

# TRINITY FINE ART

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STOLDO LORENZI  
Settignano (Florence) 1534 circa – Florence 1583

**Mars**, 1565-1575

Terracotta  
62.5 x 33 x 12 cm

**Provenance:**

Florence, private collection; Florence, Sotheby Parke Bernet, 1979, lot 955.

Mars, Roman god of war and battle, adopted in the Renaissance as the embodiment of the values of virtue and intellect, is here presented in one of his traditional iconographic variants. The deity appears completely naked, clad only in his own strength and his helmet for battle, in this case lacking the usual *lòphos* (plume or mane). The body, elegant and powerful in the musculature of the torso, is represented in an awkward, determined posture, with the back slightly arched to create a supple spiral that instils in the figure

continuous movement. Movement that is also created by the graceful articulation of the arms, with the left arm terminating in an elegant turn of the wrist and of the slightly open hand, which must originally have held one of his traditional attributes, the baton, while the right hand is sharply folded back on the powerful muscle of the buttock and clasps the handle of a sword, now lacking its blade.



In the past, the work appeared in a sale at Sotheby Parke Bernet (Florence, 1979) accompanied by a *Pluto* in terracotta (pl. 1) of similar dimensions with which it shared a dating to the beginning of the seventeenth century and the reference "da Alessandro Vittoria". This reference to an early Seicento Venetian artistic context seems plausible in the case of *Pluto*, who in the peculiar posture of the figure, portrayed with a sharp backward thrust of the torso and the

arms, seems clearly to derive from the inventions of Alessandro Vittoria.

The same cannot be said of the 'mannered' figure of *Mars*, which should, more specifically, be assigned to Florentine circles of the second half of the Cinquecento, as confirmed by the immediate iconographic and figurative references to the celebrated monumental bronze statue of *Mars Gradivus* executed between 1559 and 1560 by Bartolomeo Ammannati (Florence, Galleria degli Uffizi) from which it takes the emphatic and ultra-naturalistic anatomical features, the modulated sculptural projection of the musculature and the iconography: like this statue, the figure is entirely naked, wearing only the helmet and clasping a sword in his right hand and the baton in the left. The statue was modelled by Ammannati in 1559, when the transfer is documented from his workshop to the foundry in the Sapienza Nuova of "a clay model to cast a bronze Mars" which the sculptor had worked in that same context, as Borghini records, together with a *Venus* and the figures of two young boys (A. Cherubini, in *L'acqua, la pietra, il fuoco* 2011, pp. 396-397). We do not know the circumstances surrounding the commissioning of the magnificent sculpture, but considering the Florentine duke's devotion to the figure of the

god Mars, a deity under whose auspices he had been born and on whose principles of leadership, virtue and intellect his rule was inspired, it must have been conceived at his request.



Bartolomeo Ammannati, *Mars*, Florence, Galleria degli Uffizi

For this reason, the statue has been linked to the group of sculptures executed by Ammannati during the same period for the *Fontana di Sala Grande* (Heikamp 1978, pp. 137-138; Pizzorusso 2003), p. 84), destined for the south wall of the Salone dei Cinquecento in the Palazzo Vecchio (Florence, Museo Nazionale del Bargello; F. Loffredo, in *L'acqua, la pietra, il fuoco* 2011, pp. 370-375, n. 6), although the hypothesis cannot be excluded that the work, conceived as an autonomous group, can be identified as one of the "many statues in marble and bronze" that Cosimo I's favourite artist had executed during the same period for one of the family residences.

Prior to its transfer in 1583 to the garden of the Villa Medici in Rome, Ammannati's *Mars Gradivus* was a reference point for the young generations of artists who at the beginning of the 1570s gravitated to the circles of the newly founded Accademia del Disegno (1563). The present *Mars* in fact appears to have been inspired by this prototype, probably conceived as a commemorative emblem to Cosimo I, and perhaps created as a demonstration model to be translated into a monumental marble destined for the rooms of a prestigious residence, or a bronze cast together with other figures of profane subjects to constitute a cycle of divinities for a studiolo.

