





# DUQUESNOY'S *CUPID CARVING HIS BOW*: ARTWORK AND AUTHORSHIP BETWEEN GARDEN AND MUSEUM

With his right leg placed ahead of his left, a perhaps three-year-old boy, chubby and winged, is bending forward slightly. With downcast eyes, he is concentrating on what he is doing (fig. 1). His activity can no longer be identified. The right arm of the marble sculpture is missing; in his left hand, the boy holds the remnant of an object whose purpose can no longer be determined. Traces of other lost parts can be seen on the right thigh.

◀ 1 | François Duquesnoy, *Cupid Carving His Bow*, 1620s, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Sculpture Collection and Museum for Byzantine Art.

## From Rome via the Netherlands to Berlin, Bode Museum vs. Caputh Palace

The sculpture, roughly 75 cm in height, is a major work by the Flemish sculptor François Duquesnoy. Created in Rome in the 1620s, it attracted considerable attention in a period of upheaval in art history between late Mannerism and the early Baroque, and between conflicting aesthetic positions such as those of Italians and *fiamminghi*, the members of the Flemish-Dutch artist colony.<sup>1</sup> As a presentation of Cupid carving his bow for the love arrows from Hercules's club, the small god was sold to the businessman and art collector Lucas van Uffelen and then acquired by the city of Amsterdam after van Uffelen's death. The city decided in 1637 to make a gift of the putto to Amalia of Solms-Braunfels, the wife of Frederik Hendrik, Prince of Orange, the stadtholder of the United Provinces, who "turned out to have a particular affinity and penchant for it" and "found the most fitting location [for the sculpture] in The Hague in her ornamental pleasure garden," as reported by Joachim von Sandrart, the eminent seventeenth-century art historiographer, in his *Teutsche Academie*.<sup>2</sup> When Amalia died in 1675, the cupid, as part of the inheritance of Orange, was transferred from the garden of the Oude Hof (Noordeinde Palace) in The Hague to the possession of her former son-in-law in Berlin, Elector Friedrich Wilhelm of Brandenburg. Transferred again in 1689 to the Kunstkammer and in 1830 to the (Altes) Museum, Duquesnoy's *Cupid Carving His Bow* can now be seen in the Bode Museum as a masterpiece of Baroque sculpture (fig. 2).<sup>3</sup>

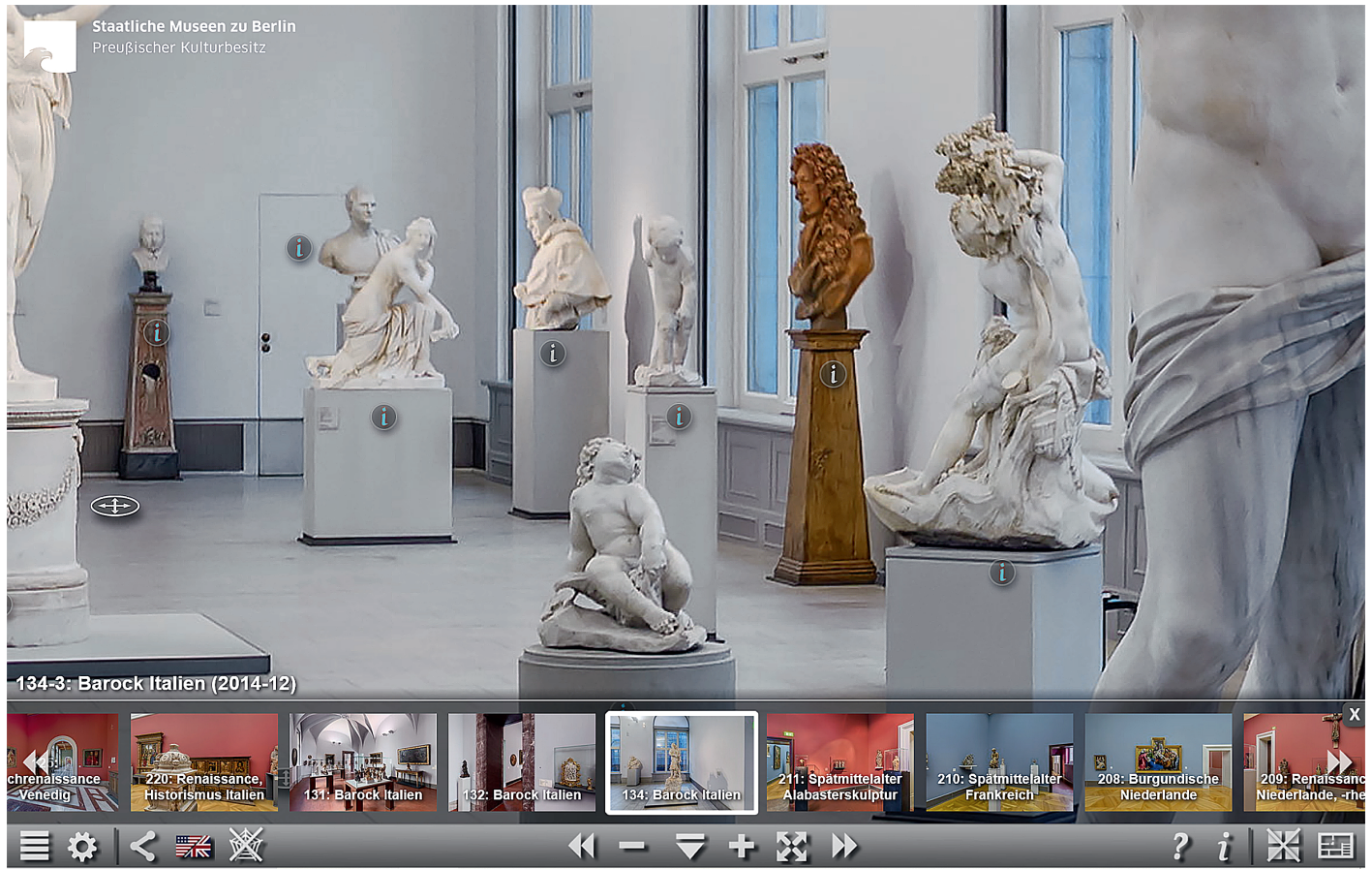
What here might suggest the inevitability of musealization and its art historical significance is deceptive, however. Although the provenance history of the cupid is well documented, today the view from Room 134 of the Bode Museum, which is devoted to Italian Baroque sculpture, springs directly back to the Roman art scene of the early seventeenth century. Its subsequent history can be neglected in this exhibition context. Nevertheless, how would Duquesnoy's work be appraised if it had not become part of the sculpture collection of the State Museums of Berlin (Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation, SPK)?

