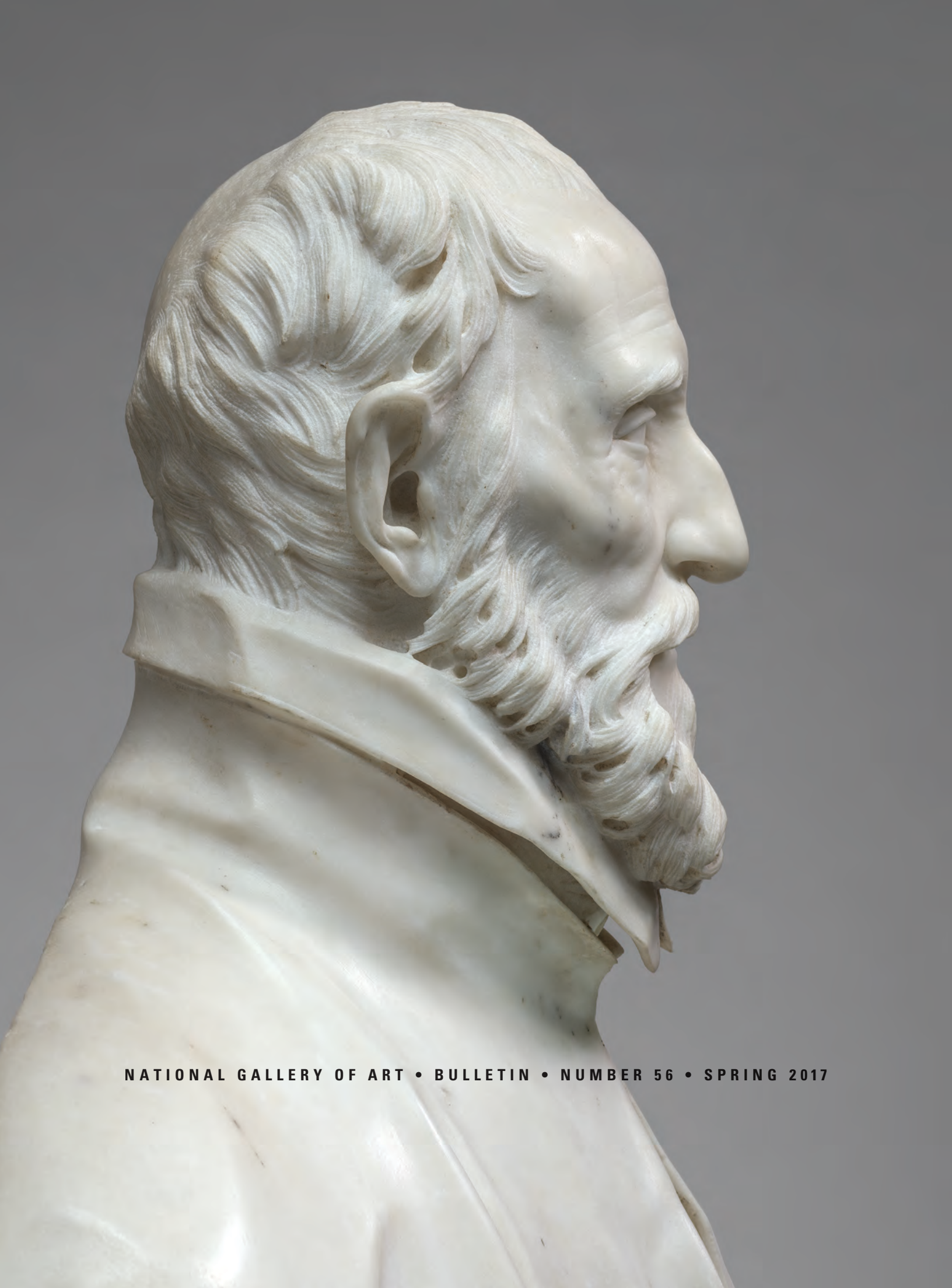

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The Sculpture Collection:

• C. D. Dickerson III, *Curator and Head of Department, Sculpture and Decorative Arts*

Fig. 1. Style of Agostino di Duccio, *Madonna and Child*, 1460s or later, marble, Andrew W. Mellon Collection

John Russell Pope's magnificent West Building is more than a temple of paintings. Within the sublime galleries, on both the main and ground floors, awaits one of the preeminent sculpture and decorative arts collections in the world, comprised of 4,000 objects created before the mid-1900s — from works of marble and bronze to examples of ceramics, textiles, metalwork, and furniture. Stretching from ancient Greece to the early twentieth century, the collection spans an even wider historical range than the West Building's great paintings. Particularly rich in works from the Italian Renaissance and eighteenth- and nineteenth-century France, the Gallery's collection began with Andrew W. Mellon's founding donations and has expanded through the present century with the transformative arrivals of the distinguished Kaufman collection of American furniture and masterpieces from the Corcoran Gallery of Art.

