has permitted
a man to form figures of such purity. In the year of Our Lord thirteen hundred and
eleven the hands of Giovanni, son of the late Nicola, by their own art alone, carved
this work, while there ruled over the Pisans, united and divided, Count Federigo da
Montefeltro, and at his side Nello di Falcone who has exercised control not only of
the work but also of the rules on which it is based. He is a Pisan by birth, like that
Giovanni who is endowed above all others with command of the pure art of sculpture,
sculpting splendid things in stone, wood and gold. He would not known how to carve
ugly or base things even if he wished to do so. There are many sculptors, but to
Giovanni remain the honours of praise. He has made noble sculptures and diverse
figures. Let any of you who wonders at them test them with the proper rules. Christ
have mercy on the man to whom such gifts were given. Amen.” (trans. Pope-
Hennessy 1996, I, 235-36)

(trans. 2) “I praise the true God, through whose agency the best of things exist, who
has permitted a man to fashion these pure figures. The hands, alone in their skill, of
Giovanni (the late and son of Nicola) carved this work here when thirteen hundred
and eleven full years of our Lord had passed, while Federigo, count (at the time, I
say) of Montefeltro ruled over the Pisans, of one accord and yet separate with Nello
di Falcone assisting, concerned not only with this work but also with the rules of the
craft. He was born at Pisa, like that Giovanni who is endowed above all others with
command of the art of pure sculpture. Sculpting splendid things in stone, wood, and
gold, he could not have carved base ones even if he had so wished. There are many
sculptors: to him alone remain the honors of praise. He made celebrated sculptures
and various figures. Whoever you are, when you have marveled [at them], then you
will approve them rightly. Christ have mercy upon him who had such gifts. Amen.”

second inscription on step beneath the pulpit:

CIRCVIT HIC AMNES MVNDI PARTESQVE IOHANNES PLVRIMA
TEMPTANDO GRATIS DISCENDA PARANDO QVEQVE LABORE GRAVI
NVNC CLAMAT NON BENE CAVI DVM PLVS MONSTRAVI PLVS HOSTITA
DAMNA PROBAVI CORDE SED IGNAVI PENAM FERO MENTE SUAVI VT
SIBI LIVOREM TOLLAM MITIGEMQVE DOLOREM ET DECVS IMPOREM
VERSIBVS ADDE ROREM SE PROBAT INDIGNVM REPROBANS
DIADEMATE DIGNVM SVC HVNC QVEM REPROBAT SE REPROBANDO
PROBAT.
(trans. 1) “Giovanni has encircled all the rivers and parts of the world endeavouring to learn much and preparing everything with heavy labour. He now exclaims: ‘I have not taken heed. The more I have achieved the more hostile injuries have I experienced. But I bear this pain with indifference and a calm mind.’ That I (the monument) may free him from this envy, mitigate his sorrow and win him recognition, add to these verses the moisture (of your tears). He proves himself unworthy who condemns him who is worthy of the diadem. Thus by condemning himself he honours him whom he condemns.” (trans. Pope-Hennessy 1996, I, 236)

(trans. 2) “Here Giovanni encircled the rivers and regions of the world, undertaking without hope of reward to learn many things, and preparing everything with heavy labor. He now cries out: ‘I have not been on guard enough, since the more I have shown my [achievements] the more I have experienced hostile injuries in my heart.’ But I [the monument] endure the penalty of an ignoble man with an embittered mind, so that I may take envy away from him and soften his sorrow. And let me entreat an honor [from you]: bedew these verses [with your tears]. He proves himself unworthy in reproving a man worthy of the crown. Thus he reproves himself and approves him whom he reproves.’” (trans. Jan Ziolkowski, per Ladis 2001, 14-15 n21)

Other inscriptions: a related inscription, on the side of the cathedral rather than the pulpit, gives the name of the opera del duomo at the time, Burgundio di Tado

† IN N(O)(M)I(N)E D(OM)I(N)E A(M)E N. / BORGHONO DI TADO FE / CE FARE LO PERBIO NUOV / O LO QUALE (è) IN DUOMO / COMINCIO SI CORE(N)TE / ANI / D(OMI)NI MCCCII. FU FINIT / O IN ANI D(OMI)NI CORENT / E MCCCXI DEL MESE D / IICIENBRE

Figs. 47 and 47b


Cat. No. 158
Madonna della Porta di S Ranieri, marble
Pisa, Duomo Museum
1312/1313

NOBILIS ARTE MANVS SCVLPSIT JOHANNES PISANVS / SCVLPSIT SVB BVRGVNDO TADI BENIGNO

In: Dietl 1987, 93
GIROLAMO DA VICENZA

Cat. No. 159
Tomb of San Pier Celestino
Aquila, Santa Maria di Collemaggio
1517

OPVS MAGISTRI HIERONYMIE VICENTINIO SCVLPTORIS

In: Nygren 1999, 281
GORO DI GREGORIO
(Sienese, fl 1300 – 34)

Cat. No. 160
Arca di S Cerbone
Massa Marittima
1324
at base of long side:

  • † ANNO D(OMI)NI MCCCXXXIII I(N)DI(C)T(IONE) VII MAGIST(ER)
  PERVCI(VS) • OP(ER)ARI(VS) • EC(C)L(ESI)E • FECIT • F(IER)I • OPVS •
  MAG(IST)RO • GORO • GREGORII • DE SENIS •


Cat. No. 161
Tomb of Archbishop Guidotto d’Abbiate
Messina Duomo
1333

  † M(A)G(ISTE)R • GREGOR(IVS) • DE • GREGORIO • DE • SENIS • FECIT

In: Dietl 2009, cat. A357; Pierini 1995, 27
GUGLIELMO DA FRISSONE

Cat. No. 162
Palazzo Pretorio façade
Riva del Garda, Trentino (prov. Trento)
1375

MCCCLXXV • M(AGISTER) • GVIELM(VS) • D(E) / FRIXO(N)IB(VS) • D(E) • CVMIS / FECIT • HOC • OPVS

In: Dietl 2009, cat. A558

Cat. No. 163
Parish Church, north side, limestone inscription block (with Guglielmo Choradin)
Varignano, Trentino (prov. Trento)
1378–86

• HOC • OPVS • FECIT • / • MAG(ISte)R • GVILL(ELMV)S • DE • / • FRIXONO • DE • CVMIS • / • MCCCLXXXVI

• CA(M)PANILE(M) • VERO • / • FECIT • P[…]S • MA•G(ISte)R • / • GVILL(ELMV)S • MCCCLXXVIII / • CHORADIN

“Magister Guillelms of Frixone from Como made this work 1386. - However… the Magister Guillelms Choradin manufactured the Campanile 1378” (trans. Dietl 2009, cat. A769)

In: Dietl 2009, cat. A769
GUGLIELMO MONACO
(fl. 15th c)

Cat. No. 164
bronze door with scenes from Ferdinand I's Struggle Against the Barons
Naples, Castel Nuovo
1474-75
lower left, around medallion self-portrait:

    GO[…]LEL[…] MONAC[…] • ME • FECIT • MILES • [?]

