Michelangelo’s Crucifix for Vittoria Colonna

by Michael Riddick
Of interest is a previously unpublished and outstanding bronze version of a crucifix whose model is attributed to Michelangelo Buonarroti (Cover, Frontispiece, Figs. 01-02, 18-19). The crucifix is the finest of all identified casts and its quality suggests it was prepared using the original wax model.¹

The attribution of the present crucifix to Michelangelo was first proposed by Manuel Gomez-Moreno who studied casts of the model identified throughout Spain.² The attribution was subsequently followed by John Goldsmith-Phillips,³ Charles de Tolnay⁴ and acknowledged by Paul Joannides.⁵

Christ’s face is reposed, as though in a slumber imbued by the attendance of the divine while the subtlety of his emaciated form is balletic, suspended in sacrificial glory.

The distinctive feature of Christ’s proper left leg, crossing over his right, has few precedents in sculpted Italian Renaissance crucifixes. The feature may have been stimulated by sources like the 14th century crucifix at the Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament at the Basilica of Saint Paul Outside the Walls in southern Rome where St. Bridget is reputed to have experienced the visionary manifestation of Christ or via an avant-garde écorché depiction of Christ crucified in Berengario da Carpi’s influential anatomical Commentaria first published in 1521.⁶ Alternatively, the feature may be an allusion to Michelangelo’s model of a crucified figure (Fig. 34, left), ca. 1520, employed as an effigy of Christ in a sketch of the Crucifixion at the British Museum.⁷

The feature of an uncovered Christ is especially bold and infers the influence or personal touch of the master, following the theme of his nude Risen Christ in marble, completed in 1521.

Four documented crucifixes are ascribed to Michelangelo. His most celebrated crucifix is the large wooden one he made in 1492 for the Church of Santa Maria del Santo Spirito in Florence as a gift for the Prior, probably Giovanni di Lap...
Fig. 01: Obverse of a bronze crucifix, after a model attributed to Michelangelo, ca. 1538-41, private collection (photo: © GCF)
Fig. 02: Reverse of a bronze crucifix, after a model attributed to Michelangelo, ca. 1538-41, private collection (photo: © GCF)
Bicchiellini, who allowed him to study the anatomy of corpses at the hospital there. Much later, in 1562, Michelangelo wrote two letters to his nephew, Lionardo, indicating his intention to carve a wooden crucifix for him. In 1563, a letter between Lionardo and the sculptor Tiberio Calcagni, mentions this same crucifix. That Michelangelo was working on small crucifixes during the last years of his life is evident in the small unfinished wooden crucifix at the Casa Buonarroti, considered one of his last known sculptural works (Fig. 03). Michelangelo’s contemporary biographer, Giorgio Vasari, additionally cites that Michelangelo made a small crucifix as a gift for his friend, Menighella.

Surviving sketches indicate Michelangelo’s study of the Crucifixion throughout his career, most notably during the end-of-his-life but also during the 1530s-40s as he deepened his spiritual interests. The occasional cameo of crucified Christ’s throughout his sketched oeuvre have made it challenging for scholars to link such sketches to any documented commissions. However, in consideration that all documented examples of his crucifixes were made as personal gifts, it is less likely they should be linked to a commission.

Nonetheless, a few theories concerning the impetus for Michelangelo’s sketches of Christ crucified have been proposed and may regard the origin of the present sculpture. It has been suggested that the present crucifix could have its origin with Michelangelo’s work at the Medici Chapel, whose New Sacristy he was awarded exclusive artistic governance over. It’s smaller details, like a possible altar cross, could have fallen under...
his responsibility. Others have noted the possibility of an unrealized large marble Crucifixion group whose marble blocks had been measured for quarrying according to a sheet preserved at the Casa Buonarroti.

A unique suggestion is that Michelangelo could have made the crucifix as a gift for his beloved friend, Vittoria Colonna, of whom he was exceedingly fond and with whom he exchanged gifts along with mutual spiritual proclivities. In particular, they shared controversial perspectives on salvation fueled by the influence of the spirituali, a sect of reformers inspired by evangelicals like Juan de Valdés, Bernardino Ochino and the anonymously published Beneficio di Cristo. The bloodless and serene, frontally oriented Christ with extended arms, addresses the viewer directly, inviting contemplation and demanding attention to the mystery of reconciliation elucidated by the spirituali.

Michelangelo and Colonna also engaged orthodox stimuli via the theologian Ambrogio Catarino Politi under whose auspices Colonna was assigned between 1538-41, and whose lectures they attended together and independently at the Roman convent of the Poor Clares at San Silvestro a Capite.

Earlier, in December 1536, Pope Paul III had authorized Colonna’s creation of a convent to be established for nuns along Monte Cavallo, on property owned by her family, not far from San Silvestro, of which Michelangelo volunteered ideas for its design. In this regard, Colonna may have served as a patron to Michelangelo, commissioning works-of-art for the anticipated convent, possibly inclusive of a devotional crucifix.

Of this period, two sketches can be visually linked to the bronze crucifix. Tolnay relates it to a sketch of Christ Crucified at the Teylers Museum of which Joannides comments on its quality being suggestive of preparations for a sculpted work (Fig. 04). Hugo Chapman noted the sketch was emphatic of Michelangelo’s tertiary interest in smaller-scale religious works while occupied with the Last Judgment fresco.
In particular, Joannides related the crucified figure on the sheet’s verso (Fig. 04) to a cruder cast of the bronze crucifix at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (see Appendix B, no. 21). The sketch is obscured by architectural studies but when graphically subdued and superimposed atop the present sculpture a relationship is apparent (Fig. 05).

Further comparable is the sketch of a crucified Christ on the verso of a draft poem Michelangelo prepared for Colonna (Fig.06). The sketch may likewise follow a sculpted model and features Christ’s proper left leg uniquely crossing over the right, while depicting an analogous emaciated, sunken abdomen that echoes the present sculpture.

The relationship between the crucifix and these sketches theoretically positions it during the period in which Michelangelo cultivated a friendship and possible patronage with Colonna. The letters and poetry shared between them, ca. 1538-41, may also cite the sculpture, as discussed in Appendix A. Additionally, Benedetto Varchi, commenting exclusively about the sculptural accomplishments of Michelangelo, mentions a nude, presumably sculpted, Christ he gave to Colonna.

The earliest firm date that can be given to the crucifix is 1574 where it appears integrated in an edited and crude form on a Crucifixion panel serving as the bronze tabernacle door to a ciborium now located at the Church of San Lorenzo in Padula (see Appendix B, no. 20). Etched in wax residue on the back of the panel is the date: 27 January 1574, recording the date of its completion and indicating a model or cast of the crucifix was available by late 1573.

The bronze tabernacle in Padula was completed by Michelangelo’s assistant, Jacopo del Duca and may have its origins in Michelangelo’s uncompleted tabernacle for the Basilica of St. Mary of the Angels in Rome. The stimulus for the Padula tabernacle’s Crucifixion panel could begin with a series of late Crucifixion sketches by Michelangelo depicting Christ crucified and flanked by two mourners.
Fig. 05: Author’s composite of a bronze crucifix, after a model attributed to Michelangelo, superimposed atop a study for a Crucifixion by Michelangelo, ca. 1530-45, Teylers Museum, Haarlem
Although this group of sketches are frequently considered private spiritual exercises executed by the master, they may alternatively represent preparatory designs for relief panels intended for the Basilica of St. Mary’s tabernacle. Vasari documents that the project was to be designed by Michelangelo and cast by his assistant, Jacopo. Michelangelo died before the commission was complete, although on 15 March 1565, Jacopo wrote to Michelangelo’s nephew, Lionardo, stating: “I have started making the bronze tabernacle, depending on the model of his that was in Rome, already almost half complete.”

Various circumstances interrupted the completion of the tabernacle, although its concept is later revitalized by Jacopo during preparations to sell a tabernacle, after Michelangelo’s designs, to Spain for Madrid’s El Escorial almost a decade later. The Escorial tabernacle likewise encountered problems and was aborted. However, Jacopo successfully sold it shortly thereafter to the Carthusians of Padula, completing the work in apparent haste or under a constrained budget.

Apart from his own admission in letters to Spain, Jacopo relied upon his deceased master’s designs for the tabernacle’s relief panels. As an assistant inheriting Michelangelo’s commissions, it is reasonable Jacopo could have had access to a crucifix model conceived by the master, employing it in the sculpted relief-work of the tabernacle.
However, Jacopo’s use of the model introduces several modifications. Christ’s head is lowered, his legs are drawn upward, a perizonium is added to cover his nudity and Christ’s arms are extended upward to fit his figure within the panel’s margins (see Appendix B, nos. 18, 20 and Fig. 33).41

Another early reference to the crucifix is Francisco Pacheco’s citation of it in his book, Arte de la Pintura, completed in 1638 and published posthumously in 1649.42 Pacheco records that a bronze crucifix by Michelangelo was brought to Seville from Rome by the silversmith Juan Bautista Franconio in 1597, thirty-three years after Michelangelo’s death.43 44 Pacheco further documents that on 17 January 1600 he painted a bronze aftercast of the sculpture made by Juan Bautista.45 46

Javier Moya Morales notes the linguistic tense used by Pacheco indicates he painted more than one bronze crucifix, suggesting that several first-generation casts were made after the example Juan Bautista brought from Rome.47 Two identified casts are indicative of this record, one in a private collection and another located at the Grand Ducal Palace of Gandia in Spain. An additional polychrome cast in silver at Cuenca Cathedral also belongs to this group of casts made by Juan Bautista and painted by Pacheco (see Appendix B, nos. 1-3).48

Pacheco cites how he used an example of the polychrome crucifix as a model for his

Fig. 07: Detail of Christ on the Cross by Francisco Pacheco, ca. 1614-15, Gomez-Moreno Museum (left; photo © Fundacion Rodriguez-Acosta); detail of a bronze crucifix after a model by Michelangelo, cast by Juan Bautista Franconio, ca. 1597-1600, painted by Francisco Pacheco, ca. 1600, private collection (right; photo: Armando Pastorino)
1614-15 painting of *Christ on the Cross* (Fig. 28).\(^{49}\) The painted tones, perizonium and location of blood correspond with these polychromed crucifixes (Fig. 07).\(^{50}\) Pacheco’s pupil and son-in-law, Diego Velazquez, also later reproduces an example of one of these crucifixes in his two portraits of the monastic, Jeronima, in 1620 (Fig. 08).\(^{51}\)

The use of the crucifix by Michelangelo’s assistant in 1573-74 and the arrival of the model in Seville in 1597, there described as a work by Michelangelo, indicate a cautious yet conceivable suggestion of authorship by the master.

Speculation concerning Juan Bautista’s enigmatic activity in Rome may provide a link in further understanding the history of the crucifix. Judging by his namesake, Juan Bautista Francoanzio was probably a Nuremberg silversmith who traveled to Rome for training or employment like others of his trade.\(^{52}\) Given the climate of Rome’s goldsmith scene during the 1590’s Juan Bautista may have become connected with the prolific workshop of Sebastiano Torrigiani. Torrigiani had inherited his workshop from a previous master, Guglielmo della Porta, marrying his master’s widow and adopting their son.\(^{53}\) Guglielmo’s workshop was known to hire foreigners and journeymen and it’s probable Torrigiani maintained this practice.\(^{54}\)
Fig. 09: Details of a bronze crucifix after a model attributed to Michelangelo, ca. 1538-41, private collection (left, right; photo: © GCF); an anatomical study attributed to Michelangelo, Royal Collection Trust (center; © HM Queen Elizabeth II)
It is during Juan Bautista’s time spent in Rome that he likely gained expertise in the serial making of crucifixes under employ of a workshop already responsible for their production, as Torrigiani and Guglielmo were both specialists in their manufacture.55 When Torrigiani died in September 1596, Juan Bautista, if under his employ, may have decided to leave Rome and seek new work in Spain where Torrigiani’s workshop already maintained traditional patronage, as his predecessor, Guglielmo, realized several of his earliest commissions in Seville.56

If Juan Bautista served in Torrigiani’s workshop and came into possession of a mould or model of the crucifix after Torrigiani’s death, it could be presumed Torrigiani earlier acquired the model from a patron or friend57 or possibly inherited it from the estate of his master: Guglielmo della Porta.

Although no known documentary evidence confirms the theory, there is reason to consider Guglielmo della Porta, a friend of Michelangelo’s,58 may have had possible access to the model of the crucifix or may have been asked to cast the crucifix at Michelangelo’s request.

Although infrequent, Michelangelo did prepare small and highly finished wax models for translation into bronze for patrons.59 Victoria Avery suggests these requests would have been made by patrons desiring Michelangelo’s workmanship while recognizing constraints on his time, thus involving only his hand in the modeling process while outsourcing the casting-and-finishing of such works to foundrymen.60

One example is the small bronze dagger Piero Aldobrandini commissioned from Michelangelo in 1506, whose casting was outsourced to an unidentified armourer in Bologna.61 More notable are the finished wax models of a salt cellar, to be cast in silver, and a horse statuette, to be cast in bronze for Francesco Maria della Rovere, Duke of Urbino in 1537,62 completed while Michelangelo was occupied with the Last Judgment fresco for Pope Clement VII.