Mellon's original vision for the Gallery did not include sculpture or decorative arts, however. He loved paintings and assumed that any museum he established would be filled entirely with them. It was only during the final years of his life that his outlook toward sculpture changed. As he wrestled with planning the expansive museum he intended to build on the National Mall in Washington, DC, he was led to think more openly about sculpture, paving the way for a series of acquisitions that helped bring the West Building to life when it opened in 1941.

Shaping a Vision, Expanding a Legacy

Mellon acquired his first sculpture in January 1935, only a couple years before his death in 1937. It was a marble relief of the Madonna and child then attributed to the Florentine master Agostino di Duccio (fig. 1). Mellon may have been attracted to the sculpture because it enjoyed a distinguished provenance, formerly owned by the financier John Pierpont Morgan, whose collection drew Mellon's interest when it was exhibited at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1913. But the choice was still unusual for Mellon. By 1935 he had been collecting old master art for almost two decades — but never sculpture, always paintings. Unsurprisingly, his preference in museums was for pure picture galleries like the National Gallery in London, where he had spent long hours while serving as the United States ambassador to England between 1932 and 1933. His attitudes began to change around 1935, however, as he contemplated the first designs for the Gallery's building. His chosen architect, John Russell Pope, was convinced that the interior should be organized around a great domed rotunda from which two monumental halls would extend to the east and west. Pope planned for these vast spaces to be filled with sculpture, as revealed in a perspective drawing by his partner, Otto R. Eggers, from around 1936 (fig. 2). In that conception, large figures in marble and bronze stand in niches along the walls and atop pedestals around the immense room. The drawing must have been a jolt to Mellon, who can only have wondered where all these sculptures would come from.

Fig. 2. Otto R. Eggers, *Preliminary Study: Central Gallery for the Exhibition of Sculpture*, c. 1936, graphite with white wash and cream gouache, Acquired from Eggers and Higgins, Architects

Part of the answer revealed itself almost simultaneously. Mellon spent the summer of 1936 in London, and one of his first appointments was with the renowned art dealer Joseph Duveen, with whom he had had a longstanding and productive relationship. Duveen told Mellon of a major group of Italian Renaissance paintings and sculptures that he had been fortunate to secure from the Parisian collector Gustave Dreyfus. Mellon agreed to inspect the material at Duveen's salesroom in New York at the end of the summer but was preempted by illness. He sent the Gallery's first director, David Finley, in his place. Finley was instructed to survey the offerings and have the best works shipped to Washington where Mellon could judge them for himself. By October, twenty-four paintings and twenty sculptures had been installed in a vacant apartment beneath Mellon's on Massachusetts Avenue. After some weeks of pondering the collection in quiet, Mellon commenced negotiations with Duveen, and the purchase was consummated on December 15, 1936.

Three of the newly acquired sculptures could not have been better chosen

for the vast interior spaces that Pope was planning. A fine bronze example of Giovanni Bologna's soaring *Mercury*, now known to be a later cast, would become the focal point of the rotunda, crowning the fountain (fig. 3). Two other life-size bronzes, a Venus and a Bacchus, now known to come from a Renaissance villa near Milan, would become the centerpieces of the west sculpture hall, installed on monumental plinths on the main axis, as visitors find them today. Neither Mellon nor Pope lived to see the propitious effects of introducing sculpture into the Gallery's collection. They died a day apart, Mellon on August 26 and Pope on August 27, 1937 — only weeks after breaking ground on the Gallery.