In Caputh near Potsdam, in one of the museum palaces of the SPK's sister institution, the Prussian Palaces and Gardens Foundation in Berlin-Brandenburg (SPSG), Dutch sculptures are displayed, such as the fragmented putto in the Porcelain Cabinet by an unknown artist from the mid-seventeenth century, which is likely the "seated marble child" listed for this room in the palace inventory

1 See, for example, Sandrart 1675/1679, vol. 1.2, pp. 33, 41; vol. 2.3, pp. 340, 348; Boudon-Machuel cat.2005, p. 273, cat. no. 62; Lingo 2007, pp. 42–63, esp. pp. 57–63; and Sandrart.net at <http://ta.sandrart.net/de/artwork/view/588> (accessed 28 October 2021).

2 Sandrart 1675/1679, vol. 2.3, p. 348.

3 Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Skulpturensammlung und Museum für Byzantinische Kunst, Skulpturensammlung, Ident.-Nr. 540; see SMB-digital, <http://www.smb-digital.de/eMuseumPlus?service=ExternalInterface&module=collection&objectId=868090> (accessed 29 October 2021).



2 | *Cupid Carving His Bow* (centre) in Room 134 of the Bode Museum, screenshot from the virtual tour on the museum website.

4 Cited in Sommer/Schurig 1999, p. 17.  
 5 See Hüneke 1988, pp. 118–26; on Döbel's copy see p. 124, cat. no. IV.42; *Onder den Oranje boom* 1999, cat. vol., pp. 148–50, cat. no. 6.21 (Christian Theuerkauff); each of these also provides additional bibliography.  
 6 See Hüneke 2000, pp. 91–2, no. 18 a, c, d, f; Sommer/Schurig 1999, p. 17. If these busts are identical to the four "Mohren bust bilder[n]" (Moor busts) (Eingangsbuch 1688/1692b, fol. 5v) in the *Kunstkammer*, then it was Friedrich II who had them displayed in Sanssouci's eastern pleasure garden. There are copies there today; the originals have been in Caputh since 1999. One of the female portraits is a copy from the nineteenth century. On the history and current discussion, see Kiesant/Alff/Wacker 2020.

of 1689 (fig. 3).<sup>4</sup> Such sculptures were appreciated in the Orange court in The Hague; in Brandenburg they became precursors to the formation of sculpture as an independent art form, as documented for example by a direct copy of Duquesnoy's cupid by Johann Michael Döbel.<sup>5</sup> If *Cupid Carving His Bow* had been directly displayed in the elector's living quarters or had been transferred from the *Kunstkammer* to palaces or gardens in the eighteenth century – as were the busts with stereotypically ennobling ideal portraits of two African women and two African men<sup>6</sup> that also made their way to the Porcelain Cabinet in Caputh – then the Flemish masterpiece might today have found its museal place in this pleasure palace in Caputh on the Havel. The museological concept in Caputh focuses on the reign of the elder Great Elector and his second consort Dorothea, and thus on a certain phase in the history of the palace. The symmetrical arrangement of the fragmented putto in between Far Eastern porcelain is in keeping with early modern usage, embedding the sculpture in the staging of an impression of a historical interior. In contrast to the white cube in Room 134 of the Bode Museum today, here Duquesnoy's cupid would also be less of an autonomous work of art than an element in interplay with others in the furnishings of princely living space in the second half of the seventeenth century, which is the focus of the museological presentation in Caputh.

Such counterfactual speculation can refer to a research perspective that concentrates on the contemporary cultural exchange between the Netherlands and Electoral Brandenburg; for the *Cupid Carving His Bow*, 1620s Rome is history, and the period following the Great Elector is a list of its



later depositories. New social energy can thus be added at any time to the modern “entropy of the collection”,<sup>7</sup> which threatens to harmonize the object biographies toward assuming a particular meaning; setting accents according to object biographies is a result of decisions that can change [■Antlers].

### The *Cupid Carving His Bow* in the Berlin Kunstkammer, or What Has Happened So Far, Part I

In the log for 4 July 1689, Christoph Ungelter, who had been the administrator of the Kunstkammer since the previous year, recorded the transport of “a marble cupid by Fiamingo” from the house of Privy Councillor Eberhard von Danckelmann to the collection rooms in the palace.<sup>8</sup> *Cupid Carving His Bow* by Duquesnoy, who was mentioned not only here as *the* Flemish artist, thus belongs to the numerous objects in the elector’s collection that in the late 1680s were stored not in royal residences, but in various living quarters of the court society. Danckelmann, for instance, had until then only been the former tutor of the prince (elector) Friedrich and did not advance to become an influential minister until his former charge took power. The order to reunite the items [●1685/1688]<sup>9</sup> in this transaction also referred, in addition to the cupid, to “two chrysolites,” “three small reclining metal children” (presumably also by Duquesnoy), and “a small metal bust portrait”.