The skill and anatomical virtuosity with which the torso is modelled, consisting of a modular web of pulsating muscles, the tendinous meticulousness of the perfectly toned legs is rendered, and the extremely high level of finish of the whole figure, carried out with rapid strokes of the batten and more cursory passages with the fingers only on the face and in the surface pattern of the helmet, does not exclude the hypothesis that the work was originally conceived as some sort of stylistic exercise.

This was quite a common practice for artists in an academic environment and in the principal sculpture workshops, aimed at refining expressive licence, perfecting design and skills in the field of copying from life through the study of the naked human figure transformed into a mythological subject in clay. Emblematic in this regard is the engraving by Agostino Veneziano depicting the *Academy of Baccio Bandinelli* (Florence, Biblioteca Marucelliana;(T.Mozzati, in *Baccio Bandinelli* 2014, pp. 528-529) in which the sculptor is showing to his pupils, intent on studying its form, the terracotta model of a *Venus*, while

on the table and in the background are visible other statues of the same size as *Mars*, slightly greater than a *braccio fiorentino*, academic iconographic and postural epitomes taken from the most illustrious examples by the masters of the Florentine Cinquecento. The work also fully corresponds to the theories of Benvenuto Cellini, advocate of the 'primacy' of the sculptural model over drawing, of the 'ignudo' over the

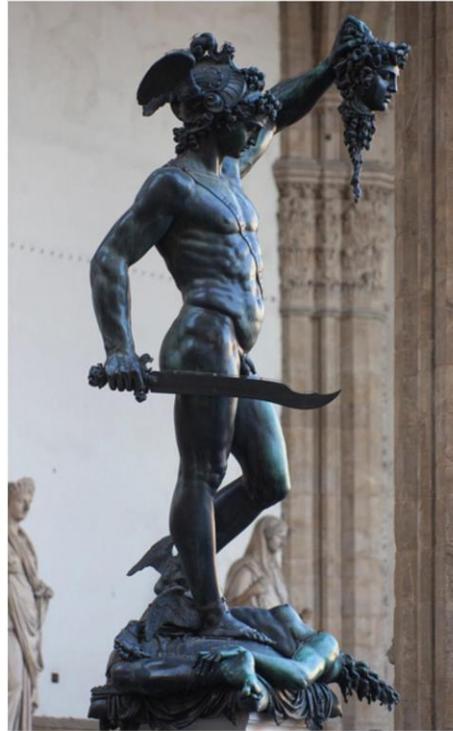


Agostino Veneziano, *Bandinelli's Academy*, 1531, Florence, Biblioteca Marucelliana

clothed body, and of a larger type of model (circa 60 cm) in comparison to that mentioned by Vasari (half a *braccio*), executed to a definitive level in finish and corresponding perfectly, in scale, to its monumental counterpart (*Scritti d'arte del Cinquecento* 1971-1977, I, p. 597; II p. 1932; Krahn 2006, pp. 45-61).

The present *Mars* might well have been created for this purpose, modelled with mimetic meticulousness and anatomical virtuosity by an outstanding master, capable of amalgamating in the forms and postures quotations from the principal sculptural models

produced during the 1550s and 1560s. The adherence to a representation of nudity still bound to the Michelangelesque example of *David* and, in general, to the theme of the powerfully strong, static male figure, as codified in the works produced by Ammannati and Bandinelli for the celebrated competition for *Neptune* in Piazza della Signoria, seems marginal in the present work. Here instead we can glimpse keen references to the latest Mannerist tendencies with regard to the nude championed by artists such as Benvenuto



Benvenuto Cellini, *Perseus*, Florence, Loggia dei Lanzi

Cellini in *Perseus*, Pierino da Vinci in his celebrated *River god* (Paris, Musée du Louvre, 1548;), and above all Giambologna, to whom is owed the codification of a new means of interaction between the human body and the space surrounding it.



Pierino da Vinci, *River God*, Paris, Musée du Louvre

Equally evident in the figure of *Mars* is the debt to the innovations introduced by the Flemish master in the statue of *Neptune* executed in 1563 for the fountain in Piazza Maggiore in Bologna (Tuttle 2006, pp. 327-331). In this work, unlike Ammannati's Florentine *Mars*, the body of the god of the sea no longer seems imprisoned in a cage of impressive muscles, or unlike Baccio Bandinelli's *Hercules and Cacus* for Piazza della Signoria it does not seem pervaded by the contractions of a tumultuous contained strength.