When the Gallery officially opened on March 17, 1941, visitors were treated to many more sculptures than the twenty-one that Mellon had personally selected for the Gallery during his lifetime. In 1940, the Gallery's trustees acquired two monumental urns in the style of Clodion for the east sculpture hall, as well as a pair of French fountains from the gardens of Versailles for the two garden courts (fig. 4). The remainder of the forty-four sculptures that had joined the Gallery's collection by the opening arrived thanks to Samuel H. Kress, founder of the popular five-and-ten-cent-store chain. Travels to Italy during the 1920s had converted Kress into an impassioned collector of Renaissance art. He housed the collection in his New York apartment on Fifth Avenue, which came to be filled with almost three thousand objects, including old master paintings, Italian and French sculptures, Italian bronzes, as well as important frames, furniture, tapestries, porcelains, and other decorative pieces. By the early 1930s, he was

Fig. 3. After Giovanni Bologna, *Mercury*, c. 1780/c. 1850, bronze, Andrew W. Mellon Collection

contemplating establishing a museum in New York, but Finley was able to convince Kress that the collection was better off in Washington where it would complement Mellon's. He also appealed to Kress's sense of civic duty, reminding him that Mellon had expected other collectors to join him in building the nation's art collection. In 1939 Kress made an initial transfer of 133 works to the Gallery, of which nine were sculptures from the Italian Renaissance.

Although Samuel Kress suffered a debilitating stroke in 1946 and was forced to stop buying, his legacy as a collector continued thanks to his younger brother, Rush, who succeeded him as president of the Samuel H. Kress Foundation. Under Rush Kress's leadership, the foundation reached new heights in collecting. It also widened its focus to represent other schools of art besides Italian. The Samuel H. Kress Foundation would ultimately donate more than 1,900 works of art to the

Fig. 4. Pierre Legros I, *Cherubs Playing with a Lyre*, 1672–1673, lead with traces of gilding, Andrew W. Mellon Collection

Fig. 5. Leon Battista Alberti, *Self-Portrait*, c. 1435, bronze, Samuel H. Kress Collection

Gallery. Of these, more than 1,480 were sculptures, with roughly 85 percent being Renaissance small bronzes, medals, and plaquettes (fig. 5). Rush Kress had purchased them as a group in 1944 from Duveen. They were part of the famed Dreyfus collection of Renaissance sculpture — the same collection that Duveen had offered to Mellon in 1936. Dreyfus, who died in 1914, had assembled one of the preeminent groups of Renaissance bronzes in the world. The Kress collection was given in 1957, and with it the Gallery could boast of Renaissance sculpture holdings of truly international stature.

Between Mellon's death in 1937 and the opening of the Gallery in 1941, his example inspired another dramatic pledge to the nation. Joseph Widener of Philadelphia was the Gallery's third Founding Benefactor. His collection had started with his father, Peter Arrell Brown Widener, whose first forays into picture-buying occurred during the 1880s. Unlike Mellon, Peter A. B. Widener eagerly pursued sculpture and the decorative arts, evidently modeling his acquisitions on such European collections as those of the Rothschilds in London and Paris. His 110-room mansion on the outskirts of Philadelphia, Lynnewood Hall, completed in 1900, demanded an integrated approach to the arts. Along with paintings, he acquired choice examples of eighteenth-century French furniture, amassed a magnificent collection of Chinese porcelains, and seized opportunities to acquire three-dimensional works of the utmost rarity, such as the medieval chalice made for Abbot Suger of Saint-Denis and the Florentine marble *The David of the Casa Martelli*, then attributed to Donatello (fig. 6). His son, Joseph, inherited the collection upon his father's death in 1915 and continued to add to it. He also followed in his father's footsteps by insisting that if the collection went to a museum, it could not be divided. Mellon knew Joseph Widener well and was desperate to secure his paintings for the Gallery. He was reluctant, however, to take the decorative arts, unsure how they would mesh with the paintings. No deal was reached before Mellon died, and Finley and Mellon's son, Paul, were left to determine a way around the impasse. The solution they presented to the trustees was to convert areas of the Gallery's ground floor into dedicated decorative arts spaces. Joseph Widener embraced the idea and even took an active role in shaping the rooms, which were designed to evoke the galleries at Lynnewood Hall.

