



ARCHIVED PRESS RELEASE
from
THE FRICK COLLECTION

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***RENAISSANCE AND BAROQUE BRONZES
FROM THE HILL COLLECTION***

**PRESENTED EXCLUSIVELY AT THE FRICK THROUGH INSTALLATIONS
THAT REFLECT THE HILLS' DIVERSE HOLDINGS**

January 28 through June 15, 2014



In the Hills' home, Giambologna-school bronzes with Ed Ruscha's *Seventeenth Century*, 1988, Collection of Mr. and Mrs. J. Tomilson Hill; © Ed Ruscha; photo: Michael Bodycomb

This winter and spring the Frick will present *Renaissance and Baroque Bronzes from the Hill Collection*, a distinguished private collection of thirty-four statuettes, sculptures, and a relief. These works represent more than twenty years of avid engagement on the part of Janine and J. Tomilson Hill, collectors who are better known for their interest in post-war painting. The bronzes, which have never before been shown to the public as a group, span the late fifteenth to the eighteenth centuries, from the inception of the genre in Renaissance Italy to its conclusion as a European wide phenomenon during the late Baroque period. Many of the statuettes were

created by renowned sculptors such as Andrea Riccio, Giambologna, and Adriaen de Vries, while others were made by lesser-known Northern artists such as Caspar Gras and Hans Reichle, whose talents have only recently begun to be appreciated. At the Frick, the Hills' statuettes will be shown in an installation that differs from earlier bronze exhibitions, such as the acclaimed monographic presentations on Antico (2012), Riccio (2008), and Willem van Tetrode (2003) as well as the Fitzwilliam (2005) and Quentin Collections (2004–5). In keeping with the residential character of the museum founded by Henry Clay Frick, where bronzes inhabit galleries along with paintings of different schools and eras, the Hills' sculptures will be shown with selected Old Master and modern paintings as well as a contemporary sculpture in displays that reflect the couple's diverse holdings and collecting sensibilities.



Giambologna (Douai, 1529–1608, Florence), *Pacing Horse* (detail), cast ca. 1573, bronze, 25.1 x 28.7 cm, Collection of Mr. and Mrs. J. Tomilson Hill; Maggie Nimkin Photography

Central to the exhibition, however, is the remarkable group of bronzes assembled thoughtfully and very personally over time by Janine and Tom Hill. Frick Curator Denise Allen characterizes these works as follows, “Strength, quality, and diversity mark these holdings. Masters of the Italian, French, German, and Dutch schools are represented here. The subject matter varies as well, with depictions of pagan gods interspersed with those of Christ, and images of secular rulers. A feeling of energy dominates the Hill collection. The emotional intensity of the bronze figures unites them creating a vibrant whole that transcends the sum of its diverse parts.” Allen adds, “It has been nearly one hundred years since Henry Clay Frick acquired his collection of Italian Renaissance bronzes. We are thrilled to show both very different collections under one roof, each to be considered with respect to the individual tastes of the collectors who acquired them.” *Renaissance and Baroque Bronzes from the Hill Collection* is organized for the Frick by its Curator Denise Allen, who was responsible for the Frick’s participation in all of the bronze exhibitions mentioned above.

CONTRAST AND KINSHIP BETWEEN OLD-MASTER AND MODERN TRADITIONS



J. Tomilson and Janine Hill discuss their collecting with Frick Director Ian Wardropper; photo: Michael Bodycomb

In their permanent location at the Hill’s New York home, the majority of the Renaissance and Baroque statuettes are shown with contemporary paintings by artists including Lichtenstein, Warhol, and Bacon in a striking ensemble that fosters a dialogue between declarative color and glowing bronze. The physical presence of the sculptures complements the pictures’ expressive force and generates an energy born of the contrast and kinship between the Old Master and modern traditions. In the dining room, for example, an extraordinary series of sculptures by Giambologna and his school are displayed before an eleven-foot-long stormy canvas by Edward Ruscha entitled *Seventeenth Century* (see front of release). The statuettes, made during that century of European conquest, depict Mars, the Roman god of war; the Triumphs of Hercules over savage mythical creatures; and the *Rape of a Sabine*, a historical event representing the foundation of Imperial Rome. The bronze figures, which symbolize the absolutist ethos of the rulers who commissioned them, punctuate the monumental canvas’s rhetorical blending of word and image. Together, the Renaissance sculptures and Ruscha’s painting create an unforgettable juxtaposition in which the violence of the not-so- distant past reverberates with that of our present age.