Michelangelo outsourced the casting of the bronze horse to an unidentified founder and had it delivered to Francesco in mid-October 1537. Although Francesco was pleased by the model, he was disappointed with the cast and requested the original model from Michelangelo in order to have it cast by a more capable foundryman.63

Guglielmo della Porta learned of this failed attempt and offered to make a successful cast of the horse but was informed Michelangelo had abandoned the project.64 This exchange suggests Michelangelo may have kept Guglielmo in-mind for a subsequent casting project, such as the present crucifix, whose undertaking would have been realized soon thereafter in 1538-41. Michelangelo’s willingness to execute small models in wax, in spite of his commitments to the Last Judgment fresco, also indicates the possibility he could have realized a small crucifix model for Colonna during this period.

Although the aforenoted data suggests possibilities for Michelangelo’s impetus in making the crucifix, a probable willingness to do so, and an ability to manage details concerning its casting; there is further stylistic evidence that may lend credence to Michelangelo’s authorship of the original model.

The attention to anatomical detail on the crucifix is exceptional, reflective of Michelangelo’s interest in classical perfection. An anatomical sketch by Michelangelo, probably belonging to a series of écorché studies, is considered a preparatory work for a sculpture in wax or clay.65 The tight pectorals, swelling serratus anterior along the upper portion of the rib cage, descending into the intercostal muscles, is comparable between the crucifix and sketch (Fig. 09). Likewise, the depressed posterior superior iliac spines and rounded gluteus maximus are equally commensurate and follow also with his marble David (Fig. 10).

Another écorché study with annotations, believed related to an unrealized publication on anatomy,66 shares a closer affinity with the crucifix (Fig.11). The relationship could
Michelangelo’s Crucifix for Vittoria Colonna

Fig. 10: Detail of a bronze crucifix after a model attributed to Michelangelo, ca. 1538-41, private collection (left photo: © GCF); detail of David by Michelangelo, ca. 1501-04, Galleria dell’Accademia, Florence

Fig. 11: Detail of a bronze crucifix after a model attributed to Michelangelo, ca. 1538-41, private collection (left photo: © GCF); an anatomical study by Michelangelo, Teylers Museum, Haarlem (right)
Michelangelo’s Crucifix for Vittoria Colonna

Fig. 12: Detail of Michelangelo’s Florentine Pietà, ca. 1547-53, Museo dell’Opera del Duomo (left); detail of a bronze crucifix after a model attributed to Michelangelo, ca. 1538-41, private collection (center; photo: © GCF); detail of a Pietà sketch by Michelangelo, ca. 1530-36, Albertina Museum (right)

Fig. 13: Detail of Bacchus by Michelangelo, ca. 1496-97, Museo Nazionale del Bargello (left); detail of a bronze crucifix after a model attributed to Michelangelo, ca. 1538-41, private collection (center; photo: © GCF); detail of David by Michelangelo, ca. 1501-04, Galleria dell’Accademia, Florence
suggest Michelangelo referenced these diagrams while preparing its model, possibly considering his studies of a corpse would assist in realizing a convincingly realistic effigy of Christ deceased. The position of Christ’s corpse against a cross is not unlike that of a corpse lying on a dissecting table and Michelangelo’s reference thereof may have been in-keeping with ideas of martyrdom surrounding the practice of dissection in Italian Renaissance culture. The sheet’s recto displays a skeletal and sinewy group of arms and hands whose veins likewise relate to those subtly modeled on the pierced hands and forearms of the crucifix.

Other idiosyncratic features of the crucifix may suggest Michelangelo’s possible authorship. For example, Christ’s sunken abdomen, subtly defined linea alba, recessed umbilicus and navel—featuring a distinct upper hood of skin—is comparable to his Florentine marble Pietà and a sketch of the Pietà at the Albertina Museum (Fig. 12). The characteristic portrayal of nipples, articulated upon slightly elevated, perfectly round, areolas is also distinct (Fig. 13).

The hands and feet of the crucifix exemplify a remarkable level of detail despite their small scale. The lines of the palms are delicately expressed in bronze, translated from the wax original. Christ’s relaxed fingers imply an expressive peace recalling his marble Pietà at St. Peter’s Basilica (Fig. 14). The wide and deeply set nail beds are superficially synonymous with Michelangelo’s workmanship while the toes of Christ’s feet feature an extended
index toe of classical Roman import, not unique to all of Michelangelo’s works, but a trait regularly reproduced by him. The protruding outer little toe mound and subtly concave dip along the upper knuckle of the big toe, however, follow Michelangelo’s other portrayals of feet.

The modeling of Christ’s hair, flowing down his back in luxuriant, voluminous spirals and terminating in thickly modeled curls, recall those characterized on his all ‘antica Cupid and marble Bacchus (Fig. 15).

The peaceful demeanor of Christ’s face compares with Michelangelo’s unfinished Dying Slave for the Tomb of Julius II and his marble Christ of the Pietà at St. Peter’s (Fig. 16). Similar to the latter is the feature of a dimple on the upper lip of Christ and the bridge-of-the-nose which descends narrowly while widening slightly at the upper cartilage, a frequent characteristic of Michelangelo’s sculpture.

Christ’s moderately pursed brow and sunken periorbitalis beneath-the-eyes subtly evoke his marble Moses for the Tomb of Pope Julius II and the distinctly defined eyelids and delineation of the lacrimal caruncle are representative of Michelangelo’s marble statuary throughout his career.

A work bearing such richness of anatomy and eloquence of expression stands unique among the innumerable crucifixes made by Italian Renaissance sculptors both obscure and celebrated and may represent a scarce vestige of Michelangelo’s projects in bronze.69

While the attribution of a model to Michelangelo may invite criticism, we anticipate the observations presented herein will bring new insight and attention to a much overlooked, yet remarkably magnificent bronze devotional crucifix of the Renaissance.
Fig. 15: Detail of a silver crucifix after a model attributed to Michelangelo, cast ca. 1600 by Juan Bautista Franconio (left; photo © Fundacion Rodriguez-Acosta); detail of Michelangelo’s Cupid, 1496, Metropolitan Museum of Art (right)

Fig. 16: Detail of a bronze crucifix after a model attributed to Michelangelo, ca. 1538-41, private collection (left; photo © GCF); detail of Michelangelo’s Pietà, ca. 1498-99, St. Peter’s Basilica, Vatican City (right)
Endnotes

1 See Appendix B where this cast is discussed as the ‘prototype.’

2 Don Manuel Gomez-Moreno (1930): Obras de Miguel Angel en España. Archivo Español de Arte y Arqueología, pp. 189-98 and M. Gomez-Moreno (1933): El Crucifijo de Miguel Angel. Archivo Español de Arte y Arqueología, pp. 81-84. It is worth noting the MET cast (Appendix B, no. 21) was earlier reproduced in the sale of Stefano Bardini’s collection, where Bardini had ascribed the crucifix to Zaccaria da Volterra, perhaps confusing him with Michelangelo’s friend and pupil, Daniele da Volterra, a specialist in bronze. Bardini associated the crucifix with Michelangelo, suggesting Volterra had modeled it after Michelangelo’s drawings. See Deluxe illustrated catalogue of the treasures and antiquities illustrating the golden age of Italian art, belonging to the famous expert and antiquarian, Signor Stefano Bardini, of Florence, Italy. American Art Association, NY, 1918, no. 108.


6 Berengario da Carpi (1521): Commentaria super Anatomia Mundini. Impressum per Hieronymum de Benedictis, Bologna, fol. 519v.

7 Michael Riddick (2020): The Thief of Michelangelo – Models Preserved in Bronze and Terracotta. Renbronz.com (accessed December 2020). See Figure 5.


11 Vasari also notes how Michelangelo was humored by Menighella’s peddling of this crucifix via cartepesta reproductions: “Michelagnolo, che era difficile a lavorare per i re, si metteva gia lassando stare ogni lavoro, e gli faceva disegni semplici accomodati alla maniera e volonta come diceva Menighella: e fra l’altre, gli fece fare un modello d’un Crocifisso, che era bellissimo, sopra il quale vi fece un cavato, e ne formava di cartone e d’altre mesture, ed in contado gli andava vendendo, che Michelagnolo crepava delle risa.” Giorgio Vasari (1550/68): Le vite de’ più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architettori. Con nuove annotazioni e commenti di Gaetano Milanesi (1878-85). Firenze, vol. 7, p. 282.


14 See Johannes Wilde (1953): Italian Drawings in the British Museum, Michelangelo and his Studio. London, no. 68, p. 107. For the sketch of the marble blocks for a Crucifixion project see Archivio Buonarroti, Corpus 486.

15 Of Vittoria Colonna, Ascanio Condivi comments: “More particularly he loved greatly the Marchedness of Pesca, of whose divine spirit he was enamored, being in return loved tenderly by her.” Ascanio Condivi (1553): The Life of Michelangelo in Michelangelo Buonarroti by Charles Holroyd, Keeper of British Art, with translations of the life of the master by his scholar, Ascanio Condivi, and three dialogues from the Portuguese by Francisco d’Ollanda. Duckworth & Co., London (1903), p. 85.

16 This idea was first proposed by Gomez-Moreno. See M. Gomez-Moreno (1930): op. cit. (note 2).


23 Teylers Museum, Inv. A034.


27 Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. lat.3211 Cr. This sketch may visibly relate to another similar study at the Ashmolean Museum: Inv WA1846.87. Tolnay also relates a faint sketch on Vat.lat.3211 XCVv to a crucifix project. See C. Tolnay (1975-80): op. cit. (note 13), p. 423.

28 In the eulogy he prepared and orated at Michelangelo’s funeral, Benedetto Varchi, having already discussed the drawings Michelangelo made for Colonna, commented: “In Rome, in Minerva is a naked Christ (Michelangelo’s marble Risen Christ-ed.), and there is also another nude Christ, unlike the other, he gave to the most divine Marchesa of Pescara (Vittoria Colonna-ed.).” Translation by Michelle Tarnopolsky (University of Toronto) from contemporary text. Benedetto Varchi (1564): Orazione funerale di Messer Benedetto Varchi fatta, e recitata da lui pubblicamente nell’essequie di Michelangelo Buonarroti in Firenze nella Chiesa di San Lorenzo, Florence, p. 29. Original text: “In Roma, nella Minerva è un Cristo nudo; e un’altro Cristo pure ignudo, ma in altra maniera deg’Altri donò egli alla divinissima Marchesa di Pescara.” The interpretation of this text is somewhat confounding as Michelangelo produced two Risen Christ’s in marble, the first was abandoned due to a problem with the marble block, ca. 1515, and later acquired in 1522 by Matello Vari, and therefore could not have been a work given to Vittoria Colonna. It would be unique for Varchi to have referenced a painting or drawing for Colonna while discussing Michelangelo’s sculpture since he already discusses the drawings Michelangelo made for Colonna earlier in his eulogy (Varchi, p. 17) and if so, it would be the only instance in his discussion of Michelangelo’s sculpture that a drawing or painting is referenced. Therefore it could be suggested the sculpture of a nude Christ for Colonna, to which Varchi refers, may reference the crucifix here discussed.


31 See British Museum Inv. 1895.0915.510; Ashmolean Museum Inv. 1846.89, KP II 343 recto; Windsor Castle RCIN 912761 recto; and Louvre Inv. 700.


33 Hugo Chapman entertained the possibility these may have been intended for an unidentified relief sculpture. H. Chapman (2005): op. cit. (note 12), p. 278.


35 The letter was sent 15 March 1565: “Et perche non posso ne voglio restare de andar scoprando le cose marravigliose de Missere, me son posto a fare il tabernaclo de mitallo, perche non posso ne voglio restare de andar quasi meza.” Carteggio Indiretto (note 9), pp. 229-30, no. 384. See also J. Montagu (1996): op. cit. (note 34), pp. 24-28, and appendix A.


38 The Padula tabernacle’s final state is a mixed product of the original design intended for Spain’s El Escorial, recycling various parts that had already been cast and adding newly cast but unfinished elements for its sale to Padula’s Carthusians, explaining its unusually discordant quality, particularly as concerns the crudeness of the relief panels which were made later (by January 1574) and may not have been cold-worked due to cost limitations for the labor involved. An etched date, 30 May 1572, along the more highly finished base of the Padula tabernacle, indicates its framework was cast earlier and a 1573 summary of the tabernacle also describes the original format for the door and relief panels, intended to be square. Last-minute decisions to heighten the panels were made during Jacopo’s negotiations to sell the tabernacle to King Phillip II of Spain. Shortly thereafter the commission was aborted. See P. Malgouyres (2011): op. cit. (note 37).


40 A panel of the Deposition also follows after Michelangelo’s late sketches and is likewise known by examples thought to be modifications by Jacopo based upon Michelangelo’s initial sculptural conception. See P. Malgouyres (2011): op. cit. (note 37). See also Louvre Inv. TH35.