Fig. 48
GUIDO DA COMO (Guido Bigarelli)  
(b ?Aragno, nr Lugano; fl ?1238; d 1257)

Cat. No. 165  
Octagonal font, marble  
Pisa, Baptistery  
1245

† A(NNO) • D(OMINI) • M • CC° • // LVºI • SVB IACOBO RECTORE LOCI • GVIDO BIGARELI D//[E] CVMO FECIT OP//VS HOC

In: Dietl 2009, cat. A489

Cat. No. 166  
Pulpit, marble  
Pistoia, S Bartolomeo in Pantano  
1250

SCVLPTOR • LAVDAT(VR) • Q(VI) • DOCT(VS) • IN ARTE P(RO)BAT(VR)  
• / GVIDO • DE • COMO • QVE(M) • CV(N)CTIS • CARMINE • P(RO)MO •


HENRICUS DE COLONIA

Cat. No. 167
Statue of marchese Alberto d’Este
Ferrara cathedral façade
1393
below the statue:

HENRICVS DE COLONIA AVRIFEX / SCVLPSIT SVPRASCPTAS LITERAS

Fig. 49

In: Bertelli 2001, 219
JACOBELLO and PIERPAOLO DALLE MASEGNE

Cat. No. 168
Iconostasis/Choir screen
Venice, San Marco
completed and signed 1394
inscribed on architrave:

IACHOBELVS ET PETRVS PAVLVS FRATRES DE VENETIIS FECIT HOC
OPVS MCCCLXXXIII

In: Pope-Hennessy 1996, I, 259
JACOPO DELLA QUERCIA
(b Siena, ?1374; d Siena, 20 Oct 1438)

Cat. No. 169
Trenta Altar
Lucca, San Frediano
1416-22
inscription beneath Virgin and Child in center of the altar:

Hº OP / FEC IACOB MAGRI PET D SENI / 1422

Fig. 50

In: Pope-Hennessy 1996, I, 179, pl. 176, 268
JACOPO DI MATTEO

Cat. No. 170
Saint Paul, main portal tympanum, marble
Pistoia, San Paolo
1350

† A(NNO) • D(OMINI) • M • CCCL • / MAG(ISTE)R • IACOBVS • OLI(M) • MAT(T)EI • / DE • PISTORIO

„In the year of the Lord 1350. The Magister Jacobus from Pistoia, son of the deceased Matthäus.“ (trans. Dietl 2009, cat. A521)

In: Dietl 2009, cat. A521
JACOPO (D’ANTONIO) SANSOVINO [TATTI]
(b Florence, bapt 2 July 1486; d Venice, 27 Nov 1570)

Cat. Nos. 171-176
Pulpit Reliefs with Scenes of Life of St. Mark
Venice, Choir, San Marco
1535-44
two series, first of which dates to 1537:

No. 171

_Baptism of Anianus_

_IACOBS SANSOVINVS FLORENTIVS FACIEBAT_

No. 172

_St Mark Healing a Demoniac_

_IACOBS SANSOVINVS FLORENTIVS FACIEBAT_

No. 173

_Martyrdom of St Mark_

_IACOBS SANSOVINVS FLORENTIVS FACIEBAT_

Second series, from 1544:

No. 174

_St Mark rescues the Servant from Provence_

_IACOBS SANSOVINVS FLORENTIVS • F •_

No. 175

_Saint Mark heals a Paralytic Woman from Murano_

_[O] • IACOBS SANSOVINVS FLORENTIVS • F •_

(Notes: initial O is very faintly inscribed; it appears to be either a mistake or an abandoned signature, and probably does not signify _opus_)
Fig. 51

No. 176

Conversion of the Nobleman of Provence

IACOVVS SANSOVINVS FLORENTINVS • F •

Fig. 52

Cat. No. 177
Sacristy Door
Venice, San Marco
  c. 1546-69; installed 4 Nov 1572
on tomb base in Deposition panel:

OPVS IACOBI SANSOVINI • F

Fig. 53

In: Pope-Hennessy 1996, 256, pl. 238

Cat. No. 178
John the Baptist, marble
Venice, Frari
  c. 1535-40
at base:

IACOVVS SANSOVINVS FLORENTINVS FACIEBAT

In: Boucher 1991

Cat. No. 179
Arsenal Madonna and Child,
Venice, Vestibule, The Arsenal
  c. 1535
on base:

IACOVVS SANSOVINVS FLORENTINVS FACIEBAT
**Cat. No. 180**
Virgin and Child (Nichesola Madonna)
Cleveland Museum of Art
c. 1530s
on base of statuette:

IACOBS SANSOVS

**In:** Boucher 1991

**Cat. No. 181**
Virgin and Child with Infant St John (logetta Madonna), gilded terracotta
Venice, Logetta, Piazza S Marco
c. 1540

OPVS IACOBI SANSOVINI F.

**In:** Boucher 1991

**Cat. No. 182**
Virgin and Child with Angels
Venice, Chiesetta, Palazzo Ducale
c. 1536-40s
on base:

OPVS IACOBI SANSOVINI FLORENTINI

Notes: Boucher, 328, considers the work to be unfinished, despite the signature.

**In:** Boucher 1991, II, 328, considers it unfinished

**Cat. Nos. 183-186**
Loggetta figures, bronze
Venice, San Marco
c. 1537-45
on the bases:
No. 183

Mercury

IACOBVVS SANSOVINVS FLORENTINVS F.

No. 184

Peace

IACOBVVS SANSOVINVS FLORENTINVS F.

Fig. 54

No. 185

Pallas

IACOBVVS SANSOVINVS FLORENTINVS F.

No. 186

Apollo

IACOBVVS SANSOVINVS FLORENTINVS F.

Fig. 55

Cat. Nos. 187-190
Four Evangelists
Venice, San Marco (orig for high altar)
1550-52
at base of each Evangelist:

IACOBVVS / SANSOVINVS / FLORENTINVS / FACIEBAT

Fig. 56

In: Boucher 1991

Cat. Nos. 191-192
Caryatids, (two)  
Padua, Villa Garzoni Carraretto, Pontecasale  
1540s  
At base of each figure:

SANSOVINVS

Notes: Boucher thinks they were actually carved by Danese Cattaneo (or another workshop member) following a design of Sansovino.

In: Boucher 1991, II, 351

Cat. Nos. 193-194  
Two Male Terms  
Birmingham City Museum and Art Gallery (prob originally for architectural setting)  
c. 1550-53  
on both bases:

IACOBVS SANSOVINVS F

Notes: Boucher thinks they are products of Sansovino’s workshop.