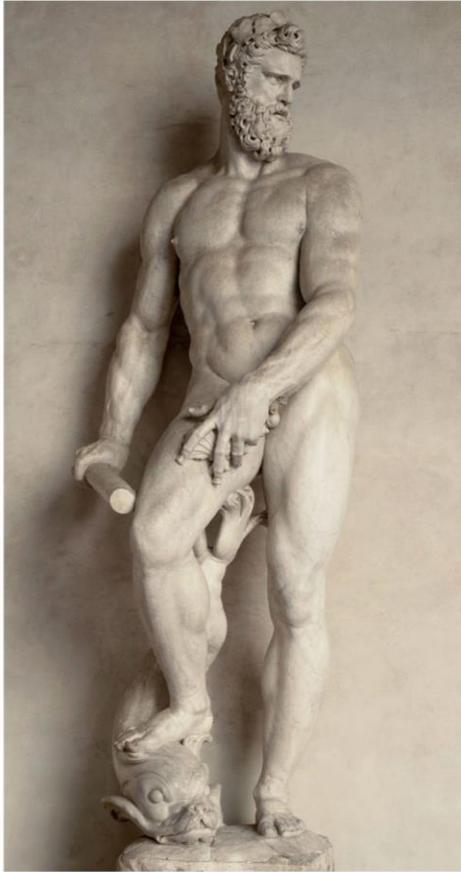
Giambologna, *fontana del Nettuno*, particolare. Bologna, Piazza Maggiore

In its invention, the present *Mars* is indebted to the colossal figure in Bologna which, although greater in volume, is liberated in the forms of a powerful musculature that pervades the whole body and in a licentious, elegant pose, almost dance-like, articulated around the pivot of the left leg, with a barely hinted inclination of the back, the

slight advance of the arm and a tenuous twist of the shoulders accompanied by the lifting of the other leg, not in the act of walking, but simply to confer a balanced lightness on the monumental figure. Similarly close is the comparison with a Florentine *Neptune* (Florence, Museo Nazionale del Bargello;), the only colossal work now known by Giambologna carved in marble between 1571 and 1573; a work which, although in a different pose, is one of the prototypes closest to the composition and to the anatomical conception of the present *Mars*, studied in a sort of postural development of the Giambologna colossus which must have been known to artists in Florence at the time in numerous terracotta models, documented today in at least four examples (D. Zikos, in *Giambologna* 2006, pp. 246-247, n. 48).

The same can be said of the comparison between the present *Mars* and Pierino da Vinci's *River god* (Paris, Musée du Louvre;) sculpted in Pisa by 1549, while he was working there for Luca Martini. Despite the anatomical differences with regard to the ephebe-like body

of Pierino's statue, in the work discussed here we can observe the same anatomical ideal, characterised by the fluid unfolding of the musculature lacking volumetric excesses and exaggerated muscular contractions, displaying in the sinuous elegance of the body rotating around the inner pivot of the leg a similar propensity to interact with the surrounding space.



Giambologna, *Nettuno*, Florence, Museo Nazionale del Bargello

This venture into the Florentine trends of the mid-Cinquecento combined with the abilities displayed by the author of *Mars* to assimilate and rework significant sculptural prototypes by Cellini, Pierino da Vinci and Giambologna, justify its attribution, which will here be supported by biographical and, in particular, stylistic considerations, to the hand of the sculptor Stoldo di Gino Lorenzi, who belonged to a family of stonemasons from Settignano, and whose bond to these three masters was profound.