In the Hill’s library some sculptures are placed among Old Master paintings to create an environment resonant with eloquent gesture and human feeling. In this setting the pictures’ impact is balanced by the statuettes’ concentrated power, which encapsulates extreme emotions and evokes monumentality. For example, the *Hercules and Antaeus*, one of the earliest works in the collection, was created by an Italian master as an imaginative small-scale reconstruction of a large, fragmentary classical marble sculpture. The group illustrates the hero Hercules wrestling with the giant Antaeus, who was unconquerable when in contact with his mother, the Earth. The myth tells how Hercules



Attributed to Maso Finiguerra (Florence, 1425–1464), *Hercules and Antaeus*, cast ca. 1460, brass, H: 25.2 cm, Collection of Mr. and Mrs. J. Tomilson Hill; Maggie Nimkin Photography

marshaled his strength, hoisted Antaeus off the ground, and broke the giant's back to defeat him. The sculptor shows Antaeus bellowing in agony as he struggles to unlock Hercules's encircling grip, arching his body against the hero's neck in a vain attempt to suffocate him. Hercules gasps for breath, raises his eyes in pain, and relentlessly maintains his stance. At barely over nine inches tall, the *Hercules and Antaeus* is one of the smallest statuettes in the Hill collection, but its size is inversely proportional to its impact. The figures' taut contours evoke a snapping spring. One can almost hear the sound of *Antaeus's* back cracking. As exhibition catalogue editor Patricia Wengraf has noted, the master sculptor composed this bronze tour-de-force to balance without support so that the hero bears the full weight of the giant in his arms while firmly standing on his own two feet. Sophisticated Renaissance patrons would have relished the connection between the sculptor's technical prowess and the Herculean balancing act that is the essence of the ancient myth. To modern collectors the group retains its evocative power. Tom Hill still remembers "the vanquished expression on the mouth of *Antaeus*, formed like the scream from a Pollaiuolo or Poussin painting" when he first encountered another example of this statuette.

A COLLECTION PRESENTED PUBLICLY TOGETHER FOR THE FIRST TIME



Ferdinando Tacca (Florence, 1619–1686), *Ceres and Bacchus*, cast probably ca. 1635–1640, bronze, H: 45.3 cm, Collection of Mr. and Mrs. J. Tomilson Hill; Maggie Nimkin Photography

This first public exhibition of the Hill bronzes will afford visitors an unprecedented opportunity to gain a sense of the character of the gathering of works as a whole. As in the Hill's home, the sculptures will be displayed freestanding and without vitrines. Liberated from the confines of the glazed enclosures that are common to museum displays, the figures will establish their own graceful rhythms across space to fully reveal the textured surfaces, refined craftsmanship, and elegant detail that endow the art of the small bronze with memorable beauty. In the words of a Renaissance collector, statuettes were made to "delight." Today the exquisite *Ceres and Bacchus* by the Baroque sculptor Ferdinando Tacca inspires just such a response. Linked in affectionate embrace, the smiling goddess of the harvest and the lord of the vine stride toward the viewer. They personify the classical saying "*Sine*

Cerere & Baccho friget Venus" (Without food and wine Venus grows cold), and they herald the promise of abundance, revelry, and love. This Baroque bronze, made toward the end of the art form's popularity in Florence, ushers out a tradition with a lyrical joy that draws as deeply from classical sources as does the epic seriousness of the early *Hercules and Antaeus*. Both works undoubtedly captivated their original owners, albeit in profoundly different ways. By providing vivid glimpses into a lost ancient world, masters of Renaissance and Baroque bronzes revived its glories and through their creations appropriated the past to express the tastes and aspirations of their own age. Collectors of statuettes share these goals, then as today.