41 The edits made on the crucifix model used by Jacopo for the Padula tabernacle Crucifixion panel is previously discussed by the present author. See M. Riddick (2020): op. cit. (note 7), see figure 11.

42 While Francisco Pacheco’s manuscript for Arte de la Pintura was complete by 1638, the effort was a life-time project first
May it please God in His mercy to exile the Artists of Spain. Vol 2
William Stirling-Maxwell (1848): Worthy of mention in Andalusia during Juan Bautista was the only goldsmith silversmiths as still active in Seville in Sevilla, Simon Faxardo, p. 611.

Juan Bautista Franconio is noted in Juan Riaño’s census of Spanish gold and silversmiths as still active in Seville in 1630. See Juan Facundo Riaño (1879): The Industrial Arts in Spain. London. Sir William Stirling-Maxwell also noted that Juan Bautista was the only goldsmith worthy of mention in Andalusia during the reign of Philip IV (1604-65). See Sir William Stirling-Maxwell (1848): Annals of the Artists of Spain. Vol 2, p. 948.

"May it please God in His mercy to exile from the world the vulgar enamellers, and in the supreme cause of truth, harmony and enlightenment to establish for flesh-painting the use of the 'matte' coloring which approaches nearer to nature, lends itself to numerous retouches, and so permits the production of that delicacy which today we so much admire...I was among the first in Spain to revive the practice of it which gives new importance and vitality to good sculpture; and if not the first in Spain, then at least the first in Seville to do it since 1600. For on January 17 of that year I painted with matte flesh tones a bronze cast of a Crucifix by Michelangelo which Juan Bautista Franconio, a notable silversmith, molded from the one he brought from Rome." Translation by Enggass-Brown (1970): op. cit. (note 43), pp. 217-18. Original text: "Quiso Dios por su misericordia desterrar del mundo estos platos vidriados, y que con mejor luz y acuerdo se introdujesen las encarnaciones nates, como pintura más natural, y que se deja retocar varias veces, y hacer en ella los priores que vemos hoy, bien es verdad que algunos de los modernos (entre los antiguos y nosotros) las comenzaron á ejercitar, y las vemos en algunas historias suyas de escultura en retablos viejos; pero el resucitárlas en España, y dar con ellas nueva luz y vida á la buena escultura, oso decir con verdad, que, yo he sido de los que comenzaron, si no el primero desde el año 1600 á esta parte, poco más á lo menos en Sevilla, porque el primer Crucifijo de bronce de cuatro clavos de los de Michel Angel, que vació del que trajo de Roma Juan Bautista Franconio (insigne platero) lo pinté yo de mate en 17 de Enero del dicho año." F. Pacheco (1649): op. cit. (note 43), pp. 405-06.

Pacheco also notes how Juan Martinez Montañés’ Christ of Clemency (Chapel of San Andrés, Seville Cathedral), carved in 1603 and polychromed by Pacheco, was influenced by Michelangelo’s crucifix. F. Pacheco (1649): op. cit. (note 43), p. 406.

In addition to the painted casts, several silver casts of remarkable fidelity are likewise associated with Juan Bautista’s reproduction of the crucifix he brought from Rome. They include examples at the Seville Cathedral, Madrid Palace and the Gomez-Moreno Museum. See Appendix B, nos. 4-6.

F. Pacheco (1649): op. cit. (note 43), pp. 405-06. The painting resides in the Gomez-Moreno Museum. Pacheco also referenced the crucifix for a painted panel of 1637, belonging to a Madrid private collection whose provenance may connect it with a painting of Christ Crucified by Pacheco formerly in the chapel of San Miguel in the church of the Colegio de San Alberto in Seville where it was documented in 1800 by J.A. Ceán Bermúdez.

The nimbus that accompanied Juan Bautista’s crucifix, or was added to it, as suggested by Pacheco’s painted depiction (Fig. 28), features a sunburst motif typical of late 16th century crucifixes, and also reproduced on crucifixes connected with Guglielmo della Porta’s workshop, like one example at the Convent of Porta Coeli in Valladolid. The nimbus typology also appears on Sebastiano Torrigiani’s bronze sculptures of Saints Peter and Paul, ca. 1585, in the Vatican Treasury.

Antonio de Puga also reproduces a polychromed example of the crucifix in his 1636 painting of St. Jerome. See Anselmo Lopez Morais (1988): Crucifijo de Miguel Angel. Un ejemplar en colección particular de Orense. University of La Rioja.


Torrigiani assumed control of Guglielmo’s workshop when he married Guglielmo’s partner, Pamphilia Guazzaroni, and became the guardian of Guglielmo and Pamphilia’s natural-born son Teodoro della Porta (Guglielmo and Pamphilia were never formally married). When Teodoro came of age in 1589 he granted permission for Torrigiani and his son, Michelangelo, to continue using his father’s moulds and designs for their work. See Emmanuel Lamouche (2011): L’attività de Bastiano Torrigiani sous le pontificat de Grégoire XIII. "Dalla gran scuola di Guglielmo Della Porta.” Revue de l’art, pp. 51-58, see footnote 47 and also G.L. Masetti Zannini (1972): Notizie biografiche di Guglielmo della Porta in documenti notariali romani. Commentari, XXIII, p. 301.


The inventory of crucifixes in Guglielmo’s workshop at the time of his death in 1577 counts at least 58 crucifixes of varying size and in varying stages of completion. See Rosario Coppol (2012): Catalogue (Christ Crucified). Guglielmo della Porta, A Counter-Reformation Sculptor. Coll & Cortés, pp. 62-73. Torrigiani’s continued production of crucifixes is evident by

Michelangelo’s Crucifix for Vittoria Colonna

Michelangelo’s Crucifix for Vittoria Colonna


57 For example, Torrigiani and Guglielmo’s friend and collaborator, Antonio Gentili da Faenza, is documented as having owned original models by Michelangelo. A court record of 1609 documents Gentili’s testimony: “In my workshop… I have had many plasters and molds of many brave men and of Michelangelo and of others.” See A. Bertolotti (1881): op. cit. (note 55), vol. 2, pp. 136-37.


67 Possibly affirming of Michelangelo’s return to these diagrams is an otherwise aimless verse of poetry he has later inked onto the sheet: “Under two beautiful eyebrows, with peace and wonderment, love has placed the brakes on my thoughts.” Leonard Barkan observes the deliberateness with which Michelangelo turned the sheet and wrote this line with his fine manner of handwriting, inferring it wasn’t a pointless instance of note taking. See Leonard Barkan (2010): Michelangelo: A Life on Paper. Princeton University Press, pp. 24-25. The correlation between the words and the illustration are confounding although it could be suggested they refer to Michelangelo’s poetic thoughts of Colonna while preparing a crucifix for her.


69 Michelangelo’s major projects in bronze do not survive, such as his life-size bronze David for the Signoria of Florence or the colossal effigy of Pope Julius II for his tomb monument. Michelangelo’s expertise in casting-and-finishing bronzes shouldn’t rule-out the possibility he may have cast a small bronze crucifix for Colonna, although the prospect seems less likely given his age and preoccupation with painting the Last Judgment and Crucifixion of St. Peter. Michelangelo’s models were preserved in bronze by other foundrymen during his lifetime, of which the crucifix could be one such example. However, unique to the crucifix is the intention behind its production, possibly linked to a commission or gift for Colonna and unlike the tacitly cast bronzes after his models like the Samson and two Philistines (Frick Collection, Inv. 1916.2.40), River God (Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Inv. 32m), Crucified thieves (Metropolitan Museum of Art, Inv. 37.28b, c) or Captive Slave (Museo Poldi Pezzoli, Inv. 85/68). Concerning Michelangelo’s works in bronze, see Victoria Avery, ed. (2018): Michelangelo: Sculptor in Bronze. London.
Fig. 17: Michelangelo Buonarroti, *Christ on the Cross*, ca. 1538-41, British Museum
Appendix A

Michelangelo and Vittoria Colonna’s discussion of a “crucifix”

Of conceivable relevance to the present sculpture is the exchange of letters between Michelangelo and Vittoria Colonna, ca. 1536/38-43, which involve discussion of a crucifix.\(^1\)

Art historians have traditionally accepted these exchanges relate to a drawing of *Christ on the Cross* Michelangelo made for Colonna, as cited by Ascanio Condivi\(^2\) and Giorgio Vasari.\(^3\) Sketched and painted versions of the *Christ on the Cross* are identified in numerous collections with a version at the British Museum believed to be Michelangelo’s original drawing (Fig. 17).\(^4\)

However, it is unclear if the crucifix cited in Michelangelo and Colonna’s letters refer to a drawing, painting or sculpture since no medium is noted. A designation of the medium of the crucifix is therefore unsettled. However, the idea that the crucifix concerns a sculpture is too often overlooked,\(^5\) particularly considering the term tends to refer to an object-of-devotion most often in the form of a sculpture.\(^6\) Additionally, the lack of terms typically referring to paintings and drawings, like *disegno* and *dipinto*, are absent in describing the crucifix.

English translations of the relevant letters are presented below followed by commentary concerning their potential reference to a sculpture. The letters are undated and their original sequence is not known, but are presented here in a possible logical order.

**COLONNA’S LETTER TO MICHELANGELO**\(^7\)

*My most genial lord, Michelangelo, I beg you to send me the little crucifix, even though it is not complete, because I would like to show it to the gentlemen of the most reverend Cardinal of Mantua,\(^8\) and if you are not working today, you could come and talk to me at your convenience.*

Colonna’s request to share Michelangelo’s ‘little crucifix’ may sensibly refer to a small devotional crucifix whose model was in-progress or finished but considered ‘not complete’ if not yet cast, or alternatively, if cast but not yet finished through chasing, burnishing, polishing and patinating, a process requiring reasonable time and labor.

It could also be suggested that the ‘little crucifix’ refers to a small devotional panel painting but it seems haphazard to present an incomplete painting and it would seem even less probable a drawing is cited since a finished drawing would require only a day’s labor, sans the design process.

**COLONNA’S LETTER TO MICHELANGELO**\(^9\)\(^10\)

*I have received your letter and examined the crucifix which has certainly crucified in my mind all other pictures that I have ever seen, nor could one find another figure more perfectly finished. Truly, I cannot express how subtly and how marvelously it is done. Wherefore I am resolved to take the work as coming*
from no other hand but yours, and accordingly I beg you to assure me whether this is really yours or another’s. Excuse the question. If it is yours, I must possess it under any conditions. In case it is not yours, and you want to have it carried out by your assistant, we will talk the matter over first. I know how extremely difficult it would be to reproduce it, and therefore I would rather let him finish something else than this. But if it be in fact yours, rest assured, and make the best of it, that it will never come again into your keeping. I have examined it carefully in the light, and with a lens and a mirror, and I never saw a more perfect object.

E.H. Ramsden challenged the notion this letter referred to a drawing, suggesting instead a finished painting while Deoclecio Redig de Campos proposed the same idea, noting that crucifixes, as tactile objects-of-devotion, were rendered solely as paintings or sculptures. Colonna’s use of the word cosa, referring to the crucifix as an ‘object,’ ‘thing,’ or ‘piece,’ would seem better suited for describing a sculpture than a drawing or painting.

Colonna’s inquiry whether the crucifix ‘is really yours or another’s’ has prompted different interpretations, speculating if Michelangelo was responsible for the concetto of the artwork, presumably executed by assistants and resulting in Colonna’s uncertainty about it, or alternatively questioning if perhaps the crucifix was already the custody of another client or commission.

The involvement of an assistant ‘to carry out’ and ‘finish’ the artwork suggests the crucifix is either a painting or sculpture as Luitpold Dussler amply comments, “it is difficult to conceive of Michelangelo sending his most intimate confidant a drawing not from his own hand.”

Colonna would have been aware Michelangelo employed assistants and was probably aware he outsourced the casting of small bronzes. A Roman foundryman and sculptor specializing in the casting of crucifixes, like Michelangelo’s friend, Guglielmo della Porta, could have resulted in her inquiry as to whether a model for the crucifix was Michelangelo’s autograph artwork or that of a foundry-assistant and talented follower like Guglielmo (see Appendix C).

Colonna’s comment concerning ‘how extremely difficult it would be to reproduce’ the crucifix could also refer to the challenges involved in casting bronze, being a more costly, laborious and technical feat than copying paintings. Colonna was apparently familiar with the labor and process involved in casting bronze. A sonnet Michelangelo dedicated to Colonna, ca. 1542-47, relates her spiritual transmutation of him to the processes involved in casting:

It’s not only the mold that, empty of finished work, waits to be filled with fired silver or gold, and which these can only be drawn from when it’s shattered. I, too, with the fire of love refill the inner void of my desire for infinite beauty, for her whom I adore, the soul and heart of my fragile life. But this noble and welcome lady pours down into me through such narrow spaces that to draw her out I must be torn down and broken.