In: Boucher 1991, II, 352
LEON BATTISTA ALBERTI
(b Genoa, 14 Feb 1404; d Rome, April 1472)

Cat. No. 195
Self-portrait medal
c. 1435

L.BAP
LEONE LEONI
(b ?Menaggio, nr Como, c. 1509; d Milan, 22 July 1590)

Cat. No. 196
Self-portrait medal, bronze
before 1549, obverse (present whereabouts unknown)

LEO. ARETINVS SCVLPTOR CAES[ARE]VS


LORENZO DA MUZZANO
(active in Milan 1490-1508; d before 1516)

Cat. No. 197
Statue of Louis XII, half-figure, marble
Paris, Louvre
Signed and dated on border of the cuirasse:

MEDIOLANENSIS. LAVRENCIVS. DE MVGIANO. OPVS. FECIT. 1508

Other inscriptions: legends on the map on the cuirasse:

ITAL(IA) // MI(LANVM) // IA(NVA) // CRE(MONA?) // VE(NETVM) //
FL(ORENTIA) // R(OMA)

In: Pogam 2008, 46-7, no. 17

Cat. No. 198
S Maria dei Miracoli presso S Celso, Milan:

LORE(N)ZO / D(A) MUZA(N)O / MCCCCCIII

In: Pogam 2008, 46; Zani 2000, 55 n27
LORENZO (DI CIONE) Ghiberti
(b Florence, 1378; d Florence, 1 Dec 1455)

Cat. No. 199
St John the Baptist
Florence, Orsanmichele
c. 1412-15
on decorated and gilded hem of the cloak, letters in circles:

O/P/V/S / L/A/V/R/E/N/T/I/I / F/LO/RE/N/TI/N/I

Fig. 58

In: Stiff 2005, 92; Pope-Hennessy 1996, I, 263; Sperling 1985, 49

Cat. No. 200
North Doors
Florence Baptistry
1403-24
in Nativity panel and Adoration of the Magi panel:

• OPVS • LAVREN / TII • FLORENTINI •

Figs. 59 and 59b

Notes: the doors also include a self-portrait, at the upper right corner of Nativity panel

Cat. No. 201
East Doors
Florence Baptistry
1427-52
border in between panels, at eye-level:

• LAVRENTII • CIONIS • DE • GIBERTIS • MIRA • ARTE • FABRICATVM•

“Made by the miraculous art of Lorenzo Cione di Ghiberti”

Notes: Ghiberti includes a self-portrait and a portrait of his son (Vittorio).

Fig. 60
In: Sperling 1985, 66
MAFFEO OLIVIERI
(b Brescia, 1484; d Brescia, 1543–4)

Cat. No. 202
pair of candlesticks (h. 1.89 m)
at the entrance to the chapel of the Sacrament of S Marco, Venice
1527
Both candlesticks bear the inscription:

ALTOBELLVS • AVEROLDVS • BRIXIANVS • EPIS(COPVS) • POLEN(SIS)
• LEGAT(VS) • APOSTOLICVS • DEO • OPT(IMO) • MAX(IMO) • DICAVIT
MAPHEVS • OLIVERIVS • BRIXIANVS • FACIEBAT

Notes: evidently donated in 1527, on Christmas Eve, by Altobello Averoldo (c. 1465–1531), Bishop of Pola (now Pula, Croatia) and Papal Legate at Venice.

In: Bacchi and Giacomelli 2008, cat. 82; Bode 1980, 79
“MAGISTER COSMATUS”

Cat. No. 203
Epigraph on entrance wall, marble
Rome, Sancta Sanctorum
c. 1277-80

† MAGISTER • / COSMATVS • / FECIT • HOC • / OPVS •

In: Dietl 2009, cat. A567; Monciatti 2004, 92 fig. 1; Kessler and Zacharias 2000, 40-42, fig. 36
“MAGISTER PAULUS”

Cat. No. 204
Inscription fragment from tomb of Antonio de Vitulis
Rome, now in Vatican
c. 1405
inscription tablet, at base of longer inscription to the deceased:

[Magister Pavlvs d]E GVALDO FECIT

In: Cesari 2001, 42, fig. 12; Sarti, Settele, and Dufresne 1903, 43

Cat. No. 205
Sepolcro Briobris
Vetralla, San Francesco
late 14th/early 15th c
below effigy on the border of the sarcophagus, above a longer inscription-bearing tablet:

M[AGISTER] PAVLVS DE GVALDO CATTANIE ME FECIT

In: Cesari 2001, p. 29 and fig. 1

Cat. No. 206
Tomb of Bartolomeo Carafa
Rome, Santa Maria del Priorato di Malta
c. 1405
bottom of inscription tablet, below inscription with information on the deceased:

MAGISTER PAVLVS FECIT

In: Cesari 2001, 44, fig. 13-14

Cat. No. 207
Tomb of Pietro Stefaneschi (d 1417)
Rome, Santa Maria in Trastevere
inscription tablet, below longer inscription:

MAGISTER PAVLVS FECIT HOC HOPVS
Fig. 61
In: Sperling 1985, 170 n447; Longhurst 1962, n13; Davies 1910, 53
MAIANO

Cat. No. 208
Tabernacle of Madonna dell’Ulivo
Prato, Cathedral
1480

IVLIANVS ET IOVANNI ET BENEDICTVS MAIANII LEONARDI FILII
HANC ARAM POSVERVNT SCVLPSERVNTQVE MCCCCLXXX

Notes: Bode and Dussler interpreted this to mean Giuliano did the architecture, Benedetto
the Madonna, and Giovanni the Pietà relief on the base.

In: Carl 2006, 27; Dussler 1924, 54; Bode 1892-1905, 109

Also see Cat. No. 072
MARCO DA SIENA

(see CIOLO DI NERIO DA SIENA and MARCO DA SIENA)
MARCO ROMANO

Cat. No. 209
Tomb of San Simeone, marble
Venice, San Simeone Grande
1318
last line, below a longer inscription, on a plaque above the effigy:

† CELAVIT MARCVS OPVS HOC INSIGNE ROMANVS • LAVDIBVS NON PARCVS EST SVA DIGNA MANVS

Notes: Only effigy, sarcophagus, and two inscription plaques remain

In: Dietl 2009, cat. A776; Wolters 1976, 152; cat. 12
MATTEO CIVITALI [Civitale, Matteo (di Giovanni)]
(b Lucca, 5 June 1436; d Lucca, 12 Oct 1501)

Cat. No. 210
Allegory of Faith
Florence, now in Bargello (originally in S Michele, Lucca?)
c. 1480
at left on base:

O • M • C • L

(“Opus Matthaei Civitalis Lucensis”)

Fig. 62

In: Harms 1995, 51-53, 225

Cat. No. 211
Tempietto del Volto Santo
Lucca, Cathedral of San Martino, central nave
1482-84
to the right of the figure of St Sebastian:

• OPVS • / • MATHEI • / • CIVITAL • / • LVCEN •

other inscription:

.VALET.VI. / .SVA. / .VERITAS. / •M• / CCCCLXXX / IIII

Fig. 63


Cat. No. 212
Eucharistic tabernacle
London, V&A (originally Lucca Baptistery, Altar of the Sacrament?)
1496 (?)
on three sides of tabernacle’s base:

OPVS / MATTHÆI / CIVITAL(IS)
Cat. No. 213-214
Statue Cycle, marble
Genoa Duomo, Chapel of St John the Baptist
c. 1484
on side base of figure of Isaiah:

No. 213

O.M.C. (Opus Matthaei Civitalis)

This version Harms 1995, 126-140, 226-227

OR

.O.M.L. / CIVITALIS (Opus Matthaei Lucensis / Civitalis)

this per Di Fabio 2004, 153-63

No. 214

on side base of Habakuk:

O.M.C.