The cost of the transport amounted to six good groschen<sup>10</sup> and six months later, on 7 January 1690, Ungelter noted the expenses for “a large pedestal with four ball feet and painted black for the marble cupid”.<sup>11</sup> The carpenter received one Reichstaler and sixteen good groschen, and another four groschen were needed “to paint the black pedestal with the marble child upon it”.<sup>12</sup> The bold contrast between the white marble sculpture and the black of the pedestal on four ball feet, which corresponded to the ubiquitous black ripple mouldings in the frames of paintings, correlated to an aesthetic generally understood as Dutch [◆Cases, Boxes]. It can unfortunately no longer be clarified if the pedestal was brought unchanged to the new rooms of the Kunstkammer along with the statue, but if so, this plain object display would have contrasted starkly with newer presentation forms [■Night Clock] and the dynamic and colourful plasticity of the room’s panelling.



3 | Dutch putto, mid-seventeenth century, in the Porcelain Cabinet of Caputh Palace, Stiftung Preußische Schlösser und Gärten Berlin-Brandenburg.

7 See Groys 1993, p. 85 and 2021, pp. 28–47.

8 Eingangsbuch 1688/1692b, fol. 15r.

9 The arrangement is transcribed in Ledebur 1831, pp. 53–4.

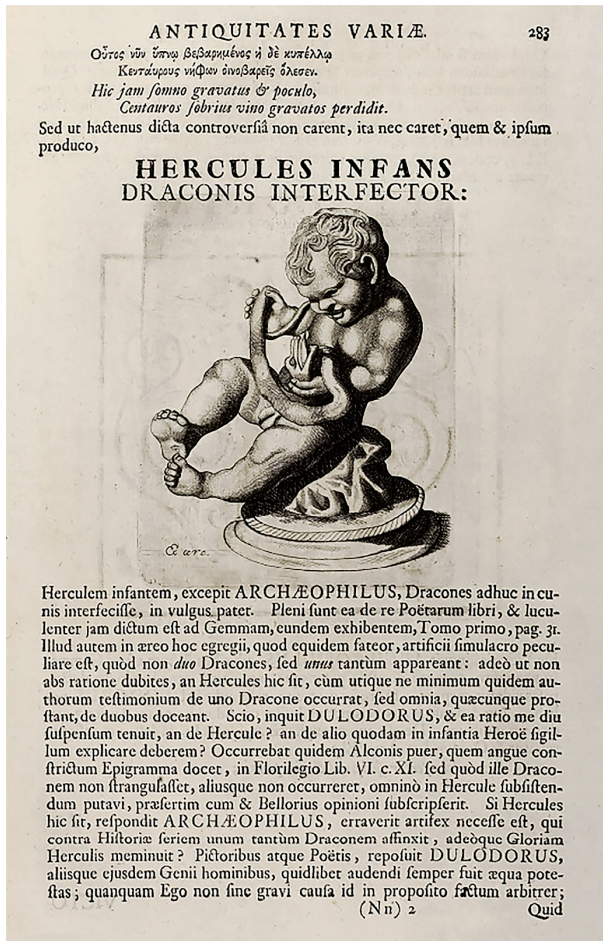


- 10 Six good groschen = 1/4 Reichstaler; see Materialbuch Ungeltes, fol. 2v.
- 11 See *ibid.*, fol. 17r.
- 12 *Ibid.*, fol. 3r.
- 13 Inventar 1694, p. 177; or Inventar 1685/1688, fol. 86v. On the *Deus silentii* (Allegory of Silence), see for example Hildebrand/Theuerkauff 1981, pp. 93–4, no. 24; *Onder den Oranje boom* 1999, cat. vol., pp. 277–9, cat. no. 8.71 (Christian Theuerkauff). It is disputed whether this, too, should be attributed to François Duquesnoy.

4 | *Deus silentii* in the reconstructed *Kunstammer* for the Prussia exhibition in 1981, illustration from Ulrich Eckhardt, *Preussen – Versuch einer Bilanz. Bilder und Texte einer Ausstellung der Berliner Festspiele GmbH*, 1982.



5 | *Hercules infans draconis interfecto*, page from Lorenz Beger, *Thesaurus Brandenburgicus*, 1701.



In the first room in this Schlüter environment (Room 991/992), Duquesnoy’s cupid showed itself to eighteenth-century visitors as an artwork of the highest rank. In addition to art cabinets such as the Pomeranian Art Cabinet [◆ Cases, Boxes], it marked the realm of artificialia, which, together with sensational naturalia such as the two “African donkeys” (i.e. zebras), the memorabilia of the life-size wax effigies [■ Wax], scientifica such as the night clock, and the ethnographic object ensemble of the reindeer sled [■ Antlers], announced the range of the *Kunstammer* collection. When after this introduction visitors successively became familiarized with the *Kunstammer* and the Antiquities Cabinet, the masterpiece of Duquesnoy, the famous *fattore di putti*, entered into a relationship with comparable antique and post-antique sculptures viewed at the time as modern, such as not least: putti. Among these modern putti are also another Dutch “naked child lying on a white marble pillow, holding a finger to the mouth, representing *Deus Silentii* [the god of silence]” (fig. 4), or ivory statuettes such as “a cupid standing on a sphere above a black pedestal, armed with a quiver, arrow, and bow”.<sup>13</sup> Among the (more or less) ancient child portrayals, there was, for example, the bronze statuette of a young Hercules strangling one of the snakes sent by Juno (fig. 5).<sup>14</sup> The iconographic comparability opened up options to participate in the *Querelle des Anciens et des Modernes* of the period around 1700, the debate on whether or not antiquity continued to be an authoritative model or if it was surpassed by the present.