Colonna discusses studying the crucifix ‘carefully in the light, and with a lens and a mirror.’ Scholars have traditionally thought Colonna’s use of a lens to view the sketch of Christ on the Cross was with the intent of observing its finely rendered details. In regard to the use of a mirror, Hugo Chapman posits, “the reversal of the design, and the resulting image’s disassociation from the drawing, was perhaps a means to move her attention away from aesthetic admiration of its merits as a work of art, to a devotional contemplation of its subject.” While an interesting suggestion, the idea is more complicated than the simple proposal Colonna may have instead been observing a sculpture in-the-round, using light to observe its contours, a lens to perceive its details and a mirror to absorb multiple viewpoints of the sculpture simultaneously. In this way, the use of these apparatus permitted a complete consumption of its three-dimensional quality (Fig. 18).
Fig. 18: Bronze crucifix, after a model attributed to Michelangelo, ca. 1538-41, private collection (photo: © GCF)
MICHELANGELO’S LETTER TO COLONNA

Signora Marchesa – Seeing that I am in Rome, I do not think it was necessary to have left the crucifix with Messer Tommaso and to have made him an intermediary between your ladyship and me, your servant, to the end that I might serve you; particularly as I had desired to perform more for you than for anyone on earth I ever knew. But the great task on which I have been and am engaged has prevented me from making this known to your Ladyship. And because I know that you know that love requires no task-master and that he who loves slumbers not – still less had he need of intermediaries. And although it may have seemed that I had forgotten, I was executing something I had not mentioned, in order to follow through with something unexpected. My plan has been spoiled.

This letter exemplifies Michelangelo’s disappointment that Colonna used an intermediary to return the crucifix to him, remarking he had been occupied with a ‘great task,’ presumably his fresco of the Last Judgment. If the crucifix was a commission, Michelangelo’s discontent may have sprung from Colonna’s formal action as a patron, communicating through an intermediary, rather than as a close friend.

2 Ascanio Condivi (1553): Vita di Michelangelo Buonarroti. Rome, Antonio Blado, pp. 81-84. The idea that the crucifix they discuss corresponds to the one described by Condivi’s citation of it. See Giorgio Vasari (1568): Le Opere di Giorgio Vasari translated from the original Tuscan, edited and annotated by E. H. Ramsden (1963): op. cit. (note 9), pp. 239-41. Original text: "…in particolare amò grandemente la Marchesana di Peschara, del cui divino spirito era inamorato, essendo all’incontro da lei amato sinceramente, della quale anchor tien la memoria, d’onesto et dolcissimo amore riportata, et quals d’il petto uscir solevasi, hauendo egli altresi scritto a lei piu et piu sonetti, pieni d’ingegno el dolce desiderio. Ella piu voler si mosse da Viterbo, & d’altrui luoghi, dove fusse andata per di porto e per passare l’astate, et a Rome se ne venne, non mossa da altra cagione se non di veder Michelagnolo, et egli al incontro tanto amore lei portava, che mi ricorda di sentirlo dire che d’altro non si doleva se non che quando l’andò a vedere nel passer di questa vita, fece a requisizione di questa signor V.C. un Cristo igrnando, quando è tolto di croce, il quale, come corpo morto abbandonato, cascherbbe a’ piedi della non cosi le bascio la mano, per la costei morte, piu tempo se ne stette sbígotito, et come morto abbandonato, cascherebbe a’ piedi ignudo, quando è tolto di croce, il quale, come emblema del l’andò a vedere nel passer d’ questa vita, fece questo et altrui, patientia. Se e vostro, io in ogni modo vol terrò, ma in caso che non sia vostro et vogliate farlo fare a quel vostro, ci parlaremos prima, perche cognoscendo io la difficoltà che ce e di imitarlo, più presto mi resolvo che colui faccia un’altra cosa che questa; ma se e il vostro questo, habbiate patientia che non son per tornarlo piu. Io l’ho ben visto al lume et col vetro et col specchio, et non vidi mai la più finita cosa. Son accomandamento vostro La Marchesa di Pescara.” British Library Ms. 23139, fol. 10.


4 British Museum, Inv. 1895/0915.504.

5 Manuel Gomez-Moreno was first among a handful of other scholars in Spain to posit the relationship between these letters and the sculpted crucifix presented in this article. See M. Gomez-Moreno (1930): Obras de Miguel Angel en España. Archivo Español de Arte y Arqueologia, pp. 189-98 and M. Gomez-Moreno (1933): El Crucifijo de Miguel Angel. Archivo Español de Arte y Arqueología, pp. 81-84. The idea that the crucifix could be a sculpture is revisited by Maria Forcellino, while acknowledging its indeterminate medium. Maria Forcellino (2007): La corrente “spirituale” nei disegni, dipinti e sculture di Michelangelo negli anni Quaranta. PhD thesis. Instituut voor Cultuur en Geschiedenis, University of Amsterdam, p. 76.

6 Mention of the crucifix in their correspondence refer to it as: crucifixo, crucifixo et crucifix.

7 Casa Buonarrotti, Cod. ix. 507: “Cordialissiamo mio S. Michel Agnolo. Ve prego me mandiate un poco el Crucifisso, se non volerlo di man d’altri, et pero chiaritemi, se e vostro, io in ogni modo vol terrò, ma in caso che non sia vostro et vogliate farlo fare a quel vostro, ci parlaremos prima, perche cognoscendo io la difficoltà che ce e di imitarlo, più presto mi resolvo che colui faccia un’altra cosa che questa; ma se e il vostro questo, habbiate patientia che non son per tornarlo piu. Io l’ho ben visto al lume et col vetro et col specchio, et non vidi mai la più finita cosa. Son accomandamento vostro La Marchesa di Pescara.” British Library Ms. 23139, fol. 10.


9 Translation by E.H. Ramsden (1963): The Letters of Michelangelo translated from the original Tuscan, edited and annotated by E. H. Ramsden. Stanford University Press; pp. 239-41. Original text: “Unico maestro Michelagnolo et mio singularissimo amico. ho hauata la vostra et visto il crucifixo, il qual certamente ha crucifixe nella memoria mia quale altri pittura viddi mai, ne se po veder piu ben fatta, piu viva et piu finita imagine et certo io no potrei mai explicar quanto sottilmente et mirabilmente e fatta, per il che ho risoluto de non volverlo di man d’altri, et pero chiertiemi, se questo e d’altri, patientia. Se e vostro, io in ogni modo vol terrò, ma in caso che non sia vostro et vogliate farlo fare a quel vostro, ci parlaremos prima, perche cognoscendo io la dificulta che ce e di imitarlo, più presto mi resolvo che colui faccia un’altra cosa che questa; ma se e il vostro questo, habbiate patientia che non son per tornarlo piu. Io l’ho ben visto al lume et col vetro et col specchio, et non vidi mai la più finita cosa. Son accomandamento vostro La Marchesa di Pescara.” British Library Ms. 23139, fol. 10.

10 Maria Forcellino suggests this letter was possibly written after May or June of 1543. See M. Forcellino (2007): op. cit. (note 4).


The imagery portrays Colonna as the precious liquid—silver or gold—that fills him through narrow spaces—the channels used to fill the mould—and Michelangelo, the finished sculpture hidden therein, to be revealed through the breaking away of the mould. The subject of casting appears to have been on Michelangelo’s mind in relation to Colonna, possibly intimating the bronze crucifix.


Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Cod. Vatic. Latino 3211, c. 99. Original text:
“Signora Marchesa. E non par, sendo io in Roma, che egli accadesse lasciar il crocifisso a messer Tommno e farlo mezzano fra Vostra Signoria e me suo servo, accioci che io la serva, e massimo avendo io desiderato di far piu per quella che per uomo che io conoscessi mai al mondo; ma l’occupazione grande, in che sono stato e sono, non ha lasciato conoscere questo a Vostra Signoria: e perche io so che ella sa che amore non vuol maestro, e che chi ama non dorme, manco accadeva ancora mezzi: e benche e paressi che io non mi ricordassi, io facero quello ch’io non dicero per giugnere con cosa non aspettata. E stato guasto il mio disegno: Mal fa chi tanta fe si tosto oblia.”

A minority of scholars suggest the ‘great task’ could alternatively refer to Michelangelo’s fresco of the Crucifixion of St. Peter.

L. Bosch (2018): *op. cit.* (note 13). Bosch proposes the demands and inquiries involved in relation to the crucifix may have been due to the context of a commission by Colonna, as opposed to being a gift, as often suggested in scholarship.
Fig. 19: Bronze crucifix, after a model attributed to Michelangelo, ca. 1538-41, probably cast by Guglielmo della Porta and workshop, 16th century, private collection (photo: © GCF)
Appendix B

Casts of the crucifix

Of all identified casts of the crucifix in this survey, the finest, here identified as the prototype (23 h x 21.8 w cm), is a privately owned example whose quality is indicative of a cast taken from the original wax model (Fig. 19). The sharp, crisp edges and fine details of the prototype are suggestive of a cast taken after the sculptor’s original model. Notable are the striations of tooled markings reproduced on the original wax model and the craquelure due to the drying of the wax, translated in the bronze. The manner in which the original casting support pins have pierced the wax model is evident on the bronze hands and feet of the crucifix, where the bronze rises upward in a parabolical manner, showing where the pin hugged the wax as it exited the palms-and-feet of the model (Fig. 20).

Although reproducing an original model, it remains indeterminate when the prototype was cast. The letters between Michelangelo and Vittoria Colonna, here suggested as possibly referring to the crucifix, indicate the sculpture was still in the presumed state of a wax model, not yet cast. If Guglielmo della Porta is theoretically responsible for casting the crucifix, it remains speculative when he may have done so or whether he ever did. If the model, or a mould thereof, was given to him and remained in his workshop, it may alternatively have been cast by a later member of the workshop like Sebastiano Torrigiani or possibly Juan Bautista Franconio, suggested here as one of Torrigiani’s late assistants. Guglielmo’s capability to cast such a work is noted by Giorgio Vasari’s overstated claim that Guglielmo could cast perfect bronzes requiring no afterwork.

A few considerations are possible with regard to a model being left uncast in Guglielmo’s workshop. If the crucifix was commissioned for Colonna’s anticipated convent on Monte Cavallo, authorized by Pope Paul III in 1536, the advent of the Salt War in 1540, straining relations between the Pope and the Colonna family, may have stalled the project. Alternatively, tensions between Michelangelo and Guglielmo, stemming from opinions and actions concerning the tomb for Pope Paul III, may have stalled collaborations between them from 1549 onward. However, Colonna’s death in early 1547 would have also left the cast unrealized.

Fig. 20: Detail of a bronze crucifix, after a model attributed to Michelangelo, ca. 1538-41, private collection (photo: © GCF)
Unless a later addition to the crucifix, the feature of a removable perizonium may especially suggest a later casting date closer toward or during the last quarter of the 16th century. The incorporation of this accessory has no firm antecedent in the casting of metal crucifixes in Italy until the 1590s, as observed by Giambologna’s large nude gilt bronze crucifix of about 1590 or Torrigiani’s possible invention of a nude crucifix (apparently inspired by Michelangelo’s model) incorporating a removable perizonium and featured on an altar cross made ca. 1592-96 for Pope Clement VIII (Fig. 31).

Juan Bautista Franconio, by 1600, was casting removable perizoniums to accompany the crucifixes he produced in Seville as evident by nos. 1-6 in this census. Nonetheless, the crucifix may have been cast earlier and the perizonium cast later much in the same way Michelangelo’s nude Risen Christ had been clothed or Guglielmo’s Prudence for Pope Paul III’s tomb, was covered by metal garments cast later by his son, Teodoro.

It is notable the reverse of the perizonium accompanying the prototype, and those reproduced by Juan Bautista, stylistically follow the reverse of integrally cast types observed on crucifixes attributed to Torrigiani’s workshop during the 1590s which reproduce earlier models originating with Guglielmo della Porta, possibly as early as 1573 (Fig. 21). The invention of the perizonium therefore remains tenuous in its association with Michelangelo, and is almost certainly the invention or product of Guglielmo’s workshop. Notably, the style of the perizonium closely follows those he produced for his wax Crucifixion realized ca. 1555-56 (Fig. 22).

Also suggestive of a possible origin in Guglielmo’s workshop are the superficial methods used to cast the crucifix. A plug is incorporated atop the head, being a strategic location for pouring molten bronze into the investment and sometimes used for fixing a separately cast nimbus. The individually cast arms are also fixed to their independently cast torso, secured in a similar location.

If not cast during Colonna’s lifetime or for some later purpose after her death in 1547, the crucifix may have been cast even later, as Michelangelo’s prolific use of models bolstered their valuable function among his peers and followers, resulting in their subsequent preservation in bronze and terracotta.
That Jacopo del Duca had access to Michelangelo’s model by 1573-74 infers there were bronze or terracotta copies of it already available in Rome at that-time (see nos. 18, 19 and 21).

