

	<p>Object: Maria mit Kind in einer Nische / Virgin and Child in a Niche</p> <p>Museum: Skulpturensammlung und Museum für Byzantinische Kunst Am Kupfergraben 10117 Berlin 030 / 266 42 54 01 sbm@smb.spk-berlin.de</p> <p>Collection: Skulpturensammlung</p> <p>Inventory number: 3044</p>
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Description

After Donatello
Donato di Niccolò di Betto Bardi
Florence ca. 1386-1466

Virgin and Child in a Niche

Gilt bronze
20,3 x 15,3 cm

Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Skulpturensammlung, Inv. SKS 3044.
Bode-Museum, on view.

Provenance

Berlin, Hainauer Collection (before 1906); Berlin, Skulpturensammlung/Kaiser-Friedrich-Museum (1906-1939); Berlin, storage (1939-1945); Merkers, storage (1945); Wiesbaden, Central Collecting Point (1945-1956); West Berlin, Skulpturensammlung/Museum Dahlem (1956-1990); Berlin, Skulpturensammlung/Museum Dahlem (1990-1997); Berlin, storage (1997-2006); Berlin, Skulpturensammlung/Bode-Museum (since 2006).

Acquisition

Gift of Henry Duveen, Duveen Brothers, London, 1906; as by Donatello. Acquisition file n°F. 1395/06 (untraced).

Other versions

- Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Skulpturensammlung, Inv. SKS 76. Painted stucco.
- Budapest, Szépművészeti Múzeum, Inv. No. 2049: Stucco, 69 x 32 cm.
- Florence, via del Corso.
- Florence, via Ghibellina.
- London, The Wallace Collection. Inv. S 297. Bronze, 20.3 x 15.3 cm.
- London, Victoria and Albert Museum, Inv. 7385-1861. Stucco, 47,5 x 32,5 cm; 20 x 15,5 cm without frame.
- Orbignano (Pistoia), Santa Maria. Marble.
- Paris, Musée du Louvre, Inv. 704. Terracotta, 21.8 x 16.9 cm.
- Ravenna. Marble.
- Sinalunga, SM delle Nevi.
- Vatican State, Museo Sacro. Marble (KIF 171507).
- Washington DC, National Gallery of Art, Kress Collection, Inv. 1957.14.131. Bronze.
- Formerly Amsterdam, private collection.
- Formerly Berlin, Oskar Hainauer collection. Bronze.
- Formerly Florence, Grassi collection. Bronze (Photo Kunsthistorisches Institut Florenz n°59966).
- Formerly London, Christie's, sale 7th July 1987, lot 150.
- Formerly New York, sale of the Raoul Tolentino collection, 1926, lot. 719. Stucco.
- Formerly Paris, Gustave Dreyfus collection.

Curatorial Files in the Bode-Museum

Letter from Ulrich Middeldorf to Peter Metz, 9 January 1961: discusses the rediscovered version in Orbignano.

Comment

This bronze relief of the Virgin and Child is known in several other versions, the closest two to the present one being in the National Gallery of Art, Washington DC and in the Wallace Collection, London. The Virgin holds her standing Child with her left hand, while gesturing invitingly toward the viewer with the other – a gesture echoed by the right hand of Christ, who holds onto the neck of his mother with his other hand, in a realistic depiction of trying to maintain balance. Both figures are seen behind a balustrade on which the Child is standing, and a vase is displayed; they stand out from a niche seen in perspective, which appears to be at some distance behind them.

It is not a coincidence that the name of Donatello has always been mentioned when discussing this typology of the Madonna and Child: the pose of the Madonna with the left arm parallel to the picture plane recalls another plaquette with a Donatellesque attribution (see Inv. SKS 1028), while the open right hand is a motif used in the High Altar of the Santo in Padua. The anatomy of the Child is typical of Donatello, as is the way his left arm is hidden behind his mother's head, with only the tips of the fingers discernable (see Inv. SKS 1940). The architecture of the niche, seen in perspective and with reference to Antique forms that are now in ruins, is present in many works by the artist, such as the bronze relief of the Feast of Herod made for the Baptistery Font in the Cathedral of Siena. Rather than

Donatello himself, whose direct style cannot be recognized in any version of the series, the critics have generally and convincingly seen the relief as by an artist from his school, probably after a model by the master (Bode 1897; Schubring 1907b. In 1961, a Madonna relief in marble was found in Santa Maria, Orbignano and attributed to Donatello by the local press (N. V. 1961); however, this relief is too weak to be b

Basic data

Material/Technique:	Bronze & Silber
Measurements:	Höhe x Breite x Tiefe: 20,5 x 15,5 x 0,9 cm (Rahmen:27,8x23,6x4,1cm); Höhe: 20,5 cm; Breite: 15,5 cm; Tiefe: 0,9 cm; Rahmenmaß: 27,8 x 23,6 x 4,1 cm

Events

Created	When	15. century
	Who	Donatello (1386-1466)
	Where	