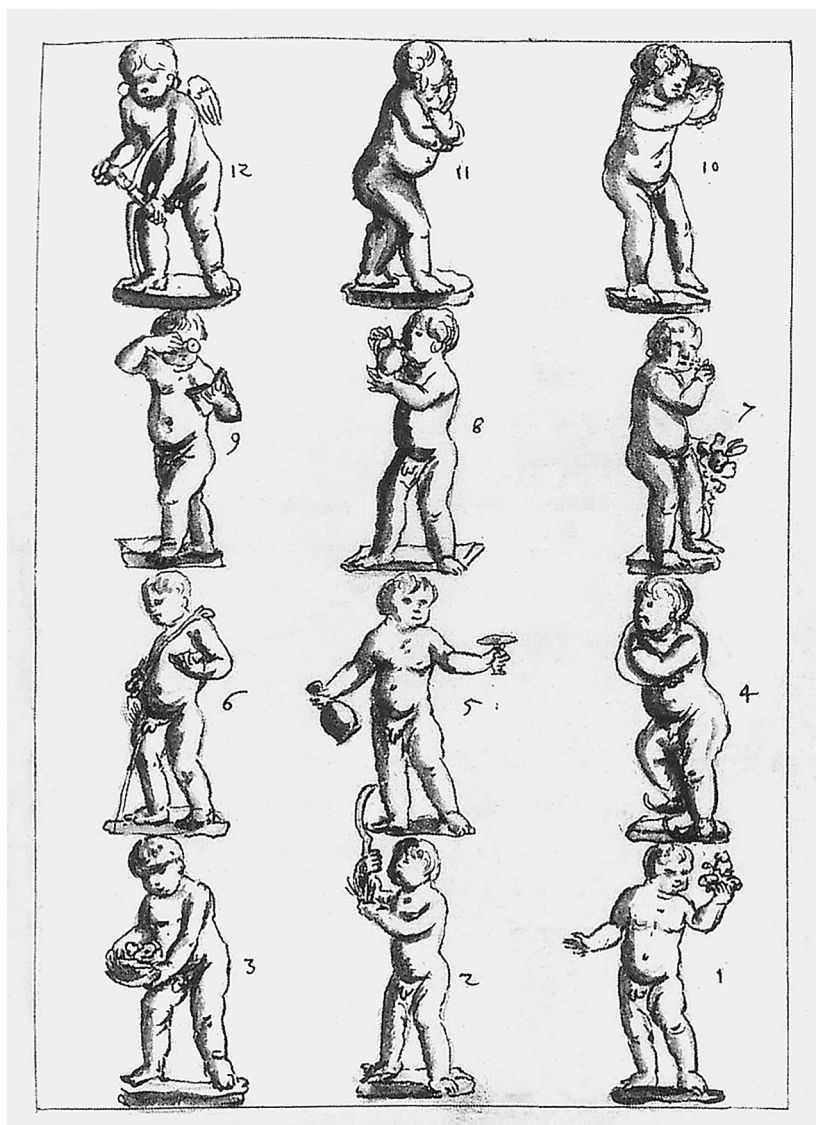


The *Cupid Carving His Bow* also shared its damaged condition with both ancient and modern sculptures. The bow laid across the right knee and the cutter held in both hands had already been broken into five pieces when it arrived in the *Kunstkammer*, as recorded by Ungelter in the acquisitions book, noting what was relevant for administrative purposes.<sup>15</sup> At the same time, the collection also contained the (pseudo-)antique *Priapus deus generationis*, of which a definitive part had been “amputated” [■Priapus]. Among the modern stone sculptures was a Cleopatra, “split at a number of places”, while another cupid could be seen “with a quiver filled with arrows at his side but without a bow; the left arm is damaged”.<sup>16</sup> Such weapons were generally elaborately fragile and exposed details, so it had to be noted, also for an ivory Hercules, that the sculpture was “damaged at the bow”.<sup>17</sup> Precious unique items such as Duquesnoy’s cupid, however, were repaired; his bow and the knife, by 1694 meanwhile broken further into six pieces, were then “glued together”<sup>18</sup> [◆Intact and Damaged].

### What Has Happened So Far, Part II: Original and Copies in Corresponding Rooms

While the original *Cupid Carving His Bow* was still being presented as a garden sculpture in The Hague, there were already – decades before it arrived in Brandenburg – two copies of Duquesnoy’s sculpture in the pleasure garden of the palace in Berlin: one in marble by Otto Mangiot (actually Francesco Mangiotti) and another white-trimmed one made of lead, an innovative material at the time, by Georg (actually Wilhelm) Larson, which was “ad exemplar marmorei fictus”, that is, based on the (original) marble version. Both copies were described and depicted by Johann Sigismund Elsholtz [■Monkey Hand] in 1657 in the *Hortus Berolinensis*, an elaborate publication that, however, was never printed at the time.<sup>19</sup> Like the original later in the *Kunstkammer*, the copies also stood in relation to neighbouring sculptures. The marble copy was the counterpart to François Dieussart’s memorial statue portraying Prince Wilhelm Heinrich as a winged cherub; the first child of the Great Elector was not even a year and a half old when he died. And the lead copy was part of an ensemble of twenty-four putti, which presented different genres of activities, the four seasons, the five senses, and the twelve signs of the zodiac (fig. 6).

Starting at the end of the century, it was up to members of the court and visitors to the palace and pleasure garden to relate the garden sculpture copies to the original in the *Kunstkammer*. The



6 | Twelve of twenty-four lead putti in the pleasure garden in Berlin, including *Cupid Carving His Bow* (no. 12) and a *Manneken Pis* (no. 6), illustration from Johann Sigismund Elsholtz, *Hortus Berolinensis*, 1657.