His initial training in painting, which, in an entirely implausible manner, Raffaello Borghini (Borghini [1584] ed. 1967, pp. 606-609), situated in the workshop of his contemporary Girolamo Macchietti, seems difficult to believe, while it appears clear that, in keeping with a consolidated family tradition and in line with the careers of his brother Antonio and cousin Giovanni Battista, Stoldo must immediately have had an induction

into the art of sculpture. Following an initial training with his father Gino, a carver, and most probably a period in the workshop of Niccolò Tribolo, his first documented activity was alongside Antonio in 1553 on the completion of sculptures for the *Fontana del Labirinto* and the statue of *Aesclepius* for the Medici Villa dell'Olmo in Castello, a workshop which Tribolo had left incomplete at his death (Keutner 1965). Stoldo, however, had already revealed his talents between 1549 and 1551, in the workshop of Benvenuto Cellini, where his brother Antonio di Gino and cousin Battista Lorenzi were already active, participating in the casting of the statue of *Perseus* for the Loggia dei Lanzi (Cellini [1558-1562] ed. 1829, pp. 161, 226), indicative of a multi-skilled training that also included the art of metalwork, which was to culminate in the following years in the execution, between 1566 and 1571, of the magnificent *Neptune* for the fountain of the same name in the Boboli Gardens (G. Capecchi, in *Palazzo Pitti* 2003, pp. 626-627).

At the beginning of the 1560s, Stoldo Lorenzi, by then fully absorbed into the dynamics of Medici patronage and that of the most influential Florentine nobility, was described by Vasari in the guise of a prolific sculptor who was to be included “among the finest youths in his profession, and works with them in the most prestigious places” and as a young artist who “[was] continuously working and acquiring greatly among his academic companions honour and fame” (Vasari [1568], ed. 1906, VI, p. 637, VIII, p. 618).

The initial phase of his activity as a sculptor, which according to the sources began with a monumental statue of *Saint Paul* sent to Portugal and as yet unidentified, must have taken place in the shadow of one of the most farsighted and influential characters of the time, the Florentine poet, scholar and academic Luca Martini, a prominent figure at the Medici court. Martini had been appointed by Cosimo I de' Medici to the post of Provveditore of Pisa, with the task of transforming the city, the new western boundary of the Medici state, into a second artistic capital for the court. To this end, between 1547 and 1553 Martini, who had previously excelled as the creator of the iconographic programme for the sculptural decoration of the villa in Castello then executed by Tribolo, had summoned to Pisa firstly Pierino da Vinci and, following his death, Stoldo Lorenzi, who became the leading sculptor working in the city for at least six years (Utz 1967, pp. 47-69; Heikamp 1995 pp. 67-71; Nesi 2011, pp. 54-71).

In Pisa he produced an *Annunciation* for the church of Santa Maria della Spina (1564-1567) and, through the intercession of Giorgio Vasari, was involved in the architectural

and decorative redevelopment of Piazza dei Cavalieri for which he executed a coat of arms of Cosimo I, unveiled to the public in 1564. In a sort of emulation of Pierino da Vinci and in a fruitful rivalry, during this period Stoldo produced pendant works to those executed by his predecessor, such as the relief with *Cosimo I receiving Tribute from Florence* (now Norfolk, Holkham Hall), a companion to the relief with *Cosimo I expelling the Vices from Pisa* (Vatican City, Musei vaticani) left unfinished by Pierino da Vinci and then completed by Lorenzi, or the statue, now lost and of subject unknown, which, like Pierino's *River god* of 1549, was then acquired by Eleonora da Toledo for the garden of her brother Garcia's Villa di Chiaia, near Naples (Borghini [1584] ed. 1967, pp. 606-609; Heikamp 1995, pp. 67-71).