Antonio Susini (Florence, 1558–1624), detail of *Cristo morto (Dead Christ)*, after a model by Giambologna of ca. 1588, cast ca. 1590–1615, gilt bronze, H: 31 cm, Collection of Mr. and Mrs. J. Tomilson Hill; Maggie Nimkin Photography

The Hill bronzes will be shown in three galleries. Each installation will recall a facet of the Hill's collecting interests in relation to the art of the statuette. In the Cabinet Gallery on the main floor, the Hill's superb group of religious sculptures will be shown with a selection from their holdings of Old Master paintings as well as with a glazed terracotta *Crucifix* of 1950–52 by the contemporary artist, Lucio Fontana. The *Crucifix* will be juxtaposed with a magnificent Baroque bronze *Christ on the Cross* by Alessandro Algardi. Although Fontana's image of the crucified Christ is couched in the language of abstraction, its spiritual intensity dramatically invokes the figurative tradition represented by Algardi and earlier Renaissance



Peter Paul Rubens, *Assumption of the Virgin*, circa 1620, oil on panel, 44.5 x 29.2 cm, Collection of Mr. and Mrs. J. Tomilson Hill; photo: Michael Bodycomb

masters. In this gallery, Giovanni di Paolo's mid fifteenth-century small gold-ground painting of *Christ as the Man of Sorrows* will be shown with Antonio Susini's late sixteenth-century gilt bronze *Christ on the Cross* (see previous page) to emphasize how preciousness, artistic refinement, and devotional decorum remain constants within the Italian Renaissance tradition. Lastly, an early seventeenth-century relief of the *Assumption of the Virgin* by an anonymous French sculptor is paired with a magisterial oil sketch by Peter Paul Rubens of the same subject, size, and approximate date. The pictorial illusionism of the bronze relief and the oil sketch's bold three-dimensional forms underscore the fluid interplay between sculpture and painting during the Baroque period.



French, second half of the seventeenth century, *The Assumption of the Virgin*, cast ca. 1650–1700, after an engraving (1647) of a painting by Simon Vouet (1644), bronze, 47.4 x 31.2 cm, Collection of Mr. and Mrs. J. Tomilson Hill; Maggie Nimkin Photography

The largest exhibition space in the museum's downstairs galleries will be devoted solely to statuettes. A superlative gathering of sculptures by Giambologna and his followers, Antonio and Gianfrancesco Susini, is at the heart of this display, which features three examples of the Labors of Hercules, Giambologna's exquisite female personification of *Astronomy*, and his most famous model, the *Rape of a Sabine*. Each of these statuettes exemplifies the type of composition known as the *figura serpentinata*, which is a figure that was composed to twist upward like a flame and to be beautiful from every point of



Circle of Ponce Jacquiot (Rethel, before 1536–1570, Paris), *Diana* (detail), model dated 1556–85, bronze, H: 34.8 cm, Collection of Mr. and Mrs. J. Tomilson Hill, Maggie Nimkin Photography

view. The *figura serpentinata* is such a hallmark of Giambologna's art, that it sometimes is forgotten that he was as inventive a sculptor of animals as he was of idealized human figures. The superlative early cast of a *Pacing Horse* (featured on the front of this release), one of the most immaculately beautiful sculptures in the Hill collection, exhibits the extraordinary syncopation of form and contour that endows Giambologna's sculptures, whatever their subject, with their sense of gracefully controlled power. The Florentine master's art inspired a generation of sculptors across Europe. This gallery contains a gathering of important French seventeenth-century sculptures as well as rare examples by German masters which often offer their own distinctive native responses to Giambologna's achievements.