14 See Beger 1696/1701, vol. 3, pp. 283–4.

15 See Eingangsbuch 1688/1692b, fol. 15r.





7 | *Cupid*, illustration from Carl Christian Heinrich Rost, *Abgüsse antiker und moderner Statuen, Figuren, Büsten, Basreliefs über die besten Originale geformt in der Rostischen Kunsthandlung zu Leipzig*, 1794 (detail).

close connection between the collection rooms and the garden had already been emphasized in 1671 by Emanuele Tesauro, a scholarly guest from Turin. The tour group with Count Rindsmaul, which climbed to the palace roof in 1706 in between visits to the Antiquities Cabinet and the *Kunstkammer*, praised the “very beautiful view”. In 1741, the visitor Johann Andreas Silbermann said: “For something else that is part of a visit to the *Kunstkammer*, I was referred to a window from which one can view the area around Berlin; it is worth seeing, it is something unrivalled.”<sup>20</sup> In 1696, Lorenz Beger offered in his *Thesaurus Brandenburgicus*, which was to be “praised as a scholarly and gallant book”,<sup>21</sup> stylized scenarios for interrupting the visit of the collection, since even “*amœniora studia . . . requirant intervalla*” (very pleasant studies require intervals). It was suggested to visit other electoral sightseeing attractions, as well as strolling to the green environs of the city and to the pleasure garden in order to enjoy the “*Hortorum delicias*”, the joys of the gardens.<sup>22</sup>

The *Kunstkammer* as an epistemic space became permeable. The collection rooms communicated via the same objects with other rooms in which other social norms and cultural practices were expedient, whose impact in turn reflected back on the perception of the objects. Whereas the *Cupid Carving His Bow* in the *Kunstkammer* was the precious artwork of a famous Flemish sculptor, which was to be aesthetically appreciated when viewed and compared with other exhibits, its copies in the pleasure garden fit into iconologically motivated image programs. The

same protagonists – aristocratic as well as middle-class members of the court and guests – were expected only to integrate the putti summarily into an appropriate experience of the garden space. Friedrich II is said to have considered of garden sculptures, “the like is only for the first coup d’œil”, the fleeting, but at the same time comprehensive glance.<sup>23</sup>

While the Berlin pleasure garden was converted under the Soldier King Friedrich Wilhelm I into a military parade ground, the *Cupid Carving His Bow* went through a renaissance as a garden sculpture in the late eighteenth century. Although small “gilded men”<sup>24</sup> associated above all with Dutch Baroque gardens had become taboo, “Fiamingo’s children” were given a license in the aesthetic debate. In 1756, in the second edition of his *Reflections on the Painting and Sculpture of the Greeks*, Johann Joachim Winckelmann expressed a widespread discomfort with ancient presentations of children similar to the slender *Cupid Stringing His Bow* by Lysippos, a Greek sculptor of the late classical period. In order to justify the popularity of the chubbier cupids of François Duquesnoy and his artist family, Winckelmann juggled with the opposition between artistic and natural truth and permitted exceptions to the ancient model, since he felt that children did not have a beautiful form anyway, as “infant forms are not strictly susceptible of that beauty, which belongs to the steadiness of riper years”.<sup>25</sup> With this recognition of a natural vitality, the threatening aesthetic depreciation turned around into a renewed appreciation, and Middle German art manufactories could offer their customers copies made of various materials: “No. 54. A cupid, by Fiamingo, known as *Cupid the Bow Cutter*, 32 in., 5 taler”, for example, was listed in 1794 in the catalogue of the art dealer Carl Christian Heinrich Rost in Leipzig (fig. 7).<sup>26</sup> Versions of the love

16 Inventar 1685/1688, fol. 104r; or Inventar 1694, p. 179.

17 *Ibid.*, p. 206.

18 *Ibid.*, p. 177.

19 See Elsholtz 2010, pp. 158–65 and 183–7, quotation p. 186; the artist data has been corrected in *Onder den Oranje boom 1999*, cat. vol., pp. 148–150, cat. no. 6.21 (Christian Theuerkauff). A *Sleeping Cupid* by François Dieussarts, which stood in the garden in The Hague together with Duquesnoy’s Cupid, was inherited by Amalia’s daughter Henriette Catharina of Anhalt-Dessau and continued to be used at Oranienbaum Palace as a garden sculpture; see *ibid.*, cat. vol., p. 339, cat. no. 9.25 (Ingo Pfeifer).





Rinden Häußgen mit Göthens Bruste  
nebst der Bildsäule des Amors

8 | "Rinden Häußgen mit Göthens  
Buste nebst der Bildsäule des Amors"  
(Garden house with bust of Goethe  
and Cupid statue), illustration from  
Wilhelm Gottlieb Becker, *Das Seifers-  
dorfer Thal*, 1792.

god which, like Edmé Bouchardon's *Cupid Carving His Bow from the Club of Hercules* of 1750 from the Versailles Petit Trianon of Marie Antoinette,<sup>27</sup> were more neo-classically oriented to the elongated proportions of Lysippos never achieved a similar popularity.

- 20 See Tesauo 1671, preface, unpag.; Hagelstange 1905, p. 207; Silbermann 1741, p. 41.
- 21 Anonym 1710, fol. 16r.
- 22 See Beger 1696/1701, vol. 1, passim, esp. pp. 314, 523–4; quotations pp. 225 and 523.
- 23 Quoted in Alvensleben/Reuther 1966, p. 165. See also Bredekamp 2010, esp. pp. 462–3, where the term for Friedrich is contextualized in the art of warfare.
- 24 Ligne 1991, p. 77.
- 25 See Winkelmann 1767, pp. 90–1, 179, quotation p. 179.
- 26 See Rost 1794, p. 36; on the context, see Becker 2014, pp. 132–5; Becker 2015, pp. 150–2.
- 27 See Louvre Collections at <https://collections.louvre.fr/ark:/53355/cl010091965> (accessed 1 March 2022).

