



# ‘A Thing of Beauty is a Joy Forever’. A Piccolomini *Tabernachetto* from the Collection of Otto Lanz

For Henk van Os, on his eightieth birthday

• FRITS SCHOLTEN •

In the catalogue of the major summer exhibition *Italiaansche kunst in Nederlandsch bezit* (Italian Art in Dutch Hands), staged in the upper galleries of the Stedelijk Museum in 1934, a section was devoted to a rather neglected area of Renaissance art – furniture. The writer of the introduction to this section was the flamboyant Amsterdam-Swiss surgeon and art collector Otto Lanz. One of the driving forces behind this exhibition, his pioneering role in collecting early Italian art in the Netherlands was first brought to light by Henk van Os.<sup>1</sup> Lanz saw his opportunity and seized it with both hands. While virtually all the other authors confined their accounts to a modest one or two pages, he spread himself over twelve, so that his introduction was by far the longest. It consequently has to be read as a powerful plea for a reappraisal of the art of Renaissance furniture-making: ‘Interest in the sublime lines of Italian Renaissance furniture, in the elegant products of the craftsmanship of those days, lags far behind that in the dominant Italian painting and sculpture. Wrongly,’ wrote Lanz.<sup>2</sup> Because the author was also a very generous lender to the exhibition, he was able to discuss a considerable number of his own pieces.<sup>3</sup> This article is about one of them – a ‘little gem of a carving’ listed in the catalogue as

< Fig. 1  
Attributed to  
ANTONIO DI NERI  
BARILI, *Devotional  
Tabernacle*, Siena,  
c. 1500.  
Walnut, h. 34 cm.  
Amsterdam,  
Rijksmuseum,  
inv. no. BK-16877.

no. 1051 in the furniture section of the exhibition. Afterwards it found its way to the Rijksmuseum, where it has since been largely ignored (fig. 1).<sup>4</sup>

Lanz must have been extraordinarily fond of this carving, for he refers to it no fewer than three times in his introduction.<sup>5</sup> At the end of his argument, the writer ranked it among the small objects to which ‘great artists gave their time’, and which the observant visitor cannot heedlessly overlook. He ended with what was then the probably not so hackneyed line by Keats: ‘a thing of beauty is a joy for ever’. Lanz credited the piece to ‘the famous Sienese wood-carver Antonio Barile’, an attribution he had most likely made himself, doubtless prompted by the presence of the arms of the Sienese Piccolomini family at the bottom of the carving.<sup>6</sup> This meant that the little work went beautifully with the large dining table in *Casa Lanz*, which was likewise decorated with the family’s coat of arms (but subsequently proved to be a modern forgery) (fig. 2).<sup>7</sup>

Lanz acquired the piece between 1911 and 1934. In all likelihood he bought it in the Hamburger brothers’ gallery at 551 Herengracht, Amsterdam, where they operated under the name *N.V. tot Uitoefening van den Kunsthandel Heerengracht 551*; later on they opened a branch in Paris.<sup>8</sup> The Hamburgers had acquired the panel at a sale at



Fig. 2  
Interior of Otto Lanz's  
house with the  
'Piccolomini' dining  
table.  
Photo: Rijksmuseum.

Drouot in March 1911, when the stock of the deceased Parisian art dealer Jules Lowengard went under the hammer.<sup>9</sup> In the second part of this sale, devoted wholly to Italian Renaissance art and decorative art objects, we find it as no. 96, catalogued as 'travail siennois de la fin du xve siècle' but without an attribution to Barile (or Barili).<sup>10</sup> According to the *Gazette de l'Hôtel Drouot*, it fetched the not inconsiderable sum of 5,950 French francs.<sup>11</sup> Lanz would undoubtedly have had to shell out a good deal more than that.