(Opus Matthaei Civitalis)

Other inscriptions: at front:

ABACVH.P.

On Elizabeth:

MATER.DIVI.IOHANNIS.BAP.

On Zacharias:

ZACHARIAS.PROPHETA

On Adam:

PRIMVS.PARENS.
On Eve:

PRIMA MATER.

In: Harms 1995, 126-140, 226-227

Cat. No. 215
Tomb of Pietro da Noceto, marble
Lucca Duomo
1472
base, at right:

OPVS MATTHAEI CIVITAL

Fig. 64

In: Ferretti 2004, 167, fig. 2; Harms 1995, 26-40, 229-230

Cat. No. 216
Altar of Saint Regulus (San Regolo), marble
Lucca Duomo, Chapel of St Regulus
c. 1484
At right and left sides of base:

OPVS / MATTHAEI / CIVITAL(IS) / LVCEN / SIS // A(NNO) D(OMINI) M / CCCC / LXXX / IIII

MICHELANGELO BUONAROTTI [Michelangelo di Lodovico Buonarroti Simoni]
(b Caprese, ?6 March 1475; d Rome, 18 Feb 1564)

Cat. No. 217
St Peter’s Pietà, marble
Rome, St Peter’s (originally in Old St Peter’s)
1497-99
on strap across the Virgin’s breast:

MICHAEL A(N)GELVS BONAROTVS FLORENT FACIEBA(T)

Figs. 65 and 65b

MINO DA FIESOLE
(b Papiano, nr Poppi in Casentino, 1429; d Florence, 1484)

Cat. No. 218
Virgin and Child, marble
originally part of Ciborium of Cardinal d'Estouteville
Rome, S Maria Maggiore, Rome (now in Cleveland Museum of Art)
c. 1459-61

OPVS MINI

In: Pope-Hennessy 1996, II, 379

Cat. No. 219
Niccolò Strozzi bust, marble
1454
On rim beneath right shoulder; inscription in excavated area beneath:

OPVS MINI

Other inscriptions: in excavated area beneath:

NICOLAS DESTROZIS INVRBE Z MCCCLIII

In: Pope-Hennessy 1996, II, 380

Cat. No. 220
Piero de’ Medici bust, marble
1453

AETATIS ANNO XXXVII / OPVS MINI SCVLPTORIS

In: Pope-Hennessy 1996, II, 380

Cat. No. 221
Portrait of Alexo di Luca
Berlin, Bode Museum
1456
at base:
ALEXO DI LVCA MINI 1456

Fig. 66

Cat. No. 222
Bust of a lady
Florence, Bargello, Inv no 72
Inscription at base:

ET IO • DA • MINO • O AVVUTO • EL LVME

Fig. 67

In: Goldthwaite 1980, 410 n23

Cat. No. 223
Bust of Diotisalvi Neroni (1406-1482), marble
1464
on the plinthe rear:

OPVS . MINI . M°CCCCLXIII .
Other inscriptions: on plinthe front:

† AETATIS . SVAE . ANnos . AGEnS . LX[...] . TYR[“C”, “G”, or “O”
…?]ACIU.[m]DVM . S[ib]I . CVRAVIT . DIETISALVIVS .

Fig. 68

In: Pogam 2008, 125 n75

Cat. No. 224
Bust of Count Rinaldo della Luna, marble
Florence, Bargello
1461
around base at rear:

OPVS MINI NE MCCCCXLI
Other inscriptions: At front, around base:
RINALDO DELLA LVNA SVE ETATIS ANNO XXVII.

**Cat. No. 225**
Angel, tympanum, marble  
Rome, San Giacomo degli Spagnuoli

OPVS MINI

Fig. 69

*In:* Zuraw 1992, 305-06

*See also cat. no. 257*

**Cat. No. 226**
Dossal with Madonna and Child and Saints  
Fiesole, Duomo, Cappella Salutati  
1464

OPVS MINI

*In:* Mino da Fiesole. I Maestri della scultura 1966

**Cat. No. 227**
Tomb of Bernardo Giugni  
Florence, Badia  
c. 1468  
below central portrait bust at top:

OPVS / MINI

*In:* Zuraw 1998, fig. 17

**Cat. No. 228**
Relief of Madonna and Child with Four Adoring Angels, marble  
London, Courtauld Institute Galleries  
c. 1470-73  
at base of steps in relief:
OPVS MINI

**In:** *Italian Renaissance Sculpture in the Time of Donatello*, cat. 61

**Cat. No. 229**
Ciborium
Volterra, Duomo
1471

OPVS MINI

**In:** *Mino da Fiesole. I maestri...

**Cat. No. 230**
Tomb of Paul II (d. 1471)
Rome, St Peter’s (originally)

OPVS MINI

**In:** Zuraw 1998, fig. 19

**Cat. No. 231**
Sacrament tabernacle
Rome, Santa Maria in Trastevere

OPVS MINI

Notes: some scholars have suggested this is actually by MINO DEL REAME, although Zuraw argues convincingly that this is not the case.

**Fig. 70**

**In:** Zuraw 1998
MODERNO [Mondella, Galeazzo]
(b Verona, 1467; d Verona, 1528)

Cat. No. 232
Mars surrounded by trophies, bronze medal
late 15th / early 16th century
on cartouche, plaque on top of standard with hand above it:

•M•F•

Other inscriptions: around edge at top:

.M.VICTORI AFVNCTVS

Fig. 71

Cat. No. 233
Flagellation, plaquette, bronze
Vienna, Kunsthistorisches
after 1506 (?)

• OP • MODERNI

In: Bacchi and Giacomelli 2008, 149-51, fig. 103
PADOVANO (GIOVANNI MARIA MOSCA) [Gianmaria] [Padoan, Zuan Maria; Padovano, Jan Maria]
(b Padua, c. 1493/5; d Kraków, after 31 March 1574)

Cat. No. 234
Tomb of Jan Kamieniecki
Church of the Visitation, Franciscan Church, Krosno (Poland)
1560

IOANNES MARIA ITALVS // DE PADVAE FECIT

Notes: PADVAE has AE ligature and is (sic)

**NANNI DI BARTOLO**

(fl 1419 – 35)

