

The Frick Collection: Detail Report



Faun Playing the Flute

Camelio (Vittore Gambello) (Italian, 1455/60–1537)

Date early 16th century

Medium Bronze

Dimensions H.: 13 1/4 in. (33.7 cm)

Credit Line Henry Clay Frick Bequest

Accession Number 1916.2.31

Currently On View

First Floor, Room 11, Library

Commentary Venice was later than Padua to develop a local school of sculptors producing bronzes, and few Venetians attained a comparable reputation. Perhaps the proximity of Padua made such efforts seem redundant. Furthermore, signed or documented works by Venetian bronze sculptors are exceedingly rare much before the middle of the sixteenth century, making attributions difficult. Attributions to Camelio, for example, are suggested only on the basis of signed reliefs, which offer less than satisfactory support for comparison with three-dimensional statuettes. A number of bronzes ascribed to Camelio, including the Faun Playing the Flute, have also been claimed as the work of an early sixteenth-century Paduan goldsmith, Francesco da Sant'Agata, whose style, however, is perhaps even less clearly defined. Both artists seem to have produced small, gracefully proportioned male nudes derived from antique models and with classicizing subjects. However, similar figures also were made by other early sixteenth-century North Italian sculptors. The present faun, who has pointed ears and a neatly curled tail, represents a popular model derived from antique precedents and known in several variants. This version has lost its flute except for a fragment remaining in the left hand. Nevertheless, the faun's lithe, dancing body seems to twist and turn to the ghostly sound of pagan pipes. Source: *Art in The Frick Collection: Paintings, Sculpture, Decorative Arts*, New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1996.

Collection History Sold through Durlacher Bros., June 13, 1904, for £600, under an ascription to Sant'Agata, to J. Pierpont Morgan, London and New York.¹⁵ Duveen. Frick, 1916. Source: *Sculpture in The Frick Collection: Italian*. Volume III. New York: The Frick Collection, 1970.