Legal complications prevented the collection from being in place in time for the Gallery's opening in 1941. Instead, it was packed and shipped to Washington at the end of the following year. Gradually, much of the sculpture and most of the decorative arts were installed on the ground floor, where they combined with the architecture to create an intimate, domestic effect. One of the more distinctive rooms, near the Seventh Street entrance, was decorated to resemble the palatial quarters of a Renaissance prince, complete with a stone fireplace (fig. 7). The walls were hung with tapestries, including the so-called Mazarin Tapestry, named after its seventeenth-century owner, Cardinal Mazarin of France. One of the Wideners' prized possessions, it is widely considered to be among the finest surviving tapestries from the sixteenth century. Renaissance furniture enlivened the display, with superb examples from the Wideners' important collections of Renaissance small bronzes, Italian maiolica, and supremely rare French Saint-Porchaire ware decorating the cabinets and tabletops. Liturgical

Fig. 6. Bernardo Rossellino or Antonio Rossellino, *The David of the Casa Martelli*, c. 1461/1479, marble, Widener Collection

Fig. 7. West Building Ground Floor sculpture gallery

Fig. 9. Auguste Rodin's portrait bust of Katherine Seney Simpson (Mrs. John W. Simpson) with *The Thinker (Le Penseur)* in the background, both gifts of Mrs. John W. Simpson

Fig. 8. French 12th Century, Alexandrian 2nd Century BC, and Alexandrian 1st Century BC, *Chalice of the Abbot Suger of Saint-Denis*, 2nd/1st century BC (cup); 1137–1140 (mounting), sardonyx cup with heavily gilded silver mounting, adorned with filigrees set with stones, pearls, glass insets, and opaque white glass pearls, Widener Collection

items, including the bejeweled sardonyx chalice of Abbot Suger, were featured in a smaller adjacent space known as the Treasury (fig. 8). In the opposite direction, a long gallery was devoted to the Wideners' 173 Chinese porcelains. Eighteenth-century furniture from the Widener Collection, also presented on the ground floor, included a writing table made by the great Jean-Henri Riesener for Marie Antoinette and a table with marquetry paneling made by David Roentgen for Louis XVI. In 1957 Joseph Widener's niece and nephew donated the wall paneling from an eighteenth-century château outside Paris; it was used to create a sumptuous setting for the furniture — the Gallery's only period room. By then — and entirely thanks to the Widener family — the Gallery had become a place where many of the best three-dimensional objects in the permanent collection were not traditional sculptures but works of decorative art.

If the Gallery's collection of European sculpture had stopped with Mellon, Kress, and the Wideners, it would be extraordinarily high in quality but limited in scope, focused on Italy and France and the roughly four hundred years between the Renaissance and the Ancien Régime. Fortunately, other collectors stepped forward to extend the range. One of the first to appear was Katherine (Kate) Seney Simpson, wife of the prominent New York lawyer John W. Simpson. In 1902, while vacationing in Paris, the Simpsons arranged a meeting with Auguste Rodin, then at the height of his fame. They succeeded in convincing Rodin to undertake a portrait bust of Kate Simpson, his first portrait commission by an American (fig. 9). During the two years it took to complete the job, Kate Simpson forged a close friendship with Rodin, writing him regularly and visiting his studio whenever she was in Paris. Her delight with the finished bust was enormous, and she became one of his most important American collectors. Her privileged position with the sculptor ensured that she was offered his choicest works for purchase, including the magnificent cast of *La France* that she acquired in 1906 (fig. 10). Between 1902 and Rodin's death in 1917, she assembled a collection of twenty-eight sculptures by the

Fig. 10. Auguste Rodin, *La France*, 1904, bronze, Gift of Mrs. John W. Simpson

Fig. 11. West Building Ground Floor sculpture gallery with wax and plaster versions of Degas's *Little Dancer Aged Fourteen*

artist in bronze, marble, plaster, and terracotta, along with drawings and prints. Around 1940 she began contemplating where her collection might end up. Her initial sympathies lay with the Metropolitan Museum of Art, to which she decided to give her bust and her other favorite marble, *The Evil Spirits*, in 1942. A week later she withdrew the gift and pledged the whole collection to the Gallery, ensuring that her collection of Rodins remained intact. Her change of heart was a major coup for the Gallery, which reaped one of the very few collections of Rodins anywhere formed during the sculptor's life with his direct involvement. Other collectors have since added to it, and the collection has remained consistent with Simpson's in an important way: the Gallery has limited its collecting of Rodin to works from the artist's lifetime. In that way, the collection is unique among the many repositories of Rodin in America.