**Cat. No. 235**
Cenotaph of Niccolò Ragoni di Brenzoni
Verona, San Fermo Maggiore
1426 (?)

- QVEM • GENVIT • RVSSI • FLORENTIA • TVSCA • IOHANIS : ISTVS • SCVLPSIT • OPVS • INGENIOSA • MANVS •

**In:** Pope-Hennessy 1996, I, 275; Sperling 1985, 144-46

**Cat. No. 236**
Obadiah [Abdias]
Florence, probably for the Campanile
1422
inscribed on scroll held by the prophet:

IOHANNES / ROSSVS / PROPHETAM / ME SCVLPSIT / ABDIAM

**Fig. 72**

**In:** Schulz 1997, figs. 11-16

**Cat. No. 237**
Portal
Marche, San Niccolò in Tolentino
1435
inscriptions on two bases of church’s portal:

(on left):
QVI FLORENTI / NOS PAPAM Q3 / DVCEM Q3 TRI / VMPHIS. REDDID /
IT ILLVSTRES FI / ERI SPECTABILE / IVSSIT HOC / OPVS ILLE DV / CVM
DVCTOR / NICOLAVIS AME / NV3. QVEM / THOLENTINV / M GENVIT S /
VB MENIBVS / ALTIS. / MCCCCXXXII

(on the right):
SED POSTQVA / M PETIIT CELVM / MENS ALMA PO / TENTIS. HOS B /
APTISTA MEM / OR FRATER Q / VOD IVVSSERA / T OLIM. TRAN /
say sculptures commissioned in 1432 by Niccolò da Tolentino; 1435 Niccolò’s brother Battista had stones brought from Venice to Tolentino, where they were arranged (*composuit*) by Nanni di Bartolo (per Sperling 1985, 149)

**In:** Schulz 1997, figs. 126, 127; Sperling 1985, 149; figs 142-3
NEROCCIO DE’ LANDI (Neroccio di Bartolommeo di Benedetto)
(b Siena, 1447; d Siena, 1500)

Cat. No. 238
Wall tomb of Bishop Tommaso Piccolomini del Testa
Siena Duomo, over door of Campanile
1485
On support of sarcophagus:

    OPVS NEROCCII PICTORIS

Other inscriptions: also has longer inscription to Tommasio Piccolomini.

Fig. 73

In: Colucci 2003, 357-61
NICCOLO DELL’ARCA [Niccolò da Ragusa; Nichollò de Bari; Nicolaus de Apulia]
(fl 1462; d Bologna, 2 March 1494)

Cat. No. 239
Madonna di Piazza
Bologna
1478

NICOLAVS • F • // MCCCC / LXXVIII

In: Pope-Hennessy 1996, II, 413; Agostini and Ciammitti 1989, 117, fig. 1

Cat. No. 240
Terracotta eagle, over entrance
Bologna, San Giovanni in Monte
On trunk eagle stands on:

NICOLAVS F

In: Pope-Hennessy 1996, II, 413; Niccolò dell’Arca. I maestri della... 1966

Cat. No. 241
St John the Baptist
location??

NICOLAVS

Cat. No. 242
Lamentation over the dead Christ, terracotta
Bologna, Santa Maria della Vita
c. 1460s (?)
on scroll on pillow supporting Christ’s head:

OPVS NICOLAI DE APVLIA

Fig. 74
NICCOLÒ LAMBERTI
(active Fl c. 1393; d. Fl 1451)

Cat. No. 243
St Mark,
Florence, originally for Duomo façade
c. 1408-14/15
on base of statue:

OPVS / NICH/OLAI

In: Sperling 1985, 77; Goldner 1978, 42-52
NICCOLÒ TRIBOLO [Niccolò di Raffaello de' Pericolo; il Tribolo]
(b ?Florence, 1500; d ?Florence, 7 Sept 1550)

Cat. No. 244
Assumption of the Virgin, marble
Bologna, Cappella delle Reliquie, San Petronio
1537
on rim of sarcophagus-like object:

TRIBOLO.FIORENTINO.FACEVA.

Notes: was originally in Madonna di Galliera before being moved in 1746; the angels in stucco were added at that time.

NICOLA DE BARTOLOMEO DE FOGIA

Cat. No. 245
Evangelary pulpit
Ravello, Cathedral
1272

over entrance to pulpit:

EGO MAGISTER NICOLAVS DE BARTHOLOMEO DE FOGIA
MARMORARIVS HOC OPVS FECI

Other inscriptions:

VIRGINIS ISTVD OPVS RVFVLVS NICOLAVS AMORE, VIR SICLIGAYTE,
PATRIEQ’ DICAVIT HONORE. EST MATHEVS AB HIIS, VRSO, IACOBVS
QVOQ’ NATVS, MAVRVS ET A PRIMO LAVRENCIVS EST GENERATVS.
HOC TIBI SIT GRATVM, PIA VIRGO, PRECAREQ’ NATVM, VT POST
ISTA BONA DET EIS CELESTIA DONA. LAPSIS MILLENIS BIS CENTVM
BISQ’ TRICENIS XPI. BISSENIS ANNIS AB ORIGINE PLENIS

In: Sheppard 1950, 321 n15; Schultz 1860, 271
NICOLA DENTE

Cat. No. 246
Lunette, portal, west façade
Trogir (Traù), Croatia, San Domenico
after 1372

MAISTE(R) • NICOLAV(S) • / DE(N)TE • DITO CERVO • D(E) VENECIA •
FECIT • / HOC • OPVS •


In: Dietl 2009, cat. A749
NICOLA [NICCOLÒ] PISANO
(b c 1220–25; d before 1284)

Cat. No. 247
Pulpit
Pisa, Baptistery
1260
inscribed beneath relief of Last Judgment:

† • ANNO MILLENO BIS CENTVM BISQ(VE) TR[I]CENO • H(OC) OP(VS)
INSINGNE SCVLPSIT NICOLA PISAN(VS) • LAVDETVR DINGNE TA(M)
BENE // DOCTA MAN(VS)

“In the year 1260 Nicola Pisano carved this noble work. May so greatly gifted a hand be praised as it deserves.” (per Pope-Hennessy 1996, I, 229)

In: Dietl 2009, cat. A495; Dietl 1987, 98; Pope-Hennessy 1996, I, 229

Cat. No. 248
The Fontana Maggiore
Perugia
1277-78
Inscription mentioning Pisani:

† NOMINA SCVLPTORVM FONTIS SVNT ISTA BONORVM.
[ARTE HONO]RATVS NICOLA[V]S AD [OMNIA GRA]TVS
EST FLOS SCVLPTORVM GRATISSIMVS ISQVE PROBORVM
EST GENITOR PRIMVS GENIT[VS] CARRISIMVS IMVS
CVI SI NON DAMPNES NOMEN DIC ESSE IOHANNES
ITV [or NATV] PISANI SINT MVLTO TEMPORE SANI

“The names of the worthy sculptors of the fountain are these: Nicola honored in his art and respected on all sides. He is the finest flower of honest sculptors. First comes the father, next the most dear son, whose name is Giovanni. May the Pisans be for long preserved on their course.” (per Moskowitz 2005, 110)

Notes: inscription on second basin has date and names of the pope (Nicholas III), emperor (Rudolph I of Hapsburg), members of the civic govt, and fountain’s engineers and sculptors

In: Moskowitz 2005, 110; Pope-Hennessy 1996, I, 231
NINO PISANO
(fl 1334–1360s; d Pisa, before 8 Dec 1368)

Cat. No. 249
Bishop Saint, marble
Oristano (Sardinia), San Francesco
 c. 1345 (?)