The strong ties that Stoldo established during this period with the Medici artistic circles were not only confined to Pisa. The sculptor maintained solid relationships with Florence, where he had a workshop, and particularly with Cosimo I himself, who, via the architect David Fortini, in 1565 appointed the sculptor to execute ten funerary epitaphs in honour of the deceased Carlo de' Medici (Cicconi 2006). In addition, thanks to the friendship and respect between Lorenzi and Vasari, during the same period the sculptor was involved in a series of important artistic projects embarked upon in Florence for the celebration of the marriage of Francesco I de' Medici and Joanna of Austria. For the ducal couple's entry into Florence in 1565, under the guidance and to the design of Giorgio Vasari, a series of portentous arches *all'antica* were set up, decorated with dynastic-celebratory themes, along the route of the marriage procession (Lepri 2017). These were complex and artificial ephemeral devices, decorated with reliefs, sculptures and painting with Stoldo Lorenzi also playing a prominent role in their execution. He participated, together with his brother Antonio, Giovanni di Scherano Fancelli, Pompilio di Baldassare Lanci and Francesco Porticini, in the execution of one of the eight *Emperors* of the Austrian dynasty, monumental figures in terracotta intended to decorate the arch located near the Loggia dei Tornabuoni close to the church of Santa Trinità, he worked on the decoration of the door panels of the device placed at the entrance to the Duomo, executing one of the ten terracotta reliefs with *Stories of the Virgin* - the *Circumcision* - a task in which Giambologna, Domenico Poggini, Giovanni Bandini, Vincenzo de' Rossi and Francesco Moschino also participated. Finally, for the arch situated next to Palazzo Medici, he executed the statues of *Victory* and *Labour*, which must have been placed alongside *Tranquillity* and *Surety* by Francesco Moschino and have accompanied the terracotta statues of *Virtue* and *Fortune* by Valerio Cioli (Lepri 2017, p. 81, 95, 116-121).



Stoldo Lorenzi, *Neptune*, Florence, Galleria Palatina, Boboli Garden

The success that resulted from this celebratory undertaking for the Medici dynasty and the reputation it earned him for his skill in modelling and sculpting on a monumental scale guaranteed him the commission, which came directly from Cosimo I himself, for the bronze statue of *Neptune* destined for the Boboli Garden (G. Capecchi, in *Palazzo Pitti* 2003, pp. 626-627, n. 160).

For a carnival masquerade, known as the *Genealogia degli Dei* (Genealogy of the Gods), organised by Cosimo I in February 1566, Stoldo Lorenzi presumably took part in the execution of one of the magnificent floats, the bold ephemeral devices adorned with paintings, reliefs and monumental sculptures of figures of the gods designed by

Giorgio Vasari, capable of influencing for years to come the figurative imagery of the principal artists working for the Medici dynasty. For example, for the execution of the great bronze sculpture in the Boboli Gardens, Stoldo drew inspiration from the *Carro di Nettuno*, and similarly from another Medici float, dedicated to Misenus, Aeneas' helmsman, derived the concept for the marble statue of the same subject carved by the artist in 1571 for the villa of Antonio Corsi in Sesto Fiorentino (Pegazzano 2010, pp. 41-47). The marble figure of



Stoldo Lorenzi, *Misenus*, from the Villa Corsi a Sesto Fiorentino (Firenze), previously collection Wilhelm Henrich, Frankfurt

*Misenus* has recently been identified by Fernando Loffredo in a statue formerly belonging to the Wilhelm Henrich collection in Frankfurt, now known from a photographic reproduction in the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florence and a drawing executed in the seventeenth century by Tommaso del Verrocchio showing it in its original location (Loffredo 2012, pp. 61-63, figs. 15-17). *Mars* displays a remarkable affinity with *Misenus* in the anatomical composition of the torso; the absolutely identical position of the legs; the modulated and corpulent definition of the abdominal muscles; the delicate upward stretching and twisting of the chest and the consequent arching of the back balanced by the movement of the left leg.



Stoldo Lorenzi, *Miseno*, from the Villa Corsi a Sesto Fiorentino (Firenze), previously collection Wilhelm Henrich, Frankfurt

During this period, Stoldo's talents in sculpture and in metalwork earned him commissions for the execution of an *Abraham* and a *King David* in terracotta (1567) for the *Prophets* cycle in the Cappella di San Luca in Santissima Annunziata (the latter was never executed and was then modelled by Giovanni Angelo Lottini) (Summers 1969-1979, pp. 67-90), working alongside the principal Florentine sculptors.



Stoldo Lorenzi, *Abraham*, Florence, Church of Santissima Annunziata



Stoldo Lorenzi, *Amphitrite*, London, Victoria & Albert Museum

The crowning point of Lorenzi's career was achieved, however, through his participation in the decoration of the Studiolo of Francesco I in Palazzo Vecchio, the most exclusive workshop of Medici patronage involving the most prominent painters in Vasarian circles and the greatest experts in the field of metalwork between 1570 and 1573.