Rodin died one hundred years ago this year, as did Edgar Degas, whose place in the Gallery's sculpture collection surpasses even Rodin's for rarity. The Gallery is the most important museum in the world for the study of Degas's sculptures. It is home to the majority of sculptures created by the artist during his lifetime, plus twelve of the bronzes cast posthumously from his sculptures. The unquestioned star of the collection is *Little Dancer Aged Fourteen* (fig. 11), which Degas exhibited in 1881 at the sixth

impressionist exhibition. With her strained expression and taut pose, the wax figure tapped an unprecedented vein of realism that made her a critical sensation. It is also the only sculpture Degas ever submitted for public display. The rest were private studies of bathers, dancers, horses, and riders in action (fig. 12). A group of some 150, including *Little Dancer Aged Fourteen*, stayed with Degas until his death.

Sometime during the 1920s, Degas's heirs decided to have the seventy-four best-preserved examples replicated in bronze casts. These bronzes instantly became cherished collector's items, while the original waxes were long presumed to have been destroyed during the casting process. But in December 1955, M. Knoedler and Company Inc. in New York displayed sixty-nine of these original waxes, a startling surprise. Paul Mellon, who had emerged as a discerning collector in his own right, visited the exhibition and was transfixed by what he saw. Told they were for sale by the widow and daughter of the French foundry owner who had overseen the casting of the posthumous bronzes, Mellon tasked the Gallery's director, John Walker, with ascertaining their authenticity. After Walker reported back that he and his staff could not find any problems with the group, Mellon finalized the purchase of the entire collection on May 25, 1956. He would eventually donate the lifetime sculptures to five museums, with the lion's share going to the Gallery. Seventeen were officially donated in 1985, with the remaining thirty-five coming as a bequest after Mellon's death in 1999. In addition to these works made during Degas's lifetime, including *Little Dancer Aged Fourteen*, Mellon gave ten of the posthumous bronzes in 1985, 1995, and by bequest. Another distinguished collector, Mrs. Lessing J. (Edith G.) Rosenwald, added two more bronzes in 1989.

Fig. 12. Edgar Degas, *Dancer Putting on Her Stocking*, 1890s/1911, pigmented beeswax, metal armature, cork, on wooden base, Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon

An overwhelming majority of the works that form the Gallery's sculpture collection have come as gifts. While acquisitions by purchase represent only a small percentage, their importance should not be underrated. The collection has greatly benefited from the strategic buying on the part of curators over the past several decades, including Clodion's terracotta model for *Poetry and Music*, acquired in 1976, and an influential wax statuette by a follower of Michelangelo, acquired in 1992. One of the most active periods was during the early 2000s, when the Gallery's main endowment for acquisitions, the Patrons' Permanent Fund, was in a fortunate position of financial strength. One of the most exceptional

Fig. 13. South German (Swabian or Franconian) 15th Century, *The Holy Kinship*, c. 1480/1490, polychromed wood, Patrons' Permanent Fund

acquisitions addressed the pressing need to expand the representation of northern European Renaissance sculpture in the collection. In 2002 the Gallery acquired *The Holy Kinship* (fig. 13), an amazingly well-preserved sculpture in painted wood by an unknown sculptor active in southwestern Germany during the late fifteenth century. The Virgin holds the Christ child and is seated with her mother at the center surrounded by relatives, all in brightly colored garments with characterful faces. In the following year, the collection gained its first major work of Spanish sculpture, Francisco Antonio Gijón's gilded wood statue *Saint John of the Cross (San Juan de la Cruz)* (fig. 14). Produced for a convent in Seville in 1675, the life-size figure animates the view down the sculpture hall in the West Building, sited in the central niche on the far western wall. A purchase of extraordinary quality is the ivory statuette *Christ Bound* attributed to François Duquesnoy, a Fleming who worked in Rome during the 1620s and 1630s (fig. 15). Acquired in 2007, the ivory is a marvel of expressive composition and virtuoso carving in miniature, as Christ's twisting body reveals a physical perfection that sets off his tormented expression.