The prototype observably precedes examples found in Spain, evident by its crisp quality and detail. It is sharper in constitution when compared with the polychromed bronze casts and high-quality silver casts acknowledged as those first made in Spain using Juan Bautista’s crucifix by Michelangelo as their model (nos. 1-6).¹⁵

The diminished quality of Christ’s hair, lessening of his nipples and the reduction of detail on his navel are observable on these casts first made in Spain (Figs. 23-25). The hair can be observed as modestly flattened along its peaking contours and Christ’s mustache has acquired more grit on the Spanish bronze casts while the silver casts reduce them to thick, crude excavations, albeit at a very fine scale (Figs. 23, 26).

Also lost-in-translation is the characteristic stroke along the eyelids of Christ, apparent on the prototype, greatly diminished on the polychromed bronze casts and entirely lost on the silver casts (Fig. 26, back cover). The upper bridge of the nose has thinned as a result of its subtly reduced state and the channels outlining the contour of Christ’s nostrils have become less defined on Juan Bautista’s casts (Fig. 26). A slight reduction of the prototype is also observed in the silver Gomez-Moreno cast (no. 5, back cover). Silver, being a resolute medium in capturing detail, showcases the finely chased creases in the palms of Christ’s hands, translated from a high-quality bronze model like the prototype. The nail beds of the silver cast are also slightly dulled, having solicited their mould from a finer cast like the prototype (Fig. 27). Later casts made after Juan Bautista’s casts in Spain can be observed as further exacerbating these reductions.

Following is a census of all currently identified casts of the crucifix. Jose Carlos Brasas Egido,¹⁶ Anselmo Lopez Morais,¹⁷ Manuel Gomez-Moreno¹⁸ and others have done much to contribute to the documentation of known examples in Spain. This census will build upon their work while adding further detailed observations in addition to previously undocumented examples.¹⁹

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Fig. 23: Detail of a polychromed bronze crucifix cast by Juan Bautista Franconio, ca. 1597-1600, after a model by Michelangelo, private collection (left; photo: Armando Pastorino); detail of a bronze crucifix, after a model attributed to Michelangelo, ca. 1538-41, probably cast by Guglielmo della Porta, private collection (center; photo © GCF); detail of a silver crucifix cast by Juan Bautista Franconio, after a model by Michelangelo, Gomez-Moreno Museum (right; photo © Fundacion Rodriguez-Acosta)

Fig. 24: Detail of a polychromed bronze crucifix cast by Juan Bautista Franconio, ca. 1597-1600, after a model by Michelangelo, private collection (left; photo: Armando Pastorino); detail of a bronze crucifix, after a model attributed to Michelangelo, ca. 1538-41, probably cast by Guglielmo della Porta, private collection (center; photo © GCF); detail of a silver crucifix cast by Juan Bautista Franconio, after a model by Michelangelo, Gomez-Moreno Museum (right; photo © Fundacion Rodriguez-Acosta)

Fig. 25: Detail of a polychromed bronze crucifix cast by Juan Bautista Franconio, ca. 1597-1600, after a model by Michelangelo, private collection (left; photo: Armando Pastorino); detail of a bronze crucifix, after a model attributed to Michelangelo, ca. 1538-41, probably cast by Guglielmo della Porta, private collection (center; photo © GCF); detail of a silver crucifix cast by Juan Bautista Franconio, after a model by Michelangelo, Gomez-Moreno Museum (right; photo © Fundacion Rodriguez-Acosta)
Fig. 26: Detail of a polychromed bronze crucifix cast by Juan Bautista Franconio, ca. 1597-1600, after a model by Michelangelo, private collection (left; photo: Armando Pastorino); detail of a bronze crucifix, after a model attributed to Michelangelo, ca. 1538-41, probably cast by Guglielmo della Porta, private collection (center; photo © GCF); detail of a silver crucifix cast by Juan Bautista Franconio, after a model by Michelangelo, Gomez-Moreno Museum (right; photo © Fundacion Rodriguez-Acosta)

Fig. 27: Detail of a silver crucifix cast by Juan Bautista Franconio, after a model by Michelangelo, Gomez-Moreno Museum (left; photo © Fundacion Rodriguez-Acosta); detail of a bronze crucifix, after a model attributed to Michelangelo, ca. 1538-41, probably cast by Guglielmo della Porta, private collection (right; photo © GCF)
No. 01 - Bronze crucifix after a model by Michelangelo, cast by Juan Bautista Franconio, ca. 1597-1600, painted by Francisco Pacheco, ca. 1600, Grand Ducal Palace of Gandia
NO. 1
PALACIO DUCAL DE GANDIA
(GRAND DUCAL PALACE OF GANDIA)

Made: ca. 1597-1600 (cast); after mid-January 1600 (polychromed)

Cast by: Juan Bautista Franconio; Polychromed by: Francisco Pacheco

A bronze cast of superb quality, polychromed in natural tones with a removable bronze perizonium. The corpus is attached to a later decorative wooden cross.

The Gandia cast is the best-preserved example in regard to its polychromy. The cast closely follows the example in an American private collection (no. 2) in regard to the quality of casting and manner of polychromy.

The Gandia and American casts corroborate Francisco Pacheco’s record of having painted bronze casts of a crucifix by Michelangelo, beginning in mid-January 1600, and cast by Juan Bautista Franconio sometime after his arrival to Seville in 1597. These painted casts also corroborate Pacheco’s record of having used a polychrome cast as a model for his painting of Christ on the Cross in 1614-15, whose tonal palette, placement of blood, and style of perizonium precisely relate (Figs.07, 28). Also corroborative is Pacheco’s pupil and son-in-law, Diego Velazquez, who reproduced a painted cast of the crucifix in his two portraits of the monastic, Jeronima (Fig. 08).

Differentiating the Gandia cast from the prototype are the subtle details lost-in-translation such as the subdued quality of the nipples, finer details of Christ’s hair, subtly dulled, and the stroked borders of the eyelids that are less defined. The toes of the Gandia cast are slightly reduced in-scale and also lack the elongated finesse of the prototype. The gap between the big-and-index toes is widened, observed also on the American cast. However, a majority of details on the Gandia cast remain identical with the prototype.

The perizonium faithfully reproduces the one accompanying the prototype (Fig. 29, left), cut vertically along Christ’s proper left hip and supported by tiny screws which extend through piercings along Christ’s thighs. A crown-of-thorns must have once adorned this cast, apparent by the abraded polychromy along Christ’s forehead. Velazquez’s inclusion of a crown-of-thorns on the cast portrayed in his portraits of Jeronima may suggest how they originally appeared, not including the possible original crown still affixed to the Cuenca Cathedral cast (no. 3), if not a later addition, or the crown-of-thorns featured on the Seville Cathedral cast (no. 4).

Prior to the Grand Ducal Palace of Gandia, this cast formerly resided in the Ducal House of Benavente during the 18th century and before that, the Palace of Santo Duque.

Bibliography:
No. 02 - Bronze crucifix after a model by Michelangelo, cast by Juan Bautista Franconio, ca. 1597-1600, painted by Francisco Pacheco, ca. 1600, private collection (photo: Armando Pastorino)
NO. 2
PRIVATE COLLECTION (USA)

Made: ca. 1597-1600 (cast); aft. mid-Jan 1600 (polychromed)
Cast by: Juan Bautista Franconio; Polychromed by: Francisco Pacheco

A previously undocumented bronze cast polychromed in natural tones. The removable perizonium is lost but its former presence on the sculpture is indicated by the freshness of paint still featured along its mid-section. Judging by the preserved paint, a perizonium following the prototype was formerly included, commensurate with that featured on the Gandia cast (no. 1).

Like the Gandia cast, this cast once featured a separate crown-of-thorns, now missing. The hole atop Christ’s head remains unplugged and may have once featured a nimbus not unlike the one depicted in Francisco Pacheco’s painting of Christ on the Cross (Fig. 28).

The wooden cross accompanying this cast is probably contemporary and may have been made in the same workshop responsible for the cross accompanying the Cuenca Cathedral cast (no. 3). The crosses relate to others made in Seville around the year 1600, such as those produced by Juan de Mesa, Gaspar Nunez Delgado, Juan Martinez Montañés, et al.

Notably, Pacheco commented on the influence Michelangelo’s crucifix had on Montañés’ Christ of Clemency. Pacheco was responsible for polychroming Montañés’ sculpture in 1603 and their working relationship during the first years of the 17th century could suggest Montañés’ or his workshop provided the natural wooden crosses accompanying this cast and that of Cuenca Cathedral.

Cast metal versions of these type of crosses are observed on the Segovia (no. 11), Ourense (no. 12) and Ebro (no. 13) casts, suggesting these casts may represent a second generation of aftercasts employing one of Juan Bautista’s bronze casts as their source.

A titulus, now missing, probably followed the type observed on Montañés’ Christ of the Clemency, reproducing a Hebrew variant of the inscription preferred by Pacheco on guidance from the Duke of Alcala.
No. 3
CUENCA CATHEDRAL

Made: probably ca. 1600 (cast); probably aft. mid-Jan 1600 (polychromed)

Cast by: Juan Bautista Franconio; Polychromed by: Francisco Pacheco

A polychromed silver cast with a removable perizonium. The painted features of the crucifix indicate it was probably polychromed by Francisco Pacheco. Although Juan Bautista Franconio is cited as having cast examples of the crucifix in bronze, his recognition as a silversmith would have reasonably entailed his production of silver examples as well.

The corpus is attached to a wooden cross reminiscent of the American cast (no. 2), already discussed. The Cuenca cross measures 60 cm in height while the American cast’s cross measures 67 cm. It is not known if the Cuenca measurement includes the height of its base, and if not, both crosses may be uniform in size. The titulus and skull are later additions.

Noteworthy is the modification made to the perizonium, here cast in silver rather than bronze. It features a relaxed flare, resulting in drapery that curves and conforms to the proper right leg of Christ. This same feature can be observed on other silver perizoniums cast by Juan Bautista, featured on examples at the Seville Cathedral (no. 4), Gomez-Moreno Museum (no. 5) and the Royal Palace of Madrid (no. 6) (Fig. 29, right).

An 1835 citation incorrectly attributed this cast to the sculptor Alonso Cano.

Bibliography:


No. 4 - Silver crucifix after a model by Michelangelo, probably cast by Juan Bautista Franconio, ca. 1600, Cathedral of Seville
NO. 4
CATHEDRAL OF SEVILLE

Made: ca. 1600
Cast: attributed to Juan Bautista Franconio

A silver cast with a removable gilt perizonium, attached to an elaborate silver and gilt processional cross with inlays and various attributes. The cast, of noteworthy quality, may suggest Juan Bautista Franconio’s involvement.

Although speculative, the processional cross accompanying this cast may also be the possible work of Juan Bautista. William Stirling-Maxwell’s survey of goldsmiths active during the reign of Philip IV, cites Juan Bautista as the only goldsmith worthy of record in Andalusia at-that-time. Additionally, the feature of a Flagellation scene along the base of the cross appears inspired by Sebastiano del Piombo’s Flagellation of Christ, after Michelangelo’s desegno, suggesting the artist responsible for the reliefs on this altar cross was aware of the composition from Rome.

The Seville cross was donated to the Cathedral in 1701 by the Archbishop of Palafox and Cardona.

Bibliography:
No. 5 - Silver crucifix after a model by Michelangelo, cast by Juan Bautista Franconio, ca. 1600, Gomez-Moreno Museum (photo © Fundacion Rodriguez-Acosta)
**NO. 5**

**MUSEO GOMEZ-MORENO DE GRANADA**

Made: ca. 1600  
Cast: attributed to Juan Bautista Franconio

A silver cast with a removable gilt perizonium, attached to an ebonized wooden cross. This cast is of remarkable quality, suggestive of a cast made by Juan Bautista Franconio and corresponding with the Seville cast (no. 4).

The cross is probably contemporary and could suggest a close proximity with Francisco Pacheco, as Morales observes Pacheco’s preference for squared crosses in his representations of Christ’s crucifixion. This tradition was also passed down to Pacheco’s students like Diego Velazquez, *et al.* Further, the use of an ebonized cross may associate it with a Franco-German typology synchronous with Juan Bautista Franconio’s probable origins.25 Morales also observed the reverse of the cross shares the same contemporary screws and washers as those featured on the reverse of the cross held by Jeronima in Velazquez’s portrait of her (Fig. 08).

Morales further notes a casting flaw occurred on Christ’s proper left foot, requiring the contemporary attachment of a replacement cast.

The attachment mechanism of the perizonium on this cast was restored during the 20th century and is not reflective of its original state.

Prior to its ownership by Manuel Gomez-Moreno, this cast formerly belonged to the private collection of Don Miguel Borondo in Madrid.

*Bibliography:*

Gomez-Moreno (1930)  
Javier Moya Morales (Conservator, Fundación Rodríguez-Acosta), email communications, 2014.
No. 6 - Silver crucifix after a model by Michelangelo, probably cast by Juan Bautista Franconio, ca. 1600, Royal Palace of Madrid
NO. 6
PALACIO DE ORIENTE DE MADRID
(ROYAL PALACE OF MADRID)

Made: ca. 1600
Cast: attributed to Juan Bautista Franconio

A silver cast with a removable gilt perizonium attached to an ebonized wooden cross.