Vincenzo Danti, *Venus*  
 Domenico Poggini, *Pluto*  
 Vincenzo de' Rossi, *Vulcan*



Stoldo Lorenzi, *Amphitrite*



Bartolomeo Ammannati, *Opi*  
 Giambologna, *Apollo*  
 Elia Candido, *Boreas*  
 Giovanni Bandini, *Juno*



For this setting, he was commissioned to execute one of the bronze deities, *Amphitrite*, which, in keeping with the complex iconographical programme drawn up by Vincenzo Borghini, was to be placed alongside other divinities created by Giambologna, Bartolomeo Ammannati, Giovanni Bandini, Vincenzo Danti, Elia Candido, Vincenzo de' Rossi and Domenico Poggini (Conticelli 2007, p. 199). A version of Stoldo's *Amphitrite*, completed in 1573, is now known in stucco (London, Victoria and Albert Museum), acquired by the museum in Florence during the nineteenth century as an early replica of the bronze prototype (Pope-Hennessy 1964, II, pp. 450-451. We cannot say whether it is a model prepared by the artist himself prior to casting or a more recent copy, however, considering the difficulty in interpreting now the Florentine original placed *in situ* in a niche in the Studiolo, the stucco in London enables us to grasp how, once again, in a work by Stoldo dating to the early 1570s, that particular propensity, already highlighted in the case of *Misenus* and the present *Mars*, towards a *serpentinata* dynamic of the bodies in keeping with the latest developments in Florentine art and with the historiographical debate arising from the "primacy of the arts" is evident.



Stoldo Lorenzi, *Annunciation, Moses and St. John the Baptist*, Milan, Santa Maria dei Miracoli presso San Celso

The fame acquired by Stoldo Lorenzi within Medici circles of patronage and those of the Florentine nobility spread well beyond the confines of Florentine territories. 1572 marked the date of the commission Lorenzi obtained from the deputies of the Milanese church of Santa Maria dei Miracoli presso San Celso for the execution of a series of statues and reliefs for the façade and interior of the building, on which he worked together with the young Annibale Fontana (Kris 1930, pp. 201-253; Zanuso 2004-2005, pp. 165-172). Of

the statues executed by the Florentine for the external façade it is possible to attribute to him those of the group of the *Annunciation*, and the reliefs of the *Adoration of the Magi* and the *Flight into Egypt*, the statue of the prophet *Ezekiel* and those of *Adam* and *Eve*, destined for two specular niches at the lowest level of the decoration; in addition, he executed *Saint John the Baptist* and *Moses* inside the church by the nave crossing. An substantial series of figures, larger than lifesize, occupied Stoldo Lorenzi from 1573 - the year in which he is first documented in that workshop - until 1581, when he returned to Pisa for the final stage of his career prior to his death in 1583 (Casini 1987, pp. 186-218; Cicconi 2006).



Baccio Bandinelli, *Adam and Eve*, Florence, Museo Nazionale del Bargello



Stoldo Lorenzi, *Adam*, Milano, Museo del Castello Sforzesco

The sculptural complex in Milan still constitutes the most identifiable phase in Stoldo Lorenzi's development, rich in the preceding years in documentary and historiographic references but from an artistic point of view referable only to very few great works.

The recent identification of the statue of *Misenus* as the work commissioned from him by Antonio Corsi (1571-1573) has permitted a more accurate assessment of the characteristics of his work before his move to Milan, to which can also be added the terracotta statue of

*Mars*, presented here, a valuable new component in Lorenzi's artistic development. The present sculpture can in fact be assigned to a time frame between 1565 and 1575, and be considered in a close relationship of reciprocal dependency and development with *Misenus*, the last work Lorenzi executed before Milan, and *Adam*, the first sculpture produced for the façade of Santa Maria presso San Celso inspired in its iconography by the Old Testament figure of the same subject executed in 1551 by Baccio Bandinelli for the Duomo of Santa Maria del Fiore.