Sculpture acquisitions made by the Gallery between the late 1990s and early 2000s could not have happened without the support of trustee Robert H. Smith, who joined the board in 1985, serving as president between 1993 and 2003. During a collecting career spanning more than four decades, Smith built one of the finest collections of Renaissance bronzes in private hands, which he displayed in his apartment overlooking Reagan National Airport in Virginia. At the time of his death in 2009, the collection totaled eighty works, including masterpieces by Antico (fig. 16), Baccio Bandinelli, Giovanni Bologna, and Barthélemy Prieur. In 2008 he announced his intentions to give the collection to the Gallery. A powerful incentive was the fact that the Gallery boasted new sculpture galleries that were practically tailor-made for his collection. As board president, Smith had made it a priority to rethink how the Gallery displayed its growing collection of sculpture. The most pressing problem was lack of space. With no options on the main floor of the West Building, attention turned to the ground floor, which offered approximately 24,000 square feet of contiguous space in the northwestern corner, much of it used for offices. In 1995 the work of converting those spaces into galleries began.

Fig. 14. Francisco Antonio Gijón, *Saint John of the Cross (San Juan de la Cruz)*, 1675, polychromed and gilded wood with sgraffito decoration (*estofado*), Patrons' Permanent Fund

Fig. 15. Attributed to François Duquesnoy, *Christ Bound*, 1620s, ivory, Patrons' Permanent Fund

Fig. 16. Antico, *Seated Nymph*, probably 1503, bronze with gilding and silvering, Robert H. and Clarice Smith

Fig. 17. West Building Ground Floor sculpture gallery

Particular care was taken to emulate Pope's architectural style, as the new galleries were meant to look as though they had always been part of the original building.

Comprising twenty-two rooms, the renovated galleries that opened in 2002 retain the same layout today. One of the most majestic spaces, a long hall with a working fountain in the center, is adorned with a Florentine Renaissance statue of Venus (fig. 17). A short walk away is another exhilarating space, also long and light-filled. Divided by two pairs of fourteen-foot columns, it houses the collection of Rodins and a group of sculptures by Degas, including *Little Dancer Aged Fourteen*. These orient the visitor toward an adjacent room given over entirely to the Degas waxes. Visitors entering from the opposite end of the galleries, located near the Seventh Street entrance, are drawn into a cabinetlike room devoted to the collection of Renaissance medals and plaquettes. Double-sided cases permit appreciation of both the obverse portraits and the fine reliefs on the reverse of the medals. Renaissance sculptures, including Andrea del Verrocchio's unbaked clay *Putto Poised on a Globe*, occupy the next two rooms, before the long hall with the fountain, which introduces the baroque works, including Gian Lorenzo Bernini's

portrait bust of Monsignor Francesco Barberini (fig. 18) and a holy-water stoup in precious metals by Giovanni Antonio Fornari. A suite of intimate rooms for the eighteenth-century furniture from the Wideners lies behind the long hall, while the route ahead leads back to Degas and Rodin by way of a rare complete set of Honoré Daumier's thirty-six bronze caricature portraits, a gift of Lessing J. Rosenwald in 1943. To navigate the circuit affords a masterfully designed view of the collection in all its breathtaking extent, with more than nine hundred works of sculpture and decorative arts from the Middle Ages through the twenty-first century.

Fig. 18. Gian Lorenzo Bernini, *Monsignor Francesco Barberini*, c. 1623, marble, Samuel H. Kress Collection

The Gallery devoted more square footage on the ground floor of the West Building to sculpture and decorative arts a decade later. In 2010 George M. and Linda H. Kaufman of Norfolk, Virginia, promised their collection of early American furniture to the Gallery. Built with great discernment over more than fifty years, their collection is one of the largest and finest in private hands. In 2012 a selection of more than a hundred pieces went on view at the Gallery in an installation on the ground floor (fig. 19), complemented by outstanding examples of paintings from the Gallery's collection, including portraits by Gilbert Stuart. The rooms used for the installation are contiguous with the sculpture galleries, on the main east-west axis of the West Building.

Fig. 19. West Building Ground Floor gallery showcasing the Kaufman collection

The decision to accept the Kaufman gift was made with an awareness that it represented a completely new collecting area for the Gallery — early American furniture — but one that made good sense given that it paralleled the excellent collections of European decorative arts that had come from the Wideners. Celebrating American craftsmanship at the highest level, the collection teaches the extraordinary diversity in styles that existed between the principal centers of production, including Boston, Newport, and Philadelphia, between the early 1700s and the early 1800s.

