

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

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TERRA-COTTA SCULPTURE EXHIBITION OPENS AT NATIONAL GALLERY OCTOBER 28

WASHINGTON, D.C. October 19, 1979. European Terra Cottas from the Arthur M. Sackler Collections, an exhibition of sculptures in clay spanning the history of the medium in western European art from the fifteenth to the twentieth centuries, opens in the National Gallery of Art's East Building October 28 and will remain on view through January 27.

On loan from the extensive holdings of Dr. Arthur M. Sackler, the 57 pieces selected for this exhibition, many of which have never before been on public display, illustrate the various uses of terra cotta as a medium through the last six centuries of western European art. For instance, in addition to independent, highly finished works of art, there are bozzetti, or models of the artist's first inspiration for a sculptural work ultimately destined for a larger scale or different medium such as marble, sketch models reflecting the sculptor's more fully developed idea on a larger scale, and, examples serving as records of sculpture in other media.

Terra cotta, literally "baked earth," is one of the most ancient and most widely used sculptural materials. The modeled clay, fired in a kiln, may be left earth-colored or, more usually, colored with paints or glazes which may serve to protect the work as well as contribute to its beauty. Small-scale examples may be made of solid clay, whereas larger works are hollowed out or fired in sections to prevent cracking and later joined together.

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Renaissance bozzetti and sketch models are the first known to have been deliberately preserved either for the artist or for his patron to retain. Also, from the Renaissance on, terra cotta was an accepted medium for finished works of art throughout Europe. They were especially prized in eighteenth-century France, which encouraged extensive work by such masters as Augustin Pajou (1730-1809) and Claude Michel, called Clodion (1738-1814), whose works reveal this medium's potential for crispness and delicacy of detail.

In addition to examples by Pajou and Clodion, the exhibition will include renderings by Jacopo del Duca (c.1520-after 1592), François Duquesnoy (1597-1643), Giuseppe Mazzuoli (1644-1725), Giuseppe Maria Mazza (1653-1741), Camillo Rusconi (1658-1728), Joseph Chinard (1756-1819), Albert Ernest Carrier-Belleuse (1824-1887), and Arturo Martini (1889-1947).

The exhibition has been organized by Carolyn Wilson Newmark, assistant curator of sculpture at the National Gallery. Mrs. Newmark has also written the brochure accompanying the exhibition. The installation of the objects has been designed by Gordon Anson of the Gallery's Installation and Design department.

A catalogue of all the terra-cotta sculptures in the Sackler collections, written by Charles Avery, former deputy keeper of sculpture at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, is scheduled for publication this winter. Mr. Avery will give a lecture entitled "European Terra Cottas: The Fingerprints of the Sculptor" at 4 p.m. on Sunday, October 28, in the East Building Auditorium.

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION or photographs contact Katherine Warwick, Assistant to the Director (Information Officer) or Mary Dyer, Information Office, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. 20565, area code 202, 737-4215, ext. 511