† NINVS : MAGITRI : ANDREE : DEPISIS : ME FECIT

In: Moskowitz 1986, 63, and figs. 130-31

Cat. No. 250
Cornaro Monument (d. 1367)
Venice, SS Giovanni e Paolo
 c. 1350 (?)
Base of Madonna, damaged gilt inscription:

HOC OPVS FE/CIT NINVS MAGISTRI AN/DREE DE PISIS

Fig. 75


Cat. No. 251
Madonna and Child
Florence, Santa Maria Novella
1360s (?)

FECIT • NINVS • MAGRI • ANDREE • DE • PISIS •

In: Pope-Hennessy 1996, I, 110, fig. 107

Cat. No. 252
Annunciation group, marble
Pisa, Santa Caterina
Missing inscription:
A DI PRIMO FEBBRAIO 1370. QUESTE FIGURE FECE NINO FIGLIUOLO D’ANDREA PISANO

Notes: the signature is no longer extant, but is mentioned in Vasari’s second edition of his Lives, (Milanesi 1878, 495). Moskowitz 1986, 74, notes that the sculptor was dead by 1368, but the inscription could have referred to the installation of the group rather than its execution (citing Pope-Hennessy 1972, 195).

In: Moskowitz 1986, 74-5; Pope-Hennessy 1972, 195; Vasari-Milanesi 1878, 495
PACE [Pasio] GAGINI
(fl 1493–1521)

Cat. No. 253
Tomb of Raoul de Lannoy and Jeanne de Poix
parish church of Folleville, Picardy (France)
1507
Signed below recumbent effigy of Raoul de Lannoy (French Governor of Genoa)

    ANTONIVS DE PORTA / TAMAGNINVS MEDIOLANENSIS FACIEBAT //
    ET PAXIVS NEPOS SVVS

In: Beltrami 1904, 58-62; Justi 1892, 18

Cat. No. 254
Statuette of Virgin and Child
parish church of Ruisseauville, Pas-de-Calais (France)
1506
at base:

    ANTONIVS • TAMAGNINVS • DE • PORTA • / ET • PAXIVS • DE • GAZINO
    • MEDIOLANESIS • FACIEBANT

Cat. No. 255
Seated figure of Francesco Lomellini
Genoa, Palazzo S Giorgio
1508

    PACES GAZINVS BISSONIVS FACIEBAT

In: Kruft 1970, 408, fig. 12; Justi 1892, 15

Cat. No. 256
Tomb of Doña Catalina de Ribera
University Church, Seville (Spain) (orig. in charterhouse of Seville)
1520

    OPVS / PACE GAZINI / FACIEBAT / IN IANVA
In: King 1921, fig. 5; Justi 1892, 3-22, 68-90, esp. 4
PAOLO ROMANO (Paolo di Mariani di Tuccio Taccone da Sezze; Paolo da Gualdo; Paolo di Mariano)
(b ?Sezze, nr Velletri; fl 1451; d Rome ?1470)

Cat. No. 257
Angel, marble
Rome, San Giacomo degli Spagnuoli, on left of tympanum over portal
c. 1460

OPVS PAVLI

Notes: it appears that the sculptor started carving PA in a lower position first, right below the angel’s legs, but abandoned this inscription, potentially because of visibility problems when viewed from ground level.

Fig. 69

See also Cat. No. 225
PASCHALIS

Cat. No. 258
Column, side of cantorium(?), rood screen (?)
Rome, S Maria in Cosmedin
c. 1250

VIR P(RO)/BVS ET /DOCT(VS) / PASCA/LIS RI/TE VO/CAT(VR) • /
SVM(M)O / CVM / STVDIO / CO(N)DIDIT / HV(N)C / CEREV/M •

“Rightfully is Paschalis called an efficient and skillful man; with greatest
eagerness he joined this Osterleuchter” (per Dietl 2009)

In: Dietl 2009, cat. A607

Cat. No. 259
Sphinx
Viterbo, Museo Civico
1286

† HOC • OPVS • FECIT • FR(ATER) • PASCALIS • ROMAN(VS) • ORD(INIS)
• P(RE)D(ICATORVM) • A(NNO) • D(OMINI) • M° • CC° • L • XXXVI •

Notes: Probably for the tomb in Dominican church of S Maria in Gradi (1286)

PEREGRINO DA SALERNO [Peregrino da Sesso]
(fl 1259–83)

Cat. No. 260
Pulpit reliefs (two panels, originally from a pulpit, showing episodes from the story of 
Jonah)
Sessa Aurunca, Cathedral
c. 1259-83
at bottom border of Jonah scene:

†MVNERE DIVINO DECVS ET LAVS SIT PEREGRINO TALIA QVI
SCVLPST OPVS EIVS VBIQVE REFVLXIT

Notes: another inscription, at the top border: †INFERVS VT CETVS IONAM VOMIT
INDE REPLETVS SIC REDDIT XPM DOCET SCRIPTVRA PER ISTAM

In: Capomaccio 2002, 115, and fig. 122; de Castris 1986, p. 137, fig. 18

Cat. No. 261
Paschal candlestick
Sessa Aurunca Cathedral (Campania)
made during the episcopate of Giovanni III, 1259–83
at bottom of candlestick:

†MVNERE DIVINO DECVS ET LAVS SIT PEREGRINO TALIA QVI
SCVLPST; OPVS EIVS VBIQVE REFVLXIT

Other inscriptions:

†HOC OPVS EST MAGNE LAVDIS FACIENTE IOHANNE

†PVLCRA COLVMPNA NITE DANS NOBIS LVMINA VITE

In: Sheppard 1950, 321 n14; Schultz 1860, 148; de Castris 1986, figs. 19-20;
Capomaccio 2002, 213ff and figs. 144-151

Cat. No. 262
Cornice section
Bari, Castello Svevo
c. 1273
Notes: In 1273 Peregrino was recalled from Sessa by Charles I of Anjou to finish work started on the royal chapel of the Castello di S Lorenzo, near Foggia (Puglia). This signature indicates that Peregrino made the iconostasis for Bari Cathedral (Puglia), of which this fragment was a part.

In: Grove
PETRUS ROMANUS (Pietro di Oderisio?)