Morais notes how Diego Velazquez resided at the Royal Palace of Madrid in 1623 and had recently, in 1620, completed his paintings of Jeronima (Fig. 08). Morais suggests the possibility Velazquez brought his own example of the crucifix to the Palace and that the Madrid cast could have been cast after it. However, it’s also possible the Madrid cast is a more immediate cast made by Juan Bautista Franconio considering its uniform quality with other silver examples and Gomez-Moreno’s comment that the Madrid cast was the next best example of the crucifix in Spain apart from his own (no. 5). Additionally, the perizonium accompanying it appears commensurate with the Seville (no. 4) and Gomez-Moreno casts (Fig. 29, right).

The ebony cross and accompanying titulus—which follows loosely with the one featured in Francisco Pacheco’s paintings after Juan Bautista’s crucifix—if contemporary, places it nearer to Pacheco’s circle which would have preferred a squared cross, previously discussed (see no. 5).

A close examination of the Hebrew featured on the titulus may help date the period of its casting, either before 1614-15 or sometime thereafter (see footnote 27).

This cast was exhibited in 1927 at the Exposicion del Arte Antiguo in Madrid.

Bibliography:
NO. 7
CONVENTO DE LAS AGUSTINAS GAITANAS, TOLEDO

Made: probably first half of the 17th century

A gilt silver cast with removable perizonium attached to an ebonized wooden cross. Although requiring more careful inspection, this cast shows a faithful translation of the prototype but could also belong to a second generation of casts.

The ebonized wooden cross superficially recalls that of the Gomez-Moreno example. Noteworthy is the loss of the flaring portion of the perizonium which, if not due to damage, could be the result of a discriminating silversmith other than Juan Bautista Franconio.

Bibliography:
NO. 8  
CATHEDRAL OF VALLADOLID

Made: probably first half of the 17th century

A silver cast with a removable gilt silver perizonium, fixed to a walnut cross, set into a metal reliquary, altogether 71 cm tall. The cross is possibly not contemporary with the corpus although the preserved titulus may be original.

A detailed examination of the Valladolid cast may help assess its proximity to the prototype. The possible lack of the flaring portion of the perizonium, as well as the slightly protruding plug atop the head of Christ, may link it to the same workshop responsible for the Monasterio de Agustinas cast in Toledo (no. 7).

Bibliography:

Marques de Lozoya (1971): *Sobre el crucifijo de plata, vaciado segun el modelo de Miguel Angel, en la Caja de Ahorros de Segovia*. Publicaciones de la Caja de Ahorros y Monte de Piedad de Segovia, Spain, p. 8.

Jose Carlos Brasas Egido (1980): *La plateria vallisoletana y su difusion*. Valladolid, fig. 279.

No. 9 - Gilt silver crucifix after a model by Michelangelo, cast by Andres de Campo Guevara, 1630, Museo de los Caminos Astorga
NO. 9
MUSEO DE LOS CAMINOS ASTORGA
(CASTROTIERRA DE LA VALDURENA)

Made: 1630
Cast by: Andres de Campo Guevara

A gilt silver cast with a removable perizonium. The subdued detail of this cast suggests an intermediary silver cast by Juan Bautista Franconio may have served as a model for producing it.

The maker of this cast and its accompanying processional cross are documented by bishop Alfonso Messia de Tovar on 16 February 1631, in which he identifies Andres de Campo Guevara as the responsible silversmith. The archives in the Diocese also document minor restorations made to the processional cross in 1651.

Although speculative, Andres' activity in Valladolid might suggest he used the Valladolid cast (no. 7) as a possible source from which to take an adequate mould of the crucifix. Alternatively, Rodriguez and Morais have both suggested Juan Bautista Franconio’s crucifix, or a cast of it, may have reached Andres’ workshop by way of Juan de Penalosa who was a student of Pablo Cespedes, the eventual recipient and owner of the crucifix Juan Bautista brought from Rome, as noted by Francisco Pacheco.26

A nimbus was once featured atop Christ’s head but was removed sometime after the 1940s. It is difficult to judge by the photos observed but the perizonium may have lost some fidelity through subsequent castings but is generally reflective of the typology observed on Juan Bautista’s silver casts (Fig. 29, right).

Andres adds chased details on this cast, retracing the outlines of Christ’s hair, possibly in an attempt to restore details lost-in-translation. Chasing is also observed around the groin and along the nail beds of Christ’s hands and feet. Although difficult to discern, there may be an added chased side-wound of Christ chiseled under his proper right pectoral. The flattened contours of Christ’s hair and lack of sharpness in other areas such as the nipples and borders where Christ’s hair falls against his body, secures the notion this cast is later and must derive from a copy made after Juan Bautista’s crucifix.

Alternatively, Harold Wethey and other scholars have suggested the corpus accompanying this processional cross was cast at an earlier date and that Andres may have added it to his unique processional cross.

Bibliography:
Egido (1980), pp. 236-37, figs. 343-46.
Morais (1988), pp. 5-6
NO. 10
IGLESIA DE SAN ANTOLIN DE TORDESILLAS

Made: aft. 1630
Cast by: Juan Alvarez (?)

A debased silver cast, lacking the perizonium and attached to a silver processional cross. The feet of Christ overlap rather than cross over one another at the ankles, a modification made perhaps due to the challenge of successfully casting the lower extremities of the legs and feet. Morais suggests this cast was probably made by Juan Alvarez using the Caminos Astorga crucifix (no. 9) as its model.

*Bibliography:*
No. 11 - Silver crucifix after a model by Michelangelo, possibly cast by Lesmes Fernandez del Moral, early 17th century, Bank of Segovia
NO. 11
CAJA DE AHORROS DE SEGOVIA

Made: aft. 1614-19
Cast: possibly by Lesmes Fernandez del Moral

A silver cast with a removable perizonium of alternative design. The corpus is attached to a bronze cross cast after a natural wood-carved original, approximately 72 cm in length, fixed to a gilt bronze ornamental base with silver embellishments.

The Segovia cast may have used a polychromed bronze cast by Juan Bautista Franconio as its model. The subtle flaws and grittiness that diminish the model’s finer details suggest this as well as the reproduction of the natural wooden cross observed accompanying two of the identified polychromed crucifixes by Juan Bautista and Francisco Pacheco (nos. 2, 3).

The current perizonium is held in-place by screws that are located where the original perizonium would have been attached. It is undetermined if the current perizonium replaces an original lost example or if it was made contemporaneously by the foundryman responsible for this cast. Its style remains in-keeping with the early 17th century. The hole atop Christ’s head has been left unplugged and may have once featured a nimbus.

The proper left ear of Christ appears crudely formed on this example, further indicating it is probably an aftercast derived from an earlier painted model, although Morais considered this example a cast made by Juan Bautista.

The Segovia cast formerly belonged to the private collection of the Marques de Lozoya. Lozoya hypothesized this cast, along with the Ebro (no. 13) and Ourense (no. 12) casts came from Valladolid, noting Segovia’s dependence on Valladolid’s workshops during the first quarter of the 17th century. He suggested they may derive from Lesmes Fernandez del Moral’s workshop, the most active silversmith in Segovia after 1596. Although Lozoya’s hypothesis is unproven but not impossible, his observation that the Ebro and Ourense examples were produced by the same maker is convincing, particularly since the elaborate base accompanying this cast precisely follows that accompanying the Ourense example (no. 12).

This cast, located at the Bank of Segovia, formerly belonged to the Marques de Lozoya and before him it resided in the collections of Juan de Contreras, Bernarda Ortega de Lara and Maria de Villalba y Aguilar.

Bibliography:
Lozoya (1971)
No. 12 - Silver crucifix after a model by Michelangelo, possibly cast by Lesmes Fernandez del Moral, early 17th century, private collection
NO. 12
PRIVATE COLLECTION; FORMERLY IN OURENSE, SPAIN

Made: aft. 1614-19
Cast: possibly by Lesmes Fernandez del Moral

A silver cast with a removable gilt silver perizonium. The corpus is attached to a cast metal cross, after a natural wood-carved original, recalling the Segovia (no. 11) and Ebro (no. 13) casts. The crucifix is set within the same elaborate base featured with the Segovia cast, decorated with silver inlays. A silver titulus is fixed to the top of the cross. The titulus does not feature the traditional Latin acronym, INRI, but follows a type specific to Francisco Pacheco’s preferences after 1614-19 and reproduced by his circle of followers.27

The overall fixture of the crucifix and its base is set against an unattributed painting, possibly a later addition and forming a private devotional altar. An unplugged hole atop Christ’s head suggests a nimbus may have once been attached and a small piercing along the forehead of Christ once supported a crown-of-thorns, now lost. Casting plugs are apparent along the surface area of the sculpture.

The quality of this cast follows the same observations made concerning the Segovia cast, suggesting its model was a polychromed cast by Juan Bautista Franconio, painted by Pacheco. In particular, detailed photos allow a comparison between this silver cast and a polychromed bronze example made by Juan Bautista (Fig. 30).

Fig. 30: Detail of a silver crucifix after a model by Michelangelo, possibly cast by Lesmes Fernandez del Moral, early 17th century, private collection (left); detail of a bronze crucifix after a model by Michelangelo, cast by Juan Bautista Franconio, ca. 1597-1600, painted by Francisco Pacheco, ca. 1600, private collection (photo: Armando Pastorino)
The chiseled side-wound of Christ, added to this cast, is positioned in the same location it appears rendered in painted blood on the polychromed examples, further suggesting it was cast and chased after guidance from a polychromed example. The Segovia and Ourense casts likewise reproduce the wider gap featured between the big-and-index toes of Christ as featured on Juan Bautista’s bronze casts (nos. 1, 2). In addition, the stout flare of the perizonium follows more closely with Juan Bautista’s bronze casts of the perizonium, accompanying polychromed casts rather than the edited version featured on his silver cast examples (nos. 3-6).

The base of the processional cross is elegant and recalls those belonging to the early 17th century. The cherubs, featured in relief, recall models emanating from an Italian source which may suggest the workshop responsible for this object had ties to Italy. Lesmes Fernandez’s collaborations with Pompeo Leoni may have fostered such an influence notwithstanding Pompeo’s possible ownership of an example of Michelangelo’s crucifix.

The Ourense cast was acquired at auction through Sala Duran in Madrid on 21 May 1974, formerly belonging to the collection of the Marques del Toro y Conde de los Villares who resided in Segovia. It more recently was sold in 2015 at Alcala Subastas, auction 77, Lot 346, there ascribed to Juan Bautista Franconio, after a model by Michelangelo.

Bibliography:
NO. 13
PRIVATE COLLECTION, HEIRS OF THE MARQUES DE MIRANDA E EBRO; SEGOVIA, SPAIN

Made: aft. 1614-19
Cast: possibly by Lesmes Fernandez del Moral

A silver cast compared in its quality with the Segovia (no. 11) and Ourense (no. 12) casts. It is accompanied by a bronze cross cast after a natural wood prototype as observed on the aforementioned casts.

According to Gomez-Moreno and Lozoya, this cast was in the private collection of the Marchesa Miranda of Ebro, documented as an earlier possession belonging to their descendant Julia Melendez de Ayones. It presently resides within their line of family descent.

Bibliography:

NO. 14
CATHEDRAL OF CORDOBA

A silver cast with a gilt perizonium, attached to a silver processional cross. Morais considers this cast to be high-quality but later.

Bibliography:

NO. 15
COLLECTION OF ADOLFO L. RIBERA; BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA

A bronze cast cited by Wethey who suggested this cast could be one of three examples he commented as being available on the Madrid art market during the 1940s. This cast was featured during an exhibition of religious art in Buenos Aires in 1948.

A more careful examination is required to judge its location among the quality of surviving casts although a cursory observation suggests it could be a cast of reasonable quality.

Bibliography:
Catalogo de la exposicion de historia y arte religiosos, Buenos Aires, 1948, no. 92.

Wethey (1955) p. 131.
No. 16 - Polychromed bronze crucifix after a model by Michelangelo, collection of Jose Navas Parejo
**NO. 16**
**COLLECTION OF JOSE NAVAS PAREJO; GRANADA, SPAIN**

A polychromed bronze cast of moderate but reasonable quality, lacking the perizonium and attached to a wooden cross from the 18th century. There is some preservation of the polychromy in the mid-section of Christ where the perizonium was once featured. Judging by the location of preservation it appears this cast may have once featured a perizonium modeled after the Segovia example (no. 11) and could possibly be descendent of it. The polychromy lacks the finesse and quality of Francisco Pacheco’s execution and suggests the workmanship of a later provincial artist.

This crucifix was exhibited at the Sala de exposiciones Cajamurcia Belluga, Plaza Cardenal Belluga, in Murcia from 28 October 2008 – 11 January 2009.

*Bibliography:*
Javier Moya Morales ( Conservator, Fundación Rodríguez-Acosta), email communication, 2014.