The carving is an example of micro-architecture: a small walnut panel, 34 centimetres high, in the shape of a classical portal with a shallow, domed, scalloped and empty niche in the middle.<sup>12</sup> The portal is made up of two Corinthian columns supporting an

ornately decorated entablature, a frieze of alternating palmettes, egg-and-dart moulding and a cornice with the head of the suffering Christ crowned with thorns in a medallion. This is flanked on each side by a laurel wreath, a bird, a flaming urn and a cherub on the corner (fig. 3). The base also has a frieze of finely carved *all'antica* motifs: a symmetrical foliar design in the middle, terminating in a chimera or lion, and beneath the columns a pendant lamp borrowed from classical candelabra (fig. 4). The lowest zone comprises curling acanthus leaves flanking the Piccolomini coat of arms – a cross with five crescent moons – crowned with a cherub's head (fig. 5). Here and there, gold paint accents have been added to the carving; there are minimal traces of bluish-grey paint on

*Fig. 3*  
Detail of the right-hand corner of the entablature and cornice, with a frieze of palmettes, a bird, a flaming urn and a cherub (fig. 1).

*Fig. 4*  
Detail of the left-hand corner of the lower zone, with a pendant lamp (fig. 1).

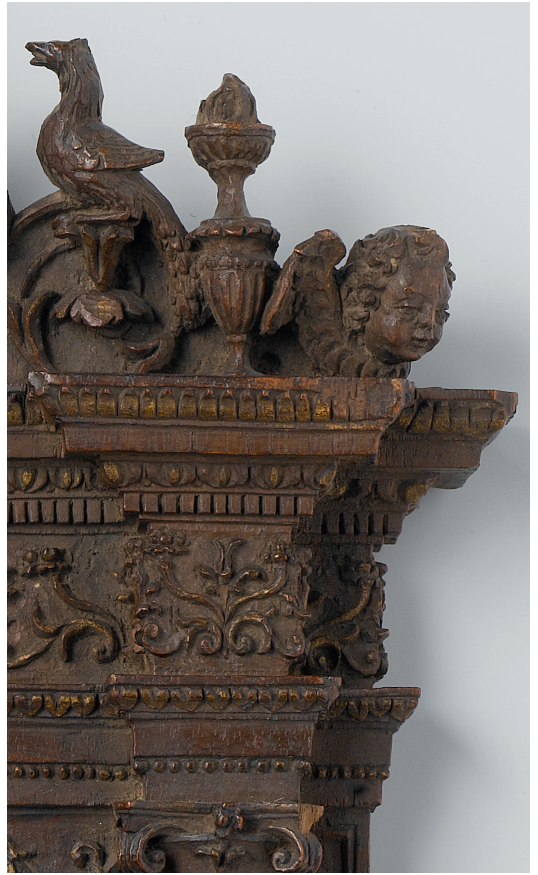


Fig. 5

Detail of the bottom with the angel's head and Piccolomini arms.



Fig. 6

The back of the tabernacle (fig. 1).



the cross in the coat of arms against which the golden crescent moons stand out. The final striking feature is that the niche must once have been filled; an irregular oval hollow in the centre, with clear marks made by a gouge or chisel, tells us that something has been hacked out quite crudely here – so roughly, indeed, that it left a hole in the back that had to be repaired with a new piece of wood (fig. 6).

#### *A Tabernachetto*

The function of the little panel is not immediately obvious. In the 1911 sale catalogue it is described neutrally as a 'petit encadrement en bois sculpté' – a small carved wood frame – and in 1934 Otto Lanz called it a 'tabernacle' or 'tabernacle frame'. And indeed, the piece does have the characteristic shape of a tabernacle, of the type that became popular in marble in Italy in the fifteenth century and can be found in all sorts of variants. Mino da Fiesole's marble wall tabernacle in the Santa Croce in Florence, which originally came from the convent in Le Murate, is a representative example of the type (c. 1473, fig. 7). Here again, we find the classic portal architecture, split into