Antonio Susini (Florence, 1558–1624), *Rape of a Sabine*, after Giambologna's marble group of 1583, cast ca. 1585, bronze, H: 59 cm, Collection of Mr. and Mrs. J. Tomilson Hill; Maggie Nimkin Photography

The second downstairs gallery will feature the largest bronzes in the Hill collection which will be displayed together with three contemporary paintings: Edward Ruscha's *Seventeenth Century*, and two *Untitled* canvases of 1959 and 1970 by Cy Twombly. Four superb sculptures by the Florentine Baroque master, Giuseppe Piamontini, will be shown with these works. The meticulous modeling, precise casting, and refined tooling for which Piamontini is best known is exemplified by a quintessential image of autocratic rule, the portrait of *Prince Ferdinando di Cosimo III on Horseback*. But Piamontini also was capable of composing works with the raw power of an ancient Hellenistic sculptor. The *Seated Hercules & Cerberus* is a muscular, craggy mountain of a bronze that rivals the monumentality and majesty of the ancient works that inspired it, and it possesses the same forceful impact as Twombly's roughly painted 1959 canvas, *Untitled*. Commanding this gallery is Adriaen de Vries's large-scale *Bacchic Man Wearing a Grotesque Mask* which is the only bronze in the Hill



Giuseppe Piamontini (Florence, 1664–1742), *Prince Ferdinando di Cosimo III on Horseback* (detail), cast 1717, bronze, H: 62.5 cm, Collection of Mr. and Mrs. J. Tomilson Hill; Maggie Nimkin Photography



Adriaen de Vries (The Hague, ca. 1545–1626, Prague), *Bacchic Man Wearing a Grotesque Mask* (detail), cast ca. 1578–80, bronze, H: 89.5 cm, Collection of Mr. and Mrs. J. Tomilson Hill; Maggie Nimkin Photography

collection that falls outside the category of the statuette. Intended to surmount a fountain, the *Bacchic Man* was the presiding spirit of a Milanese counter-culture academy, which was comprised of some one hundred erudite men who daringly upheld the principles of literary and artistic freedom during the most restrictive period of the Catholic Reformation. There is no direct classical or Renaissance precedent for depicting *Bacchus* as a frighteningly muscular figure, the casual stance is novel, as is the masked god's menacing gaze. The bronze, which brilliantly embodies the principles of artistic license central to the academy it represented, was made to shock, to subvert conventions, and to inspire creativity. These themes resonate with Ruscha's and Twombly's paintings. The canvases' subdued palettes also draw attention to the often overlooked beauty of the varied colors of bronze sculptures.

Within a wide-ranging collection of bronzes such as the Hill's, the sculptures encourage visual dialogues that elicit recognition of the genre's European development, invoke appreciation of evolving types such as the idealized male and female nude, and foster the sheer pleasure of comparing the poses and expressions of individual figures. Most of all, this collection of statuettes inspires admiration for the creative artistry of masters from centuries past who endowed the solid figures they crafted from molten metal with a sense of vital animation and, sometimes, the stirrings of a soul. When viewing the Hill collection, one can react to the sublime pathos of Alessandro Algardi's *Christ on the Cross*, encounter the cool, hesitant beauty of Hubert Le Sueur's *Venus* and leave with the impression of harmony. Such is the fulfilling response to two very different masterpieces that were created with authority and conviction by men who were among the best European sculptors of their day. Like the infinitely shifting patterns of a kaleidoscope, such experiences multiply with each viewing of the Hill bronzes. Artistic quality has the power to unify even the most disparate beautiful works, and to excite and to elevate the sensibilities of those who view them. These principles have always underpinned the formation of eminent collections assembled by those who respond to the innate power of great works

of art. Le Sueur's *Venus* was the first bronze acquired by Janine and Tom Hill. At the time they knew nothing about the artist, nonetheless they recognized his gifts.