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**NO. 17**
**CATHEDRAL OF ASTORGA**

Cast: b. 1677

A bronze cast with a high brass content. The perizonium, probably integrally cast, is made of the same metal. Morais suggests this cast is later, derived from or descendent of the Caminos Astorga cast made by Andres de Campo Guevara (no. 9). The object was donated to the church by Francisco Aguado III who served at the cathedral as bishop between 1668 and 1677, providing a *terminus ante quem* for its casting.

*Bibliography:*
No. 18 - Gilt bronze crucifix after a model by Michelangelo, possibly cast by Sebastiano Torrigiani and workshop, ca. 1573, private collection
NO. 18
GALLARUS ARTS, NY; FORMERLY OFFERED BY SOTHEBY’S

Made: ca. 1573
Cast: possibly by Sebastiano Torrigiani

A gilt bronze cast with integral perizonium. This cast is of particular importance in linking an awareness of the crucifix to Sebastiano Torrigiani and his workshop. This cast appears to copy or partly reproduce the prototype, being an intermediary leading to a freely conceived version inspired by it, for an altar cross once the property of—and probably commissioned by—Pope Clement VIII and attributed to Torrigiani or his workshop (Fig. 31).²⁹

The Gallarus Arts cast reflects the prototype in regard to its suave execution and the proper left foot of Christ crossing over the right. However, the arms of Christ are raised and the hands are newly remodeled. The upper abdomen is exchanged for a sternum terminating in a pointed arch versus a rounded one. The head, with a slightly remodeled face, has been turned to the proper-right. The legs are drawn slightly upward and turned. A tightly fitted perizonium is cast integrally.

In comparing the Clement VIII altar cross model and Gallarus Arts cast, the facial character of Christ is similar, as are the sternum and modeling of the nipples (Fig. 32). The perizonium, removable on the Clement VIII example, is shown cast integrally on the Gallarus Arts cast, with the knot and flare featured on the opposing hip.

The close proximity between the Gallarus Arts cast and the model used by Jacopo del Duca for the ciborium in Padula (no. 20) could suggest a cast like this one was acquired by Jacopo and featured on the ciborium’s Crucifixion panel, perhaps witting the model originated with Michelangelo (Fig. 33). This idea could suggest Jacopo never owned a mould of Michelangelo’s original crucifix model but instead may have acquired it from Sebastiano Torrigiani’s workshop. Jacopo’s brother, Ludovico, later collaborated with Torrigiani in realizing the bronze tabernacle for Sta. Maria Maggiore in Rome, for which he borrowed not only models from Jacopo for the relief panels but also models from Torrigiani’s workshop in order to dress several decorative features.³⁰


Fig. 31: Altar cross attributed to the workshop or ambit of Sebastiano Torrigiani, probably ca. 1592-96 and before 1598, Museo diocesano di Mantova
Fig. 32: Detail of a gilt bronze crucifix after a model by Michelangelo, possibly cast by Sebastiano Torrigiani and workshop, ca. 1573, private collection (no. 18; left); detail of a gilt bronze crucifix attributed to the workshop or ambit of Sebastiano Torrigiani, ca. 1591-96, Metropolitan Museum of Art (right)
No. 19
PRIVATE COLLECTION, OFFERED BY CHRISTIE'S

Made: ca. 1570s
Cast: probably in Rome

A gilt bronze cast of reasonable quality with some edits introduced to the prototype, inclusive of raised arms and an alternative perizonium of the late 16th century. The quality of this cast and its edits suggest it could be the production of a Roman founder, by or within Sebastiano Torrigiani’s ambit.

Provenance: Christie’s auction, 6 December 1988, Lot 178.

No. 19 - Gilt bronze crucifix after a model by Michelangelo, possibly cast by Sebastiano Torrigiani or his workshop, ca. 1570s, private collection
No. 20 - Bronze Crucifixion panel for a tabernacle by Jacopo del Duca, 1573-74, after a design by Michelangelo, Certosa di San Lorenzo, Padula
NO. 20
BRONZE TABERNACLE PANEL OF THE CRUCIFIXION;
CERTOSA DI SAN LORENZO IN PADULA, ITALY

Made: 1573-74
Cast: by Jacopo del Duca

An edited bronze version of the prototype cast integrally on a relief panel of the Crucifixion, after designs by Michelangelo. This panel, one of eight featuring scenes from the life of Christ, was cast by Michelangelo’s assistant, Jacopo del Duca. Wax residue still present on the reverse of the panel, along with that of the Last Supper panel, feature the date: 27 January 1574, providing a terminus ante quem for their casting. The panel has been left unfinished, probably due to budget constraints during its final sale to the Carthusians of Padula.

The crucifix featured on the panel displays edits observed also on the Gallarus Arts cast (no. 18), albeit cast in reverse (Fig. 33), and could suggest that Jacopo may not have inherited the model from Michelangelo’s workshop but may have instead acquired it from the workshop of Sebastiano Torrigiani. However, in theory, Jacopo’s potentially direct access to such a model cannot be entirely ruled-out.

Bibliography:


Fig. 33: Gilt bronze crucifix after a model by Michelangelo, possibly cast by Sebastiano Torrigiani and workshop, ca. 1573, private collection (no. 18; left); detail of a bronze Crucifixion panel, shown in reverse, for a tabernacle by Jacopo del Duca, 1573-74, Certosa di San Lorenzo, Padula (no. 20, right)
No. 21 - Bronze crucifix after a model by Michelangelo, possibly cast by Daniele da Volterra, second-half of the 16th cent., Metropolitan Museum of Art
Fig. 34: Bronze Crucifixion group after models attributed to Michelangelo, possibly cast by Daniele da Volterra, second-half of the 16th cent., Metropolitan Museum of Art

NO. 21
METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

Made: second-half of the 16th century
Cast: possibly by Daniele da Volterra

A debased bronze cast lacking the perizonium and paired with two bronze crucified thieves of like condition. The group were previously attached to crosses and set into a bronze base of later, possibly 19th century manufacture (Fig. 34). The arms of Christ have been manipulated to extend upward in a manner that reminiscés of nos. 18-20, but the arms are not quite as high and the object overall follows the features of the original model, albeit greatly diminished in fidelity. A side wound is added to Christ, unlike the original model.

It is possible the foundryman responsible for this cast, and that of its corresponding thieves, chose to extend the arms of Christ upward in order to suspend the corpus alongside the thieves to produce visual harmony. The penitent thief, for example, features upward extended arms that are likewise a modification from its original design. The responsible founder may have been aware all three models belonged originally to the hand of Michelangelo and therefore sought to preserve the group in bronze for posterity or for use as a workshop model, although the figures for the thieves possibly belong to an earlier period of invention, ca. 1520.31

Stefano Bardini’s presumably original suggestion that the group is related to Daniele da Volterra is possibly not far removed, as Daniele would have been a reasonable source for their grouping and casting.32 The group compare reasonably well in appearance and texture with the bronze statuette of Samson and two Philistines in The Frick Collection, believed cast by Daniele after Michelangelo’s model.33

Daniele’s possible involvement in this cast may account for its lackluster quality as Guglielmo della Porta was critical of Daniele’s skills as a sculptor and bronze founder34 and Jacopo, though accepting of Daniele’s work, was critical of the capabilities of his foundry assistants.35

Provenance: Sale of Stefano Bardini’s collection in 1918, acquired by the dealer Frank Schnittjer in New York and later sold to the MET in 1937.

Bibliography:
Christies auction, 5 June 1899, p. 15, pl. 4.
NO. 22
COLEGIO DEL PATRIARCA DE VALENCIA

Cast: b. 1774

A late bronze cast with high brass content. The perizonium, probably integrally cast, is made of the same metal.

In the 18th century the Spanish painter and traveler, Antonio Ponz, unwitting of its origins, observed and wrote about this cast’s Michelangelo-like character. His citation of the cast, published in 1774, provides a terminus ante quem for its casting.

The relationship of this cast with the brass-like 17th century Cathedral of Astorga example (no. 17) may suggest a single foundry active in producing aftercasts of the crucifix, could theoretically be responsible for nos. 17, 22 and 24 in this census.

Bibliography:

NO. 23
CATHEDRAL OF GRANADA

Cast: probably b. 1774

A bronze cast with high brass content. The perizonium, probably integrally cast, is made of the same metal. This cast may be related to nos. 17, 22 and 24.

This cast is displayed on the lectern of the choir in the Granada Cathedral. Morais deemed this a later cast.

Bibliography:

NO. 24
COLLECTION OF ÁNGEL SÁNCHEZ CABEZUDO; SEVILLE, SPAIN

Cast: probably b. 1774

This solid cast example visually exhibits a high-brass content and may also belong to those casts Morais identifies with a similar appearance. See nos. 17, 22 and 23.

Bibliography:
Castro and Fernández (2017)

NOS. 25-26
SANTA MARIA DE GUADALUPE MONASTERY (ROYAL MONASTERY OF SANTA MARIA DE GUADALUPE)

Morais cites these two as later bronze casts.

Bibliography:

NO. 27
GALLARUS ARTS, NY; FORMERLY OFFERED BY BONHAMS

A gilt bronze cast with a removable perizonium. A late cast, much reduced in quality and featuring some chased details in an attempt to preserve its features. The crucifix is mounted to an ebonized wooden cross with appliques of a skull, cherub head and titulus.

Provenance: Bonhams auction, 1 Jul 2008, Lot 34.
No. 24 - Brass cast of a crucifix after a model by Michelangelo, 18th or 17th cent., collection of Angel Sanchez Cabezudo

No. 27 - Gilt bronze cast of a crucifix after a model by Michelangelo, Gallarus Arts, NY
NO. 28
GALLARUS ARTS, NY; FORMERLY OFFERED BY BONHAMS

A late debased bronze cast featuring traces of gold and silver gilding, lacking a perizonium and mounted to a later ebonized base. This cast was possibly made in Spain judging by the visually significant amount of copper in the bronze.

Provenance: Bonhams auction, 7 Dec 2010, Lot 1019.

MODERN SILVER CASTS

In addition to the casts cited in this census, the Cathedral of Seville has twelve modern silver casts of the crucifix placed on different altars in the cathedral. They were cast in 1940 by an adept silversmith, Señor Seco, using the Seville cast (no. 4) as a master model. These crucifixes are attached to wooden crosses with a brass titulus.

Egido suggests the possibility some additional modern casts by Seco may have entered the art market, mistaken as 17th century originals. One probable example is a cast offered in 2016 by Abalarte (Fig. 35) and an additional example belongs to the Hospital of Venerable Priests in Seville.

Bibliography:
Egido (1980)
Endnotes

1 See Appendix A.


6 An XRF examination of the crucifix and perizonium may help indicate if the crucifix was cast earlier or in close-proximity with the perizonium.


8 There is a close affinity between these sculptures. For example, Sotheby’s catalogers (10 July 2014 sale, Lot 85) attributed a gilt bronze crucifix to Jacopo del Duca, after a model attributed to Michelangelo. However, the model more accurately follows the crucifix prototype attributed to Sebastiano Torrigiani as featured on an altar cross for Pope Clement VIII (Museo diocesano di Mantova), known also by a contemporaneous cast at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, (Inv. 44.142.2). It should be noted that a sketch of a nude Crucified Christ at the Louvre (Inv. 10 903), attributed to the school of Michelangelo, was first thought to copy the bronze crucifix here associated with Michelangelo, as noted by Paul Joannides, although more accurately follows Torrigiani’s nude crucifix inspired by Michelangelo’s model. See Paul Joannides (1996): Michelangelo and his Influence: Drawings from Windsor Castle. UK, p. 96; Paul Joannides (2003): Michel-ange élèves et copistes – dessins italiens du musee du louvre. RMN, Paris, no. 78, pp. 224-25 and Michael Riddick (2019): A possible Corpus, Saint and Siren by Sebastiano Torrigiani. Renbronze.com (accessed December 2020).


12 For a discussion on this see M. Riddick (2019): op. cit. (note 8), see Appendix.


14 An example of this during Michelangelo’s own lifetime is the bronze cast of a “river god” at the Museo Nazionale del Bargello (Inv. 32m) prepared from a wax model conceived by Michelangelo in 1521 as preparatory for the tomb of Lorenzo, Duke of Urbino, for the New Sacristy of San Lorenzo. The cast is thought to have been made by Alessandro Cesati during the 1530s-40s and appears in the Medici inventory of 1553. Its facture indicates an early desire by collectors to preserve wax and unbaked clay models by Michelangelo for sake of long-term preservation. See Eike Schmidt (2016): Michelangelo’s bronze River Gods: perpetuation, germination and modification. Lecture from A Michelangelo Discovery Symposium, University of Cambridge, UK, 6 July 2016. See also Victoria Avery (2018): Divine Pipe Dreams. Mature Michelangelo and the mastery of metal. Michelangelo: Sculptor in Bronze. London, p. 91.