Copies of Duquesnoy's version of the subject no longer joined the ranks of an army of putti, but instead, as individual sculptures, accentuated the atmospheric content of sentimental landscape garden scenes. Remarkably, in advertising for manufactories and in garden descriptions, this discourse managed to avoid any reference to the location of the original. Whereas such provenance data otherwise played a legitimizing role in a communicative model of the use of copies of classical sculptures, here Duquesnoy's unicum became a placeless and as it were dematerialized original, a comparable contemporary perhaps being Giambologna's *Flying Mercury*. Carl von Brühl, chamberlain at the Prussian court from 1800 on, was familiar since his youth with a presumably cast-iron copy of *Cupid Carving His Bow* that stood on the acclaimed Seifersdorf manor grounds of his parents near Dresden. Perhaps he was surprised when he discovered the original in the collections of which he took charge in 1829 as director general of the Royal Museums (fig. 8).<sup>28</sup>

### What Has Happened So Far, Part III: Kunstkammer Items and the Artists' Names

Whereas visitors around 1700 did not yet mention the *Cupid Carving His Bow* in the Kunstkammer, by 1740 it belonged to the standard canon of must-see objects [●Around 1740]. It now became important to appreciate the aesthetic qualities of the sculpture, though most accounts were naïve and unclouded by true connoisseurship: "Some say it is a cupid and that the greatest accomplishment is around the mouth."<sup>29</sup> More fascinating for the general traveller, however, was the monetary value of the "marble bow cutter, which supposedly cost around 10,000 Reichstalers".<sup>30</sup> At the same time, artists profiled themselves as a particular group of admirers, as "the current court painter Mr. Le pain ~~besides another offer~~ previously offered the king 500 pistoles, that would be 2500 Reichstalers, and (furthermore [inserted later]) said he would replace it with something else".<sup>31</sup> Another traveller, without naming the person making the offer, set it more precisely in the time of the "late king", that is, Friedrich Wilhelm I, who died in 1740. However, the king "did not want to give it up", although the amount mentioned in the offer had even doubled to 1000 pistoles, whereby here as well it was ennobled from plain silver talers to gold currency and changed to the prestigious-sounding designation "pistoles" (corresponding to the golden Friedrich d'or, worth five silver talers).<sup>32</sup>

After sculptors such as Johann Michael Döbel had studied the cupid and comparable Dutch works in the seventeenth century, the new desirous appreciation by the Prussian court painter Antoine Pesne was not an isolated case, as around the same time in Vienna the sculptor Georg Raphael Donner was also inspired by Duquesnoy's works in the collections there.<sup>33</sup> In Berlin, artists used Kunstkammer display pieces: from the lacquerwork master Gérard Dagly around 1700 [◆Cases, Boxes], who found not only Chinese lacquerworks there, but also ink drawings; to the modelers of the Royal Porcelain Manufactory, who in 1809 requested a cast of an Isis torso; to Adolph Menzel, who for his *Fridericiana* illustrations around 1840 was interested in "looking through all such pictures located in the great collection in the Royal Kunstkammer here".<sup>34</sup>

The basis of the aesthetic appreciation of the *Cupid Carving His Bow* as an independent work of art (as well as its neoclassical copy career in the later eighteenth century) was a theory of art from the early modern period, into whose discourse the sculpture was firmly integrated since its genesis. In the *Teutsche Academie*, Sandrart smuggled it, in addition to Michelangelo's *Risen Christ*, into

28 On the Seifersdorfer copy, see Becker 2014, pp. 169–72.

29 Küster 1756, col. 541; see also Anonymus B, fol. 1v.

30 Küster 1756, p. 18.

31 Silbermann 1741, p. 37.

32 Anonymus B, fol. 1v.

33 See Leithe-Jasper 1991, pp. 99–123.

34 See Graf 2021 (incl. additional literature); ABBAW, PAW (1700–1811), I–XV–10, fol. 32; and cited in Kirstein 1916, p. 18.

35 Sandrart 1675/1679, vol. 1,2, p. 33.

36 See for example the entries in Inventar 1685/1688, fol. 104r; or Inventar 1694, pp. 195–6.

37 Anonymus B, fol. 1v (who, like Küster 1756, col. 541, names "Franciscus Genua" as an alternative); and Silbermann 1741, p. 37.

38 Nicolai 1786a, p. 794n. In the first edition, Nicolai 1769, p. 341, "Franz Quesnoy called Fiamingo" was still undisputed; the second edition, Nicolai 1779, p. 584, contains a footnote with the remark: "If this is correct, which is not to be doubted . . . ," which was then omitted in the third edition.



his list of the “most famous antique statues”, which as authoritative models were to be emulated and which he declared to be the “wet nurses” of art.<sup>35</sup> As such a “quasi-antiquity”, the cupid, with its delicate modelling of soft body volumes that merge into one another, entered into a paragone, a competition among the arts, with painting. The result commanded due respect from Rubens at the time of its origin, but evidently also from a late Baroque painter such as Pesne.

As a work by an eminent artist, the cupid was one of the few artificialia that was associated, also in the *Kunstkammer*, with the name of its creator (most of whom were men, with few exceptions [■Priapus]). This otherwise applied only to the works of Gottfried Leygebe, as a Berlin peculiarity [●1685/1688 / ◆Changing Focuses], or also, prestige-enhancing, for those attributed to Albrecht Dürer with his unmistakable, albeit oft-forged monogram.<sup>36</sup> For the cupid, however, a certain confusion developed in the Berlin *Kunstkammer*, when in attributing the artist in the eighteenth century suddenly the “famous Italian Viamengo” competed with the “famous sculptor Francois Genoa, a Fleming”.<sup>37</sup> While the provenance from princely succession did not play a role, Friedrich Nicolai increased the confusion in 1779–86 concerning the “very sublime statue”, when after a thorough study of the sources he introduced an error into the discussion, confusing it with the marble copy in the former pleasure garden:

