

# The Frick Collection: Detail Report

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## Don Fernando Álvarez de Toledo, Third Duke of Alba

Jacques Jonghelinck (Netherlandish, 1530–1606)

**Date** 1571

**Medium** Bronze

**Dimensions** 46 × 26 3/4 × 15 in. (116.8 × 67.9 × 38.1 cm)

**Credit Line** Henry Clay Frick Bequest

**Accession Number** 1916.2.61

Currently On View

First Floor, Room 17, Garden Court

**Commentary** Jonghelinck was unfortunate in that one of his last major works of sculpture, a full-length, over-life-size bronze statue of the Duke of Alba, erected within the citadel of Antwerp in 1571, was destroyed only a few years later. But his subject happened to be the most hated man in the Netherlands: Don Fernando Álvarez de Toledo, third Duke of Alba (1507–82). Monuments to tyrants seldom survive for long. Fanatically devoted to the Catholic Church and the Spanish throne, Alba commanded the Spanish armies, winning victories for his sovereigns, Charles V and Philip II, against the Turks and the Protestants. He was sent as viceroy to Naples and on various diplomatic missions, and in 1567 he was appointed governor-general of the Low Countries. There, his arrogance, tyranny, and merciless suppression of civil and religious opposition were so extreme that even his employers found his cruelty unacceptable. He was recalled to Madrid two years after Jonghelinck made the bronze statue of him, the portrait bust in The Frick Collection, and a portrait medal, a silver cast of which also belongs to the Collection. Jonghelinck's inscribed, signed, and dated bust of Alba adheres to standards of restraint and decorum typical of the international court style, which was so pervasive in portrait painting and sculpture of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Like Adrian de Vries in his portrait of Emperor Rudolf II or Leone Leoni in his of Charles V, Jonghelinck renders details of the costume—the armor, ruff, and Order of the Golden Fleece—with scrupulous precision. In Jonghelinck's portrait, the stiffness and sharpness of these outward appearances seem a perfect match to the severe and forbidding aspect of the Duke, whose rigid posture, aristocratic mien, and fierce expression so unequivocally reveal the man's character. Source: *Art in The Frick Collection: Paintings, Sculpture, Decorative Arts*, New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1996.

**Collection History** Dukes of Alba, Madrid (till 1810). Maréchal Ney, Duc d'Elchingen, Château des Condreaux, near Châteaudun. After the execution of Ney (1815) the bust appears to have remained in the Château des Condreaux, and in 1825 it was sold with the house to Maréchal Vicomte de Reille. Vicomte Gustave de Reille, Paris. Baron Victor Reille, Paris. Duveen. Frick, 1916. Source: *Sculpture in The Frick Collection: German, Netherlandish, French and British*. Volume IV. New York: The Frick Collection, 1970.