Fig. 7  
MINO DA FIESOLE,  
Wall Tabernacle,  
c. 1473. Marble.  
Florence,  
Santa Croce.

three zones: the niche, the pediment-shaped entablature and a tapering lower zone. In the centre is a small bronze door, behind which the host is kept. Iconographically, everything here points to the sacrament of the Eucharist: in the 'heavenly' upper register, two cherubs flank an empty tondo – the host – which is brought by way of the ceiling of the niche below it to the faithful on earth. There it appears again, now as Christ in bronze on the little door in the middle and below as an inlaid round of green marble, surrounded by four angels carrying candles. The inscription on the base pithily sums up this iconography: *Hic est panis vivus q[ui] de celo descendit*.<sup>13</sup> In the lowest zone an angel holds a banderol.

Lanz's carving incorporates similar elements, a similar basic shape, the tondo in the pediment – with the head of the suffering Christ crowned with

thorns – and the angel in the lowest zone. In that sense it could have served as the *sportello* (door) of a large marble wall tabernacle, as Lanz believed and as it has been recorded in the Rijksmuseum ever since. The repetition of a tabernacle form like this within a larger, identical form is quite common. And yet there are several arguments that militate against a function as a door, such as the absence of any signs of fixings or hinges on the back and the lack of a keyhole. Their absence cannot be explained because the back was flattened off when the hole in the middle of the niche was filled. Furthermore, the small doors of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Italian wall tabernacles were made of gilded bronze or copper virtually as standard.<sup>14</sup> The only wooden examples I know of come from north of the Alps. So how, then, should this piece be explained? Might it be a scale model for a large wall tabernacle? That is possible in theory, although it would seem more obvious that the designs for a relief carving like this would have been drawn because there was no need to make it to scale in three dimensions first. Should we take Drouot's neutral description of it as a 'petit encadrement' or Lanz's as a 'tabernacle frame' seriously? In that case the little panel fits into a large group of Italian frames for paintings and mirrors in the shape of a tabernacle, a genre that emerged in the fifteenth century and also featured classical pediment or portal architecture.<sup>15</sup> Strictly speaking, however, it is not a frame or 'encadrement', at least if we assume that the missing image in the niche was a logical part of the carving and the iconographic programme.

All things considered, it seems most likely that the object we have here is what is known as a devotional tabernacle: a panel intended for private devotions in the shape of a larger wall tabernacle. There are early references to such *tabernacula* among the papal possessions in Avignon in the four-

teenth century, for example '1 small tabernacle with the figure of the Blessed Virgin in ivory'.<sup>16</sup> Victor Schmidt rightly points out that the use of the word *tabernaculum* in such cases is motivated by the shape of the frame, which 'always has substance and is thus often listed separately from the "contents" in the inventories'.<sup>17</sup> But the specific use of the term appears to have become rather diluted in the fifteenth century, as the mention of a *tabernacholetto* in Neri di Bicci's *ricordanze* demonstrates: 'this triptych does not differ in shape or because of the frame from other painted *tavolette*'.<sup>18</sup> Nevertheless, we frequently find tabernacle-shaped panels like this in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century illustrations of Italian interiors, and they must therefore have maintained their popularity.<sup>19</sup> There is a nice example in an illustration in a mnemonics treatise by Johannes Host von Romberch (*Congestorium artificiose memorie*,

Fig. 8  
*Objects in a Fictitious Abbey* (no. 7: devotional tabernacle), illustration in Johannes Host von Romberch, 'Aula, biblioteca, cappella', from *Congestorium artificiose memorie*, Venice 1533.  
Photo: Penn Libraries.

Fig. 9  
MICHELE CIAMPANTI (formerly known as the Stratonice Master), *Antiochus and Stratonice* (detail of the second panel: Stratonice dining with her friends), Lucca, c. 1475. Tempera on panel, c. 30 x 100 cm. San Marino (cA), Huntington Art Collections.