At the time of the Kaufman gift, the Gallery owned few works of American sculpture, creating a strange imbalance within the collection. (The great plaster relief for the Shaw Memorial by Augustus Saint-Gaudens, on loan from the Saint-Gaudens National Historical Site since 1997, actually does not belong to the Gallery.) The situation

changed markedly in 2014 with the historic acquisition of more than 6,000 works from the Corcoran Gallery of Art, including 227 works of American sculpture from the Revolutionary War through the twentieth century. The unquestioned star and arguably the most important work of American sculpture from the nineteenth century, *The Greek Slave* by Hiram Powers (fig. 20), now occupies a gallery on the Ground Floor, beckoning visitors from the Seventh Street entrance with her demure gaze. As the first life-size, publicly exhibited American sculpture depicting a female nude, *The Greek Slave* attracted unprecedented attention at its unveiling in the United States in 1847, following a successful exhibition in Europe. Powers, a native of Cincinnati who worked in Italy, had produced a first version in 1844. He followed it with five more life-size versions, each slightly different. William Wilson Corcoran acquired the first of those, which became a centerpiece of the Corcoran Gallery of Art.

Sculpture held a special place for William Corcoran, who made a point of collecting works by contemporary masters, both Americans as well as Europeans. The French sculptor he most admired was Antoine-Louis Barye, best known for his small bronzes of animals. Corcoran succeeded in acquiring a nearly complete set of Barye's animals and historical and mythological subjects, almost one hundred bronzes in total; he was one of only two individuals to do so. (The other was William Walters, founder of the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore.) Efforts are now under way to create a special gallery dedicated to a selection of the works by Barye, with the first of several cases

Fig. 20. Hiram Powers, *The Greek Slave*, model 1841–1843, carved 1846, Serravezza marble, Corcoran Collection (Gift of William Wilson Corcoran)

Fig. 21. West Building Ground Floor gallery devoted to sculptures by Antoine-Louis Barye

already completed (fig. 21). One by one, other masterpieces from the Corcoran are being installed, such as the marble bust known as *The Veiled Nun* by an anonymous nineteenth-century Italian sculptor and Saint-Gaudens's *Amor Caritas*.

With the acquisitions from the Corcoran, there is now an opportunity to create a denser, more comprehensive installation that will tell the history of American sculpture in greater depth. One of the most enviable challenges in the coming months will be reimagining the room on the ground floor that has been the customary home of Thomas Crawford's *David Triumphant* and Randolph Rogers's *Nydia, the Blind Girl of Pompeii*. Among the additions being contemplated are Crawford's *Peri at the Gates of Paradise*, Powers's *Diana*, and William Henry Rinehart's *Penserosa*. The Gallery has also become the new home for many treasures of decorative arts from the Corcoran, including superb examples of Italian maiolica assembled by Senator William A. Clark, some now on display on the ground floor with works from the Wideners. More are slated to go on view on the main floor.

Besides curating the ever-evolving permanent collection, the Gallery also drives appreciation for sculpture and decorative arts through an ambitious program of international loan exhibitions, part of a long tradition dating back to the first major exhibition of early modern sculpture undertaken by the Gallery, *Rodin Rediscovered*, which opened in 1981 (fig. 22). Featuring more than three hundred bronzes, marbles, plasters, drawings, and photographs, the exhibition was installed throughout the East Building and provided an intimate view of Rodin's astonishing creative powers. Since then, the Gallery has developed a sterling reputation for organizing exhibitions that cast a spotlight on underappreciated sculptors represented in the collection, such as Tilman Riemenschneider in 1999, Jean-Antoine Houdon in 2003, and Desiderio da Settignano in 2007. The current exhibition continues that practice, celebrating the brightly colored ceramic sculptures of Luca della Robbia and his family workshop. Running through June 4, 2017, *Della Robbia: Sculpting with Color in Renaissance Florence* draws chiefly from American collections but also presents several outstanding international loans, including Luca's masterpiece *The Visitation*, which has never left Italy before now (fig. 23). Like every sculpture exhibition at the Gallery, this one is designed to heighten appreciation for the permanent collection, a collection that Andrew Mellon may have founded but whose phenomenal growth would surely have left him amazed. •

Fig. 22. The *Rodin Rediscovered* exhibition at the Gallery in 1981

Fig. 23. The *Della Robbia: Sculpting with Color in Renaissance Florence* exhibition, including *The Visitation*, at the Gallery in 2017

Opportunities for Giving

The National Gallery of Art relies on a partnership of public support and private philanthropy to fulfill its mission to exhibit, preserve, and enhance through acquisition our nation's art collections. Opportunities abound to support the Gallery's efforts at various levels, and we welcome your involvement, now or in the future. You may lend your support to a variety of projects in art acquisition and conservation, scholarly and scientific research, exhibitions, educational outreach programs, and the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts. The following initiatives also offer avenues for participation.