Stoldo Lorenzi, *Adamo*, Milan, Museo del Castello Sforzesco, previously Santa Maria dei Miracoli presso San Satiro



Similarities with the monumental statue of *Adam* (S. Zanuso, in *Museo d'arte antica* 2014, pp, 57-58) appear even more pronounced and can easily be ascertained now that the work is no longer on the outside of the church of Santa Maria dei Miracoli but conserved in the Museo del Castello Sforzesco where, following a recent restoration it is displayed in a large gallery and lit by natural light, which creates the same evocative effect of the diffused play of light on the musculature also seen in *Mars*. A comparison of the heads of the two sculptures is revealing, as well as the anatomical composition, similarly broad and

dictated by an identical upward twist which determines a precise contraction and lengthening of the abdominal and pectoral muscles that stand out for their soft and modulated projection. In addition, both figures display a similar backward arching of the back, balanced by the delicate resting on the left leg and by the magniloquent and considered twist of the heads.



Stoldo Lorenzi, *Adam*, Milan, Museo del Castello Sforzesco



Stoldo Lorenzi, *Adam*, Milan, Museo del Castello Sforzesco

This comparison reveals such strong similarities between the two sculptures on a postural and anatomical level as to suggest that the figurative prototype of *Mars*, perhaps used earlier by Lorenzi in Florence for a larger cast in bronze, in what might have been a

similar cycle to the one in the Studiolo of Francesco I, was subsequently also adopted as a reference model for the monumental Milanese statue, which differs from the present terracotta only in some details in the positioning of the arms, the delicate inclination of the head and for an adaptation of the iconographical attributes appropriate to an Old Testament subject such as *Adam*.

In addition, the same appears to have occurred for the *Eve* in Milan, conceived as a variant of the bronze *Amphitrite* cast for the Studiolo of Francesco I and therefore also to be considered the product of the same terracotta model.



Stoldo Lorenzi, *Eve*, Milan, Santa Maria dei Miracoli presso San Celso



Stoldo Lorenzi, *Amphitrite*, Florence, Palazzo Vecchio, Studiolo Francesco I

Finally, in confirmation of the attribution to Stoldo, should be added the comparisons between *Mars* and the works carved during the same period by his cousin Battista Lorenzi, who succeeded him in the Pisan workshops after 1583 (Utz 1973, pp. 37-70; Keutner 1982; Schmidt 2000, pp. 73-80), one of the most influential Florentine sculptors of the time, after his masters Bandinelli and Cellini. Celebrated above all for the portrait of Michelangelo destined for his tomb in Santa Croce, Battista Lorenzi was also responsible for the marble group representing *Alpheus and Arethusa*, executed between 1568 and 1570

for Alamanno Bandini's Villa il Paradiso (New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art) the *Ganymede* destined for the Boboli fountain of the same name and the celebrated *Perseus* (c. 1575) for Jacopo Salviati's palazzo, known as the Palazzo Nonfinito;



Battista Lorenzi, *Alpheus and Aretusa*, New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, formerly Florence, Villa il Paradiso

works closely related to the anatomical and postural concept embodied in the present *Mars* and in all of Stoldo's works, differing from these only in the more imposing rendering of the anatomy, a powerful formal synthesis and a solid monumentality.



Battista Lorenzi, *Perseus*, Florence, Palazzo Salviati detto palazzo Nonfinito.



Florentine Sculptor(Domenico Poggini?), *Jason*, London, Victoria and Albert Museum

Characteristics that are also evident in the statue of *Jason*, London, Victoria and Albert Museum, 140cm), attributed in the past by Hildegard Utz (1975, pp. 63-78) to Domenico Poggini, companion and assistant on various commissions to Stoldo Lorenzi and also favoured by Cosimo I, which could represent an eloquent example of the possible original destination for the *Mars* presented here.

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### Stoldo Lorenzi – Biographical notes

1533/34 - born in Settignano near Florence, son of Gino di Antonio, a stonemason

1549/1551 - he appears in the payments for his work on the casting of Benvenuto Cellini's *Perseus*

1553 - collaborates alongside his brother Antonio Lorenzi on the execution of the *Fontana grande* and of *Aesclepius* for the Medici Villa dell'Olmo, or Castello in Sesto Fiorentino

1554/1555 - Carves the statue of *Saint Paul* (now lost) sent to Portugal

1555 - summoned to Pisa by Luca Martini following the death of Pierino da Vinci. For Martini, he executes a statue whose subject is unknown, which together with the River god made by Pierino in 1549 is sent to Naples for the garden of the Villa di Chiaia, the property of Garcia da Toledo, brother of Eleonora da Toledo.