15 Francisco Pacheco (1649): Arte de la pintura, su antiguedad y grandezas : descriuense los hombres eminentes que ha auído en ella, assi antiguos como modernos… Sevilla, Simon Faxardo, pp. 405-06, 611.


19 The analysis of casts in this census has been made by visual observation of photographs, occasionally of insufficient quality and is also partially reliant on the judgments of other scholars who have studied the casts in-person. However, to the present author’s knowledge, this census is the most complete survey conducted on the crucifix, its possible origin and the hierarchy of closeness of the casts with the original model.

20 F. Pacheco (1649): op. cit. (note 15), pp. 405-06, 611.


25 The use of an ebonized cross with cast metal finials is emphatic of the South German tradition but was also used in Guglielmo della Porta’s Roman workshop where he employed various journeymen like the Dutch cabinet maker Jan van Santen, et al. See Pietro Cannata (2011): Scultore in bronzo: Museo Nazionale del Palazzo di Venezia. Gangemi Editore, pp. 142-154.


27 Around 1611 and earlier, Pacheco’s Crucifixion paintings reproduced a titulus inscription typology proposed by the Duke of Alcala who was influential over Pacheco’s academic understanding of Christ’s death on the cross. Rather than the traditional Latin INRI acronym typical of most tituli, it instead featured the non-abbreviated Hebrew, Greek and Latin. From 1614 onward, Pacheco begins adjusting his tituli to one modeled after Luis de Alazar’s type, based on a relic found in Rome in 1492. This later inscription, making less use of classical Hebrew, was supported by Francisco de Rioja, but to the disdain of the Duke of Alcala who had specifically guided Pacheco formerly on the matter. Pacheco altogether did his best to remain neutral in the matter, being friends with both scholars. However, his painted Crucifixions, of which his two theologically-minded friends were acquainted, launched them into an academic debate that would eventually be publicized in 1619. See J.L. Rave Prieto (1992): op. cit. (note 22).

28 Lesmes Fernandez de Moral collaborated with the sculptor Pompeo Leoni on several commissions during the first decade of the 17th century. Kelley Helmstutler Di Dio cites a ‘crucifix by Michelangelo’ in the 1609 inventory of Pompeo Leoni’s estate. Of the 208 sculptures listed in the appraisal only casts made after Michelangelo’s famous sculptures are associated with an artist’s name. Margarita Estella Marcos suggested the crucifix cited in Pompeo’s 1609 inventory may have been Michelangelo’s original work, proposing it could have belonged to Pompeo’s father, Leone, who was a friend of Michelangelo’s and a recipient of his wax models. With reserve, Di Dio also notes the crucifix in Pompeo’s inventory could be a cast “after” Michelangelo and not an original artwork by him given the low value associated with it. She further observes the possibility it could be the work of Pompeo’s own son whose name was also Michelangelo, a problem which has confounded a clearer understanding of Pompeo’s inventory. Nonetheless, if the crucifix by Michelangelo, cited in Pompeo’s inventory, is a cast after the crucifix brought to Seville by Juan Bautista Franconio, it could suggest Lesmes Fernandez may have had access to an example in Pompeo’s collection. See Kelley Helmstutler Di Dio (2003): Leone Leoní’s Collection in the Casa Degli Omenoni, Milan: The Inventory of 1609. The Burlington Magazine, Vol. 145, No. 1205, August 2003, p. 573; Kelley Helmstutler Di Dio (2006): The chief and perhaps only antiquarian in Spain, Pompeo Leoni and his collection in Madrid. Journal of the History of Collections, Vol. 18, No. 2, pp. 140, 142; and Margarita Estella Marcos (1993): Algo más sobre Pompeo Leoni. Archivo Español de Arte 66, pp. 133-49.


32 Stefano Bardini had ascribed the crucifix to Zaccaria da Volterra, perhaps confusing him with Michelangelo’s friend and pupil, Daniele da Volterra, a specialist in bronze. Bardini associated the crucifix with Michelangelo, suggesting Volterra had modeled it after Michelangelo’s drawings. Deluxe illustrated catalogue of the treasures and antiquities illustrating the golden age of Italian art, belonging to the famous expert and antiquarian, Signor Stefano Bardini, of Florence, Italy. American Art Association, NY, 1918, no. 108.


36 “En una pieza donde se guardan las reliquias…y un crucifixo de marfil y otro de bronco en que se reconoce el grandioso character de Miguel Angel…” Antonio Ponz (1774): Viaje de España, ó cartas, en que se dá notícia de las cosas mas apreciables, y dignas de saberse, que hay en ella: Tomo Tercero, Vol. 3, Por d. Joachin Ibarra, Impresor de Cámara de S.M. Se hallará en la Libreria de Espanza, Puerta del Sol frente de la fuente, p. 273.
Fig. 36: Michelangelo Buonarroti, Tomb of Lorenzo de’ Medici, ca. 1524-31, Chapel of San Lorenzo, Florence (left); Guglielmo della Porta, Funeral monument of Paul III, ca. 1550-55, St. Peter’s Cathedral, Vatican City (right)
Appendix C

Michelangelo’s influence on Guglielmo della Porta

Guglielmo della Porta’s art significantly leaned on Michelangelo’s influence, attested by several of his works, most notably Guglielmo’s Tomb Monument of Pope Paul III (Fig. 36, right), executed between 1550-55, and brazenly borrowing from Michelangelo’s Tomb Monument for Lorenzo de’ Medici (Fig. 36, left).¹ Guglielmo’s signature on the monument, carved along Fidelity’s strap, emulates Michelangelo’s only signed work: his Pietà, autographed likewise on the figure of Mary. While Guglielmo was indebted to the influence of Michelangelo, opinions and actions concerning the monument for Pope Paul III produced tensions between them after 1549.² Toward the end of his career, Guglielmo complained his unrealized projects had been due to interventions from Michelangelo.³

Guglielmo met Michelangelo during the late 1530s, sometime after his arrival in Rome from Genoa in 1537.⁴ Giorgio Vasari notes Michelangelo’s recommendation of Guglielmo to the Farnese family as a restorer of the antiquities being uncovered at the Baths of Carcalla, notably replacing losses to excavated figures of Flora and Hercules in 1546.⁵ In 1560, when the original missing pieces were discovered and excavated, Michelangelo opposed replacing Guglielmo’s corrections with the original antiques, advocating the talent of contemporary sculptors as being equal to the ancients.⁶ In 1547, Michelangelo was instrumental in securing Guglielmo’s appointment as Bollatore Apostolico, keeper of the apostolic seal for papal bulls, a prestigious position earning him an annual salary of 800 scudi and entailing his assignment as chief portrait sculptor of the Pope.⁷

Although a talented draughtsman, evident by his surviving sketches,⁸ Guglielmo’s workshop may also have produced works based upon or inspired by Michelangelo’s designs. Michelangelo’s composition for a Descent from the Cross (Fig. 37, left)⁹ stimulated small-scale copies in low-relief, known by various gilt bronze and silver examples that could derive from Guglielmo’s workshop.¹⁰ Particularly, ivory examples made by his assistants, Nicolas Piper d’Arras (called Niccolò Pippi) and possibly also Jacobus Cornelis Cobaert, are tantamount to this idea (Fig. 37, right).¹¹

In 1569, Alessandro Farnese’s request of Guglielmo for “some crucifixes made of solid silver and other gilt metals” for St. Peter’s Basilica¹² evinces Guglielmo’s trusted skill in producing metal crucifixes by the late 1560s.¹³ Additionally, Guglielmo’s letter to his friend Bartolomeo Ammannati, that same year, mentions how he “once again” focused on casting crucifixes in gold and silver,¹⁴ implying a concentration on having cast them during an earlier epoch of his career.
Guglielmo’s interest in modeling and casting devotional crucifixes may have a notional origin in a commission to cast one on behalf of Michelangelo as early as the late 1530s and early 1540s while the two sculptors were advancing their friendship.

A wax *Crucifixion* relief attributed to Guglielmo, ca. 1555-56, possibly a preliminary or reduced model in preparation for fourteen larger panels Guglielmo designed to be cast in bronze for the mausoleum of the Emperor Charles V,\textsuperscript{15} exhibits a possible awareness of Michelangelo’s crucifix (Fig. 38). The articulation of Christ’s torso and upper body echoes the emaciated countenance of Michelangelo’s crucifix along with the superficial position of Christ’s head, turned-and-sunken with his hair tucked behind the proper left ear (Fig. 39). Guglielmo’s unique workmanship remains present in the relief’s other characteristics like the densely packed nervous intensity of the overall composition and its modeling.

Similar features are maintained in Guglielmo’s crucifix given to Maximilian II of Austria in 1569 (Fig. 40)\textsuperscript{16} where Christ’s outstretched arms—almost as wide as the sculpture is tall—and serene expression of Christ’s face are comparatively superficial. The rich attention to anatomy, featuring a semi-
Fig. 38: *Crucifixion*, ca. 1555-56, attributed to Guglielmo della Porta, wax-on-slate, Galleria Borghese, Rome
circular upper abdomen and similarly placed veins along the arms—albeit modeled in higher relief and without the subtlety and skill evident on Michelangelo’s crucifix—display a possible reference point.

While all probability points to a possible casting of the crucifix in Guglielmo’s workshop, it remains unlikely Guglielmo could have personally modeled it. There are notable differences between the crucifix and those securely identified or attributed to Guglielmo.

Guglielmo’s crucifixes boast a distinct Northern appearance in the facial character of his Christ’s, often articulated with a long face framed by fiery strands of hair modeled with the anxious energy apparent in his sketched works (Fig. 41). The forearms of his crucifixes are modeled stockier, relevant also to the hulking upper bodies of his crucifixes (Fig. 42). The nipples are elevated and lack defined areola while the umbilicus is rendered in the form of an inverted triangle (Fig. 42, left). A blood-dripping side wound is frequently portrayed on Guglielmo’s crucifixes and Guglielmo is not known to have produced any nude crucifixes. These characteristics collectively alienate Guglielmo’s known crucifixes from the example discussed here. However, if Michelangelo’s crucifix influenced Guglielmo’s later successful models, it may suggest a significant, if not understated, indebtedness to the master.
Fig. 40: Bronze crucifix, 1569, probably cast by Antonio Gentili da Faenza, after a model by Guglielmo della Porta, Kunsthistorisches Schatzkammer, Vienna
Fig. 41: Detail of a bronze crucifix, attributed to Guglielmo della Porta and workshop, third quarter of the 16th century, Van den Bergh collection (top, left); detail of a bronze crucifix, attributed to Guglielmo della Porta and workshop, third quarter of the 16th century, Tiroler Landesmuseum (top, right); detail of a bronze crucifix attributed to Guglielmo della Porta, ca. 1570, from an altar cross belonging to the Capponi family of Rome (bottom, left); detail of a bronze crucifix attributed to Guglielmo della Porta, ca. 1570, formerly with Coll & Cortés Fine Art (bottom, right)
Fig. 42: Bronze crucifix attributed to Guglielmo della Porta, ca. 1570, formerly with Coll & Cortés Fine Art (left); bronze crucifix attributed to Guglielmo della Porta or workshop, ca. 1570, formerly with Galerie Sismann (right)
Endnotes


2 C. Avery (2012): *op. cit.* (note 1).


8 W. Gramberg (1964): *op. cit.* (note 3).

9 Michelangelo’s sketches for this composition are found in the Teylers Museum, Inv. A25r; the British Museum, Inv. 1860,0616.4 and one in a Cologne private collection. For the latter see Francesca Alberti (2012): *La Descente de croix de Daniele da Volterra: iconographie, fonction et contexte*. *Artibus et historiae*, no. 66, p. 189-238.

10 For the most recent published census and discussion of examples of the *Deposition* in stucco, plaster, wax, bronze and silver, and their continued reproduction in Germany and Austria by Northern workshops, see Christina Schmidt (1993): *Das Kreuzabnahmerelief in der Dülmen Kreuzkapelle – eine MichelangeloKopie in Westfalen*. *Heft für Geschichte, Kinst und Volkskunde*, vol. 71, pp. 194-202.


13 In particular, Rosario Coppel has commented on Guglielmo’s intensified focus on producing religiously-themed sculpture from the 1560s onward. See Rosario Coppel [2012]: Guglielmo della Porta in Rome. *Guglielmo della Porta, A Counter-Reformation Sculptor*. Coll & Cortés, pp. 28-57.


16 Kunsthistorisches, Schatzkammer, GS E 14. The crucifix for Maximilian is less spirited and may suggest the temperament of finishing observed in casts produced by Antonio Gentili da Faenza after Guglielmo’s models. Gentili was actively collaborating with Guglielmo at-this-time, evident by Gentili’s production of twelve reliquaries, using Guglielmo’s models, for Pope Pius V in 1570. The appearance of this crucifix, which subdues Guglielmo’s emphatic nervous quality, along with its matte-like finish, are hallmarks of Antonio Gentili’s productions after Guglielmo’s models. See Michael Riddick (2019): *The Paxes and Reliefs of Antonio Gentili da Faenza*. Renbronze.com (accessed January 2021).