HENRY CLAY FRICK'S APPRECIATION FOR RENAISSANCE BRONZES

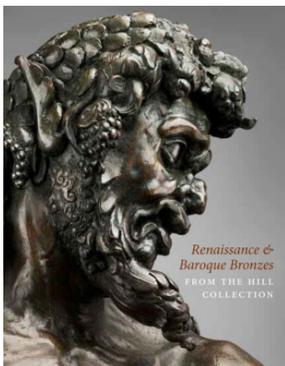
In 1916 when Henry Clay Frick selected his collection of bronzes from J. P. Morgan's estate, he famously admonished his dealer, Joseph Duveen, that he would accept, "nothing but the finest." Frick unremittingly pursued that dictum, forcing Duveen to relinquish sculptural masterpieces that he secretly withheld to sell to others. Today, The Frick Collection houses the finest group of early Italian bronzes in the United States. The group's narrow focus reflects the prevailing aesthetic at the turn of the twentieth century, when renowned scholars such as Wilhelm von Bode and collectors such as Frick esteemed the creations of Andrea Riccio and the early Renaissance school above all others. Henry Clay may have acquired the majority of his bronzes *en bloc* in almost a single stroke, but he enjoyed them. It is said that he had a few mounted on wheeled bases so that he could turn them to admire them from every point of view. And it often has been noted that Frick, who abjured buying overtly emotional pictures, filled nearly every room and gallery of his mansion with lively bronze figures that impart something unabashedly personal to the grand landscapes and calm formal portraits that were his preferred subjects in painting.



Andrea Briosco, known as Riccio (Trent, 1470–1532, Padua), *Strigil Bearer*, cast ca. 1515–1520, bronze, H: 32 cm, Collection of Mr. and Mrs. J. Tomilson Hill; Maggie Nimkin Photography

Present day collectors of statuettes generally have broader tastes than did Henry Clay Frick. Their uncompromising pursuit of quality, however, does not differ at all from Frick's or his contemporaries. And they possess the same judgment, creativity, and passion that are necessary to assemble important collections and to orchestrate their display. The Hill collection was formed through the discerning selection of single works over two decades, and as it grew it developed characteristic strengths that are quite different from the Frick's permanent holdings. In the Hill's home, as in the Frick exhibition, these bronzes eloquently speak to each other as well as to the Old Master and contemporary paintings with which they will be shown. Although the discourse may have changed since the days of Henry Clay Frick, the unbounded pleasures in the conversation remain the same.

PUBLICATION



The exhibition is accompanied by a lavishly illustrated catalogue published by Paul Holberton, London. *Renaissance and Baroque Bronzes from the Hill Collection* features a forward by Frick Director Ian Wardropper and a preface by J. Tomilson Hill. Acknowledgements by Patricia Wengraf are followed by an essay she has authored: Adriaen de Vries, a re-consideration of his early works and of the influence of the Leoni. Dimitrios Zikos has contributed another essay: A *Kleinplastik* collection in Regency Florence. Giovan Battista Borri's bronzes and terracottas. Entries on the bronzes have been

contributed by Denise Allen, Rupert Harris, Claudia Kryza-Gersch, Patricia Wengraf, and Dimitrios Zikos. The book (hardcover, 384 pages; 258 illustrations; \$100, Member Price: \$90) will be available in the Museum Shop or ordered through the Frick's Web site (www.frick.org) and by phone at 212.547.6848.

EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND EVENTS (SEE WEB SITE FOR DESCRIPTIONS)

Lectures

Lectures are free, and seating is on a first-come, first-served basis. Reservations are not accepted. Selected lectures will be webcast live and made available on our Web site and The Frick Collection's channel on FORA.tv. Please visit our Web site for details. Unless otherwise noted, lectures are made possible by the generous support of the Robert H. Smith Family Foundation.