1555/1556 - Completes the relief left unfinished by Pierino da Vinci representing *Cosimo I expelling the Vices from Pisa* (Vatican City, Musei Vaticani); executes the relief depicting *Cosimo I receiving Tribute from Florence* (Norfolk, Holkham Hall)

1562/1564 - involved through the intervention of Giorgio Vasari in the architectural and decorative rearrangement of Piazza dei Cavalieri in Pisa, also executing the coat of arms of Cosimo I.

1564/1567 - produces a monumental marble *Annunciation* for the church of Santa Maria della Spina.

1565 - To mark the celebrations for the marriage of Francesco I de' Medici and Joanna of Austria, under the direction of Giorgio Vasari and following a programme he had drawn up, imposing arches "all'antica" were erected along the streets of Florence. For the occasion, Stoldo executed one of the eight *Emperors* of the Austrian dynasty, monumental figures in terracotta intended to adorn the arch situated near the Loggia dei Tornabuoni close to the church of Santa Trinità, alongside his brother Antonio, Giovanni di Scherano Fancelli, Pompilio di Baldassarre Lanci and Francesco Porticini. He also worked on the decoration of the doors of the float placed at the entrance to the Duomo, executing one of the ten terracotta reliefs with *Stories of the Virgin* - the *Circumcision* - a task in which

Giambologna, Domenico Poggini, Giovanni Bandini, Vincenzo de' Rossi and Francesco Moschino were also involved.

For the arch located near Palazzo Medici, he also executed the statues of *Victory* and *Labour*, pendants to Francesco Moschini's *Tranquillity* and *Surety*, and *Virtue* and *Fortune* by Valerio Cioli.

1565 - commissioned by Cosimo I to execute ten funerary epitaphs in honour of the deceased cardinal Carlo de' Medici.

1566 - Stoldo probably participated in the carnival masquerade of the *Genealogia degli Dei* organised by Cosimo I in February 1566 to a programme by Vasari, which consisted of a parade of imposing ephemeral devices adorned with paintings, reliefs and monumental sculptures with figures of the gods.

1566/1571 - commissioned by Cosimo I to execute the monumental Neptune for the fountain of the same name in the Boboli Gardens.

1567 - For the *Prophets* cycle in the Cappella di San Luca in Santissima Annunziata, Stoldo commissioned to model in terracotta a monumental *Adam* (executed and in loco) and a *King David* (not executed and subsequently modelled by Giovanni Angelo Lottini).

1570 - with his cousin Battista Lorenzi, he witnesses Benvenuto Cellini's second will.

1570/1573 - Stoldo makes one of the bronze divinities, *Amphitrite*, for the celebrated studiolo of Francesco I in Palazzo Vecchio, for a series in which Giambologna, Bartolomeo Ammannati, Giovanni Bandini, Vincenzo Danti, Elia Candido, Vincenzo de' Rossi and Domenico Poggini also participated at the same time.

1571 - executes the marble statue of *Misenus* for the villa of Antonio Corsi in Sesto Fiorentino.

1572/1581 - Stoldo Lorenzi's fruitful period in Milan occurred during these years. In 1572, the sculptor obtained the commission for the statues on the façade and interior of the church of Santa Maria dei Miracoli presso San Celso, aided by the young Annibale Fontana. Stoldo's works on the façade include the *Annunciation* group, the reliefs of the *Adoration of the Magi* and the *Flight into Egypt*, the statue of the prophet *Ezekiel*, and those of *Adam* and *Eve*, destined for two specular niches on the lowest level of the decoration. In the interior, near the crossing, the figures of *Saint John the Baptist* and *Moses*.

1581 - he is once again in Pisa, involved in works for the Fabbrica del Duomo

1583 - dies in Florence by 6 September.

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