The general opinion is that this statue was made by Fiamingo. In Elsholtz’s description of the former pleasure garden in Berlin, where this statue otherwise stood – written in 1657 and accompanied by drawings but not yet published – he recorded expressly that it was made by Otto Mangiot, a sculptor from Brabant who learned his art in Italy. This is a sculptor whose skill matches that of Fiamingo and whose name has not yet been mentioned by any authors.<sup>38</sup>

It is, however, decisive how the discourse was geared toward the search for a specific artist. The first edition of Nicolai’s city guidebook in 1769 already included for the collection, in addition to the “most skilled artists” of the art cabinets, the names of the artists Titian, Dürer, Duquesnoy, Leygebe (with a reference to his *vita*), Schlüter, Johann Jacobi (bronze founder), Pierre Fromery (steel worker), Gottfried Spiller (glass cutter), the names of the miniature painters Forbenagel (i.e. Lukas Furtenagel), Joseph Werner, and the brothers Jean-Pierre, Pierre, and Amy Huot (i.e. Huault), as well as Charles Le Brun and the names of the model and/or instrument builders Vlieth, Johann Michael Dobler, and Ehrenfried Walther von Tschirnhaus. In 1786, Mangiot, the wax sculptor Johann Wilhelm von Kolm, and the paper artist Joanna Koerten were added.<sup>39</sup>

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<b>Diaglänger, J. M.</b> 48.	<b>Huault, Johann Peter.</b> 47.
<b>Dobbeler, Hans Michael.</b> 70.	<b>Hufnagel, Heinrich.</b> 51.
<b>Döbel, Johann Christian.</b> 27.	<b>Hulsius, Livin.</b> 74.
64.	<b>Hyre, L. de la.</b> 58.
<b>Dresche, Reineke van.</b> 51.	<b>Jacobi.</b> 60.
<b>Dubsky v Wittenau.</b> 65.	— — H. F. 85.
<b>Dürer, Albrecht.</b> 13. 14. 17. 29.	— — Jacob Friedrich. 65.
86.	— — Johann. 59.
<b>Eck, Adam.</b> 18.	<b>Ibbetson, L. L. Boscawen.</b> 118.
<b>Eckstein.</b> 29. 64.	<b>Jamnitzer, Wenzel.</b> 16. 56.
<b>Eichbaum, Carl Bernhard.</b> 85.	— — Christoph. 56.
<b>Engiugno, Maggio.</b> 52.	<b>Kager, Mathias.</b> 77.
<b>Esche, Maximilian.</b> 85.	<b>Kahl, Sigismund.</b> 110.
<b>Falter, J. H.</b> 18.	<b>Kallenbach, Georg Gottfried.</b>
<b>Falz, Raymund.</b> 8. 29. 55. 63.	67.
<b>Fiammingo, Franz du Quesnoy</b>	<b>Kelian, Lucas.</b> 29.
<b>gen.</b> 80.	<b>Kern, Leonhard.</b> 6. 28.
<b>Fischer, Johann Georg.</b> 16.	<b>Keyll, Johann.</b> 37.
<b>Flötner, Peter.</b> 27. 28.	<b>Kirstein.</b> 55.
<b>Fraxato da Rovigo.</b> 34.	<b>Klieber, Ulrich.</b> 73.
<b>Friedrich der Grosse.</b> 96.	<b>Klöppel, Johann Thomas.</b> 84.
<b>Frommer.</b> 76.	<b>Köhler, Johann Gottlob.</b> 114.
<b>Gabler, Mathias.</b> 77.	<b>Kolb, Nicolaus.</b> 77.
<b>Galilaeus Galilaei.</b> 73.	<b>Kraft, Adam.</b> 13.
<b>Gaas, Michael.</b> 77.	<b>Kretschmer.</b> 17.
<b>Geigor, J. C.</b> 39.	<b>Krug, L.</b> 27. 29.
<b>Genser, Marx.</b> 77.	<b>Kuenlin, Jacob.</b> 77.
<b>Geronimo da Urbino.</b> 34.	<b>Kummer, K. W.</b> 113.
<b>Glume.</b> 17.	<b>Kunkel.</b> 38.
<b>Goachmana, Friedrich.</b> 70. 77.	<b>Langenbücher, Achilles.</b> 77.
<b>Göttlich, Paul.</b> 75–78.	<b>Laudin, Jean.</b> 42. 45.
<b>Grietsbeck, Daniel.</b> 77.	— — Joseph. 44.
<b>Günsch, C. F.</b> 85.	— — Nicolaus. 44.
<b>Haber, S.</b> 29.	<b>Lehmann, Caspar.</b> 39.
<b>Hainhofer, Philipp.</b> 72. 73. 77.	<b>Leygebe, Gottfried.</b> 59. 92.
<b>Harrich, C.</b> 9.	<b>Limosin, Leonardo.</b> 42.
<b>Hartmann, P. J.</b> 22.	<b>Lindner, Dr. W.</b> 84.
<b>Heckinger, Jonas.</b> 77.	<b>Lischke, Therese.</b> 83.
<b>Heideloff, Carl.</b> 61.	<b>Listenay, Emanuel.</b> 84.
<b>Held, L.</b> 59.	<b>Lück.</b> 8.
<b>Hertel, C. E.</b> 17.	<b>Meelführer, Gabriel.</b> 77.
<b>Hicken, Nicke Peters.</b> 84.	<b>Meil, J. L.</b> 25.
<b>Hossauer.</b> 60.	<b>Meißner, J. H.</b> 17.
<b>Huault, Amicus.</b> 47.	<b>Mendeler, Caspar.</b> 77.

9 | Page from the index of artists' names with the entry "Fiammingo, Franz du Quesnoy gen.", from Leopold von Ledebur, *Leitfaden für die Königliche Kunstkammer und das Ethnographische Cabinet zu Berlin*, 1844.