Cat. No. 263
Tomb of Edward the Confessor
London, Westminster Abbey
1269

† ANNO MILENO DOMINI CVM SEXAGENO ET / BIS CENTENO CVM
COMPLETO QVASI DENO HOC OPVS EST FACTVM QVOD PETRVS /
DVXIT IN ACTVM ROMANVS CIVIS HOMO / CAVSAM NOSCERE SI VIS
REX FVIT HENRICVS SANCTI PRESENTIS AMICVS

In: Hutton 1950, 41

Also see Cat. No. 265
PIERO DI NICCOLÒ LAMBERTI
(b Fl c 1393; d Venice 1435)

and GIOVANNI DI MARTINO DA FIESOLE

Cat. No. 264
Tomb of Doge Tommaso Mocenigo
Venice, SS Giovanni e Paolo
1423
Below the inscription tablet:

PETRVS MAGISTRI NICHOLAI DEFLORENCIA ET IOVANNES MARTINI
DEFESVLIS INCISERVNT HOC OPVS 1423

Fig. 76

In: Sperling 1985, 138-40; Goldner 1978, 186
PIERPAOLO DALLE MASEGNE

(see JACOBELLO and PIERPAOLO DALLE MASEGNE)
PIETRO DI ODERISIO (Petrus Oderisii / Oderisi)
(fl c. 1268)

Cat. No. 265
Tomb of Clement IV (d 1268)
Viterbo, San Francesco (originally in S Maria in Gradi, moved c. 1900)
c. 1268

PETRVS ODERISI SEPVLCREI FECIT HOC OPVS

In: Dietl 2009, cat. A812; Hutton 1950, 41

Also see Cat. No. 263
PIETRO LOMBARDO [Pietro Solari]
(Carona, Lombardy, c. 1435 – Venice, June 1515)

Cat. No. 266
Dante’s Tomb
Ravenna
1483

•OP’ / PETRI / LOM/BAR/DI

Fig. 77
PISANELLO [Pisano, Antonio]
(b Pisa or Verona, by 1395; d ?c. Oct 1455)

Cat. No. 267
Medal of John VIII Palaeologus
1438
on reverse, at top:

- OPVS • PISANI • PICTO/RIS •

Fig. 78

Cat. No. 268
Medal of Cecilia Gonzaga
1447
on reverse, plaque with signature:

OPVS / PISAN/I • PICT / ORIS • / • M • / CCCC / XLVII

Fig. 79

Cat. No. 269
Medal of Leonello d’Este
C. 1441
on reverse, at bottom around edge:

PISANVS / PICTOR / FECIT

Fig. 80
SEVERO (DI DOMENICO CALZETTA) DA RAVENNA
(fl c. 1496–c. 1543)

Cat. No. 270
St John the Baptist, marble
Padua, Cappella del Santo, S Antonio
1500
at base:

OPVS • SEVERI•RAV

In: Schulz 1998, fig. 34; McHam, 1994, fig. 36
SIMEON RAGUSEUS [Simon da Ragusa]

Cat. No. 271
Door of Sant’Andrea a Barletta
Before 1260 (?)

INCOLA TRANENSIS SCULPSIT SIMEON RAGUSEVS

In: Dietl 2003, 242
SPERANDIO (Savelli)
(b Mantua, ?1425; d Venice ?1504)

Cat. No. 272
Medal of Francesco Sforza
c. 1460
on reverse:

    OPVS SPERANDEI

In: Welch 1995, 189

Cat. No. 273
Portrait of Ercole I d’Este, marble, relief
Paris, Louvre
c. 1475
at base:

    OPVS • SPERANDEI

In: Torresi 2007, 209
TADDEUS
(fl c. 1259-83)

Cat. No. 274
Cathedral of Sessa Aurunca
1259-83

QVI FAMA FVLXIT OPVS HOC IN MARMORE SCVLPSIT / NOMINE TADDEVS CVI MISERERE DEVS

“Who shone because of his renown, Taddeus carved this work with his name; god be gracious to him” (trans. Dietl 1987, 107)

In: Dietl 1987, 107, and 107 n148
TINO DI CAMAINO
(b Siena, c. 1280; d Naples, 1337)

Cat. No. 275
Baptismal Font
Pisa Cathedral
finished c. 1311 (destroyed 1595, fire)

Annis millenis tercentum et duodenis / Hoc opus expletum fontis fuit, atque repletum / Ordine perfecto sit chavo denique recto / Tini sculptoris de Senis arte coloris / Rector Burgundius Tadi virtute profundus / Huic ego tunc Tadi Burgundius nomine favi.

In: Dietl 2009, cat. A505; Valentiner 1935, 41, 156

Cat. No. 276
Statuette of the Madonna, marble
Turin, Pinacoteca Reale
C. 1312-15

† VIRGINIS • AT / TINO • FVI/T OH • / Q(V)A(M) CERNIS / IMAGHO • / QVAM GENVERE / SEIE CAMAI/NV(S) PATER Q(V)AM / MAGIS(T)RO

In: Dietl 2009, cat. A760; Kreytenberg 1986, p. 12 and fig. 9; Valentiner 1935, 156

Cat. No. 277
The Tomb of Bishop Orso (fragmentary)
Florence Duomo
C. 1321
Inscription on wall beneath the consoles:

† OPERV(M) DE SENIS NATVS EX MAG(IST)RO CAMAINO IN HOC SITV FLORENTINO • TINVS • SCVLPSIT • O(MN)E • LAT(VS)• / HVC P(RO) PATRE GENITIVO DECET INCLINARI VT MAGISTER ILLO VIVO • NOLIT • APPELLARI

“Tino, son of Master Camaino of Siena, carved this work on every side in this site in Florence. It is fitting that he should so defer to his father as to refuse, during his life-time, to be called Master.” (trans. Pope-Hennessy 1996, I, 242)
Fig. 81

In: Gramigni 2006; Pope-Hennessy 1996, I, 242
TOMMASO FIAMBERTI
(fl 1498; d Cesena, between 7 Sept 1524 and 21 Jan 1525)

Cat. No. 278
Tomb monument of Luffo Numai
Ravenna, S Francesco, Ravenna
1509
at top arch of tomb:

THOMAE • FIAMBERTI • SCVLPTORIS / OPVS
TOMMASO [TOMASO] PISANO
(fl 1363–72)

Cat. No. 279
Marble high altar (polyptych)
Pisa, San Francesco
late 1360s/early 1370s
At base, below central panel of Virgin and Child:

† • TOMASO • FIGLIVOLO • CHE [FV • DI • MAE]STRO • ANDR[E]A •
F[EC]E • QV]ESTO • [LA]VORO • ET • FV • PISANO

In: Dietl 2009, cat. A494; Moskowitz 1986, 163, figs. 328-37
TOMMASO [TOMASO] RODARI
(b Maroggi, Lake Como; fl Como, 1484–1526)

and GIACOMO RODARI
(fl 1487-1509)

Cat. No. 280
Altar of the Passion
Duomo di Como
1492

VENERABILIS. D. BARTHOLOMEVS. PARAVESINVS. DECRETORVM.
DOCTOR. AC. EIVS. VENERABILIS. NEPOS. DNS. IOHANNES. JACOBVS.
HVIVS. / ECCLESIE. CANONICVS. EDERE. FECERVNT. OPVS. PER.
TOMAM. DE. RODARIIS. DE. MAROZIA. 1492.