Fund for Art Acquisition

Because the Gallery relies solely on private gifts to acquire works of art, a secure source of art acquisition funds has been established to sustain the growth and quality of the nation's collections in the future. For more information about how you can support the Fund for Art Acquisition, please call the Development Office at (202) 842-6372.

Fund for the International Exchange of Art

The Fund for the International Exchange of Art plays a critical role in furthering the Gallery's mission as America's cultural ambassador to the world by supporting international exhibitions and exchange projects. Frequent international exhibitions share great works of art among nations, and many other programs find an international audience, such as publications, symposia for scholars, fellowships, and educational resources. By participating in the Fund for the International Exchange of Art, individuals, foundations, and corporations help the Gallery meet these goals.

Planned Gifts and Charitable Annuities

By making a donation to the National Gallery of Art through a bequest of cash or property, gift of art, trust arrangement, charitable gift annuity (CGA), or other estate plan provision, you can help provide for the Gallery's future while meeting your current financial goals. For example, a CGA, which provides you guaranteed, fixed payments for life, can offer additional benefits such as increased income over traditional investments, capital gains tax avoidance, investment diversification, a generous income tax deduction, and the opportunity to designate your gift to support a specific Gallery program. Friends who make a planned gift will be invited to become a member of The Legacy Circle. For more information about The Legacy Circle, a personal illustration of a charitable gift annuity, or other options for including the Gallery in your estate plan, please contact the Gallery's Office of Planned Giving at (202) 842-6372 or email *plannedgiving@nga.gov*.

The Exhibition Circle of the National Gallery of Art

Members of The Exhibition Circle provide the Gallery with a crucial source of spendable funds for its exhibition program with annual gifts of $20,000 and above. Each year, revenue from The Exhibition Circle is allocated to support special exhibitions at the Gallery. Members of The Exhibition Circle enjoy a variety of privileges, including special invitations to openings for exhibitions sponsored by The Exhibition Circle and recognition in select exhibition catalogs. For more information about joining The Exhibition Circle, please contact the Circle office at (202) 842-6450, email *circle@nga.gov*, or refer to the enclosed reply card.

The Circle of the National Gallery of Art

Circle members play a substantive role in the life of the Gallery, as their annual gifts of $1,000, $2,500, $5,000, $10,000, and above provide a much-needed source of unrestricted funds for a broad spectrum of activities. The benefits of membership include invitations to curatorial and other events, special exhibition previews, and much more. For more information about joining The Circle, please contact the Circle office at (202) 842-6450, email *circle@nga.gov*, or refer to the enclosed reply card.

The Tower Project

The Tower Project provides support for the *In the Tower* series of modern and contemporary exhibitions in the East Building. Through an annual gift of $2,500, Tower Project members will be invited to opening events for exhibitions sponsored by The Tower Project. Members will be recognized in related exhibition materials and invited to take part in special curatorial lectures, tours, and receptions. Additionally, Tower Project members are entitled to all Contributing-level Circle benefits. Should you wish to join or have any questions, please contact the Circle office at (202) 842-6450 or email *towerproject@nga.gov*.

Patrons' Permanent Fund

The Patrons' Permanent Fund (PPF), an endowment for art acquisition, is a vital resource in building an art collection of the highest caliber. More than 3,400 works of art have been acquired through the PPF, including paintings, drawings, sculptures, prints, photographs, and other media. For more information about making a gift to the PPF, please call the Development Office at (202) 842-6372.

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Challenge Grant

Last year, to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the National Gallery of Art, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation awarded the Gallery a historic challenge grant. We are indeed grateful for this opportunity to strengthen the Gallery's work in several crucial areas—digital engagement, conservation, scholarship, and educational programming. We hope you will join this endeavor by making a gift of your own. Your contribution supporting the Gallery's endowment will be matched by the Mellon Foundation. For further information, please call (202) 842-6372, visit us online at *nga.gov/support*, or write to the Development Office at 2000B South Club Drive, Landover, MD 20785.

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