39 See Nicolai 1769, pp. 337–48, quotation p. 340 (unchanged in Nicolai 1779, pp. 581–90); Nicolai 1786a, pp. 793–9.



Collection objects whose material presence and iconography were indebted not least of all to the princely decorum of their owner were now transformed – not only by the Enlightenment advocate Nicolai, who collected artist biographies and sought to ennoble especially regional artists<sup>40</sup> – into evidence of the work of individual artists and artisans. At a time of royal neglect, the *Kunstammer* became one of the birthplaces of modern art historiography, which, with its focus on artist personalities and personal style, developed in the study of the objects. In Franz Kugler's *Beschreibung der in der Kgl. Kunstammer zu Berlin vorhandenen Kunst-Sammlung* (Description of the art collection in the Royal *Kunstammer* in Berlin) in 1838, under “bronze works of this period”, the following was written about the “figures of three small boys”:

These small works came to the *Kunstammer* in 1689. Attributed to Fiammingo (1594–1644), they do indeed correspond completely to the gracefully naïve child figures for which this master, in addition to more magnificent works, is so particularly distinguished.<sup>41</sup>

10 | *Cupid Carving His Bow* (detail),  
Staatliche Museen zu Berlin,  
Sculpture Collection and Museum for  
Byzantine Art.

In 1844, *Kunstammer* director Leopold von Ledebur reflected this perspective when presenting the new collection profile by introducing his guidebook with a four-page index of artist names (fig. 9) [■Night Clock].<sup>42</sup>







11 | Fighting putto, montage of three different sculptures, three frames from Sergei Eisenstein, *Battleship Potemkin*, 1925.

## Epilogue: *Manneken Pis* and a Shot in the Head

At the time, the cupid, as one of the “more magnificent works” by Duquesnoy, had already been transferred to the (Altes) Museum. The sculptor Christian Friedrich Tieck, who was responsible for the sculptures, referred to it in 1835 as a “successful work”;<sup>43</sup> in a handbook of 1861 it received a star, comparable to the famous Baedeker star ratings, as particularly worth seeing.<sup>44</sup> However, another museum guidebook of 1894 clearly showed how lonely and awry the cupid was as a classicizing early Baroque Flemish work amid Italian Renaissance pieces and the French school of the eighteenth century in the art historical and spatial order of the “sculptures of the Christian era”.<sup>45</sup>

With its present-day popularity among museum visitors, the cupid was even chosen as a “Lieblingsstück” (favourite piece) on the blog of the State Museums.<sup>46</sup> This is due to the popularity of “Fiamingo’s children” in pop culture, which brings to mind the world-famous *Manneken Pis* (Peeing Boy) in Brussels by François’s father Jérôme Duquesnoy the Elder (fig. 6), and especially due to the fragmented state of the sculpture. However, here it is no longer a matter of a broken and “glued together” bow as in 1694, but instead of severe damage to the cupid in the Second World War. Extending outward from a possibly intentional shot in the head around the left ear, cracks radiate, starlike, through the marble (fig. 10).<sup>47</sup> The experiences of violence in modernity and, in stark contrast, an unprecedented increase in the appreciation of the physical and psychological integrity of children as compared with the early modern age, allow this putto, in an empathetic, substitutive image act,<sup>48</sup> to become a vis-à-vis in reflecting and overcoming violence. Putti and modern war: in a famous sequence from Sergei Eisenstein’s 1925 film *Battleship Potemkin*, a Baroque putto comes alive in an attraction montage; powerless, it braces itself against the explosive revolutionary storm on the “headquarters of the generals” in Odessa (fig. 11). In 2019 a photograph with the war-damaged sculptures in the Schlüter staircase of the Berlin palace was given the sympathy-inducing caption: “The lonely putto at the lower flight of stairs. His little brother to the left was destroyed during the filming of the Battle of Berlin in 1948.”<sup>49</sup> This kind of contextualization, in which a crack in the crystal structure of the marble becomes a flesh wound, marked a new epoch in the object biography of the *Cupid Carving His Bow* by François Duquesnoy that would have been inconceivable in the early modern age, making it once again into a strikingly modern work of art.

Translated by Allison Brown

40 See especially Nicolai 1786b.

41 Kugler 1838, p. 230. The statuettes are the “three small reclining metal children” that came from Danckelmann’s house in 1689 (see above).

42 See Ledebur 1844, pp. ix–xii, on Duquesnoy p. 58. Kugler 1838, p. 309, also includes a list of monograms.

43 See Tieck 1835, pp. 11–12, quotation p. 11. However, Tieck wonders, following Nicolai, if the sculpture was in fact the one mentioned by Sandrart or else the pleasure garden copy by “Otto Mongiat”. In addition, the museum also had Döbel’s copy (ibid., p. 12), which had been bought for the Kunstkammer after the death of the sculptor. However, it was never mentioned in the sources, so it must remain unclear where it was stored or if it was displayed.

44 Schasler 1861, p. 29.

45 See Schöne 1894, “Bildwerke der christlichen Epoche,” pp. 25–44, here p. 35.

46 See Fröhlich 2015.

47 This aspect was also central to Fabian Fröhlich’s deliberations (ibid.), written in connection with the *Lost Museum* exhibition, about the museums’ war losses. Here there is also a photograph of the fragments of the sculpture from the time between its destruction in the Friedrichshain flak bunker in 1945 and its restoration before returning from the Soviet Union in 1958. Another restoration, which did not replace the missing parts, took place in the 1990s.

48 On the concept, see Bredekamp 2021, 137–92.

49 Gehrke 2019, p. 15, illustration with caption. However, it is unclear to which film the caption is referring (oral information from Kathrin Nachtigall, Berlin).