Date Wednesday, January 29, 6:00 p.m.
Speaker Claudia Kryza-Gersch, art historian
Title *Why Multiplicity? On the Production of Small Bronzes in the Italian Renaissance*

Date Wednesday, February 5, 6:00 p.m.
Speaker David Ekserdjian, Professor of Art History, University of Leicester
Title *Renaissance and Baroque Bronzes from the Hill Collection*

Date Wednesday, March 26, 6:00 p.m.
Speaker Michael Cole, Professor of Italian Renaissance and Baroque Art, Department of Art History and Archaeology, Columbia University
Title *The Small Bronze and the Legacy of Leonardo in Florence*

Artists, Poets, and Writers Lecture *(made possible by the Drue Heinz Trust).*

Date Thursday, April 24, 6:00 p.m.
Speaker Jeff Koons, artist
Title *Jeff Koons on Sculpture*

Seminars

Seminars provide unparalleled access to works of art and encourage thought-provoking discussion with experts in their fields. Sessions are held when the galleries are closed to the public and are limited to twenty participants. Advance registration is required; register online or by calling 212.547.0704. \$100 (\$90 for Members).

Date Tuesday, March 18, 6:00 to 7:30 p.m.
Speakers Peggy Fogelman, Head of Collections, Morgan Library & Museum, and Denise Allen, Curator, The Frick Collection
Title *A Close Look at Italian Renaissance Bronzes in the Hill Collection*

Date Monday, April 14, 2:00 to 3:30 p.m.
Speakers Ian Wardropper, Director, The Frick Collection
Title *A Close Look at Italian and French Baroque Bronzes in the Hill Collection*

Introductory Gallery Talks: Saturdays, March 1, April 5, & May 3, 3:00 to 3:30 p.m.

Olivia Powell, Associate Museum Educator for Academic Programs, and Katie Steiner, Curatorial Assistant, The Frick Collection offer an overview of the special exhibition. *Advance reservations are required; to register, please visit our Web site.*

Course: The Frick Connection

For college students and recent graduates under age 39; Courses are free with a \$25 student membership or a full membership for recent graduates. Advance online registration is required; please visit our Web site to register.

Date Friday, February 21, 5:30 to 7:00 p.m.
Speaker Deepthiman Gowda, Assistant Professor of Medicine, College of Physicians and Surgeons, Columbia University
Title *The Presence and Pleasure of Viewing Sculpture*

Free Evening Event

Spring Night: Friday, March 21, 6:00 to 9:00 p.m.

Enjoy a night of free programs and activities when we open our doors to the public after-hours to celebrate our special exhibitions. Attendees will have the opportunity to hear gallery talks, sketch in the Garden Court, and listen to live music. *The evening is free, and visitors will be admitted on a first-come, first-served basis. No reservations are accepted.*

BASIC INFORMATION

General Information Phone: 212.288.0700

Web site: www.frick.org

E-mail: info@frick.org

Where: 1 East 70th Street, near Fifth Avenue

Hours: open six days a week: 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Tuesdays through Saturdays; 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Sundays. Closed Mondays, New Year's Day, Independence Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas Day. Limited hours (11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) on Lincoln's Birthday, Election Day, and Veterans Day

Admission: \$20; senior citizens \$15; students \$10; "pay what you wish" on Sundays from 11 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

PLEASE NOTE TO YOUR READERS: Children under ten are not admitted to the Collection.
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Subway: #6 local (on Lexington Avenue) to 68th Street station; **Bus:** M1, M2, M3, and M4 southbound on Fifth Avenue to 72nd Street and northbound on Madison Avenue to 70th Street

Tour Information: included in the price of admission is an Acoustiguide audio tour of the permanent collection offered in six languages: English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, and Spanish.

Museum Shop: the shop is open the same days as the Museum, closing fifteen minutes before the institution.

Group Admission for the Permanent Collection: Please call 212.288.0700 for details and to make reservations.

Public Programs: A calendar of events is published regularly and all content is available online.

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For further press information, please contact Heidi Rosenau, Head of Media Relations & Marketing or Alexis Light, Manager of Media Relations & Marketing

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