In: Mastropierro 1971): 71-77, p. 71, img. 71 fig. 1

Cat. No. 281
Additions to sculptures of Pliny the Younger and Pliny the Elder
Duomo di Como
1498

‘Thomas et Jacobus de Rodariis faciebant’

Cat. No. 282
Como Cathedral, chancel
1513 (foundation stone laid)

THOMAS DE RODARIIS • FACIEBAT

Full inscription:

CVM HOC TEMPLVVM VETVSTATE CON / FECTVM ESSET APOPVLO
COMENSI / RENOVARI CEPTVM EST MCCCLXXXVII / HVIVS VERO
POSTERIORIS PARTIS IACTA SVNT / FVNDAMENTA MDXIII XXII
DECEMBRIS / FRONTIS ET LATER IAM OPERE PERFECTO / THOMAS
DE RODARIIS FACIEBAT
Fig. 82

In: *Il duomo di Como* 1972, 16, fig. 12
TULLIO LOMBARDO
(b ?c. 1455; d Venice, 17 Nov 1532)

Cat. No. 283
Adam
NY, now in MET, originally from Monument of Andrea Vendramin, SS Giovanni e Paolo, Venice
mid-1490s
on base:

TVLLII LOMBARDI O

Fig. 83


Cat. No. 284
Self-portrait (?) with wife, marble relief
Venice, Ca D’Oro
1490s (?)

TVLLIVS LOMBARDVS F.

Fig. 84

Cat. No. 285
Coronation of the Virgin
Venice, San Giovanni Crisostono
1500-1502
at base of relief:

TVLLII LOMBARDI OPVS

In: Poeschke 1996, fig. 129

Cat. No. 286
Miracle of the Reattached Leg, relief for Chapel of St Anthony
Padua, S Antonio
1500-1505

TVLLII / LOMBARDI / OPVS

Fig. 85

In: McHam, 1994, plate V

Cat. No. 287
Miracle of the Miser’s Heart, relief for Chapel of St Anthony
Padua, S Antonio
1520-25

OPVS TVLLII LOMBAR PETRI F / M D XXV

Fig. 86
UGOLINO DI VIERI
(fl 1329; d 1380–85)

Cat. No. 288
Reliquary of the Holy Corporal, gold, silver, enamel
Orvieto, Duomo
1337-38

† HOC OPVS FECIT FIERI DOMINVS FRATER TRAMVS
EPISCOPVS VRBETANVS (ET) D(OMINVS) ANGELVS
ARCHIPRESBITERI (ET) D(OMINVS) LIGVS CAPELANVS
DOMINI PAPE (ET) D(OMINVS) NICHOLAVS D(E) ALATRO /
D(OMINVS) FREDVS (ET) D(OMINVS) NINVS (ET) D(OMINVS) 
LEONARDVS CANONECI (!) VRBETANI PER MAGISTRVM /
VGOLINVM (ET) SOTIOS AFRIFICIES (!) DE SENIS FACTVM
FVIT SVB ANNO DOMINI M CCC XXX VIII TENPORE (!)
DOMINI / BENEDICTI PAPE XII

“The Lord Friar Tramo, bishop of Orvieto, caused this work to be made, [together with] Lord Angelo, archpriest, and Lord Ligo, chaplain of the Lord Pope, and Nicolo of Alatro, and Lord Fredo, and Lord Nino, and Lord Leonardo, canons of Orvieto. It was made in the year of our Lord 1338, in the time of Pope Benedict XII, by Master Ugolino and his associate goldsmiths of Siena.” (trans. Freni 2000, 119)

Fig. 87

In: Dietl 2009, cat. A417; Freni 2000, 119

Cat. No. 289
Reliquary of the skull of San Savino, gold and silver
Orvieto, Museo dell’Opera del Duomo
1340-45

† VGH/OLIN/VS (ET) / VIVA / D(E) SE/NIS F/ECIER/V(N)T IS/TVM 
TABE/RNAC/VLVM(M)

Notes: The VIVA mentioned is Viva da Lando
In: Dietl 2009, cat. A414
VASSALLETTUS [Vassalleto; Bassallectus; Bassallettus]

**Cat. No. 290**  
Papal throne, marble  
Anagni, Duomo  
c. 1260  
inlaid marble disk on throne back:

\[\text{VASALET DE ROMA ME FECIT}\]

**Fig. 88**

**In:** Hutton 1950, 38

**Cat. No. 291**  
Candelabrum, marble  
Anagni, Duomo  
c. 1260 (?)  
on base of candlestick:

\[\text{VASSALLETO / ME FECIT}\]

**Fig. 89**

**In:** Claussen 1981, 31, 32 fig. 16; Hutton 1950, 38
VECCHIETTA (Lorenzo di Pietro di Giovanni)
(bapt Siena, 11 Aug 1410; d Siena, 6 June 1480)

Cat. No. 292
Resurrection, bronze
Now in Frick Museum, NYC
1472

•OPVS•LAVR / ENTII•PETRI•P / ITTORIS•AL• / VECHIETTA• / DESENIS •
M • / CCCC•LXXII•

Fig. 90

In: Pope-Hennessy 1996, II, 393

Cat. No. 293
The Risen Christ, bronze
Siena, Santa Maria della Scala
1476

inscription on base:

OPVS LAVRENTII PETRI PICTORIS AL VECHIETTA DE SENIS
MCCCCLXXVI PRO SVI DEVOTIONE FECIT HOC


Cat. No. 294
St Anthony of Padua, wood sculpture
Narni, Cathedral

[Signed and dated 1475]

In: Vigni 1937, 52-53 and 82

Cat. No. 295
San Bernardino, painted wood
Florence, Bargello
Painted letters at base:
OPVS • LAVRENTII • PETRI • PICTORIS • SENENSIS •

Fig. 91
VINCENTIVS DE RVBEIS CIVIS FLOREN • OPVS

In: Pizzorusso 2008, figs. 28, 34
[GIOVAN] VINCENZO GAGINI
(1527-95)

Cat. No. 297
Three figure group with Sts James the Minor, Philip, and Vito, marble
Museo Nazionale Pepoli, Trapani (from Oratory of Confraternity of S Giacomo in
Trapani)
1553

VINCENTIVS / GAGINI SCVLPSIT / A.D. M. CCCCC. LIII

Notes: signature is arranged in the following manner:

below Jacobus minor: VINCENTIVS
“ Philippus: GAGINI SCVLPSIT
“ Vitus: A.D. M. CCCCC. LIII

In: Kruft 1980, 440, figs. 526-30, cat. 7
VITTORE GAMBELLO [Vittorio Camello; Camelius; Camelus]
(b Venice, 1455 or 1460; d Venice, 1537)

Cat. No. 298
bronze battle relief
Venice, Doge’s Palace
Raised letters at center, above the scene:

• O • VICTOR • CAMELIVS •

In: Bode 1980, 30-31, fig. 29

Cat. No. 299
Portrait medal of Giovanni Bellini
New York, Met Museum
c. 1485-1505
on reverse, at base:

VICTOR CAMELIVS / FACIEBAT

Other inscriptions: above:

VIRTVTIS ET INGENII

On obverse, running around border with portrait of Bellini:

• OP • IOANNES BELLINVS • VENET • PICTOR

In: Pincus 2008, 98, figs. 12 and 13
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fig. 3: Andrea, Madonna and Child (cat. 009)
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