Venice 1533), in which the objects found in an abbey around 1500 serve as aides-memoire (fig. 8).<sup>20</sup> In the *aula* ('hall') of this fictitious building there is just such a small tabernacle (no. 7 in the woodcut). We also see a similar *tabernacholetto* hanging in the background to a scene with Antiochus and Stratonice, attributed to Michele Ciampanti of Lucca. The principal image here is a female martyr, while in the upper zone God the Father appears to have a place (fig. 9). A similar piece, this time with a Virgin and Child, appears in a fifteenth-century bedchamber pictured in a woodcut in *Questo sie la nobilissima historia di Maria per Ravenna* (Venice c. 1540?) (fig. 10).<sup>21</sup> A slimmer example hangs on the wall in an originally late fifteenth-century woodcut, re-used in *La rappresentazione di San Grisante & Daria* (Florence 1559) (fig. 11). What stands out is that in almost every case – Host von Romberch's treatise is the excep-





Fig. 10  
Interior with  
bedchamber and a  
devotional tabernacle  
on the rear wall.  
Illustration in *Questo  
sie la nobilissima  
historia di Maria  
per Ravenna*,  
Venice, c. 1540.  
Amsterdam,  
Rijksmuseum  
Research Library,  
447 A 14.



Fig. 11  
Interior with *San  
Grisante and Daria*  
and a devotional  
tabernacle on the rear  
wall. Illustration in  
*La rappresentazione  
di San Grisante &  
Daria*, Florence 1559  
(woodcut before 1500).  
Amsterdam,  
Rijksmuseum  
Research Library,  
447 A 14.

tion to the rule – small tabernacles for personal devotion like these hung in bedrooms. Other sources confirm that the bedroom was the favourite place for private devotional objects.<sup>22</sup> At the same time it ties in with the fact that in medieval art the Annunciation to the Virgin was usually situated in her bedroom, where she is interrupted during her meditation by the Archangel Gabriel.

If we assume that Lanz's carving had this same function for the owner's private devotions in the intimacy of the bedchamber, we have to ask ourselves what the missing central carving was. Given the shape of the space, it could very well have been a Virgin and Child, a highly appropriate image for such a panel, of course. Another, at least as self-evident a possibility is a *Pietà*, which would echo the theme of the suffering Christ in the upper zone and fit equally well in the panel's niche. There are plenty of good examples of both images on a smaller scale, chiefly small plaques or paxes, such as a gilded bronze example with the Virgin and Christ flanked by two saints, attributed to Moderno (c. 1500, fig. 12),<sup>23</sup> and a bronze *Pietà* from the circle of Jacopo Sansovino (1486-1570).<sup>24</sup> The panel shares with these metal plaques both the detailed execution and the predominantly monochrome character.

The central image must have been of exceptional workmanship, otherwise we are at a loss to explain why it was removed from the niche at some point,

Fig. 12  
GALEAZZO  
MONDELLA called  
MODERNO, *The Virgin  
and Christ, Flanked  
by St Anthony and  
St Jerome* (plaque  
transformed into a  
pax), Verona (?),  
c. 1490.  
Gilded bronze,  
10.7 x 5.8 cm.  
Amsterdam,  
Rijksmuseum,  
inv. no. BK-NM-11919.







Fig. 13

NICODEMO FERRI and CARLO BARTOLOZZI, *Mirror*, Siena, 1870. Walnut, 45.7 x 41.5 cm. Chicago, The Art Institute of Chicago, inv. no. 1997.333; gift of Martin P. Levy in memory of his father George J. Levy. Photo: © 2018 The Art Institute of Chicago/ Art Resource, NY/ Scala, Florence.

leaving only its vague outline.<sup>25</sup> It would seem that this crude assault on the object was committed in the nineteenth century simply to make a profit: evidently the relief and the surround would fetch more individually than the original as a whole piece. We can also not rule out the possibility that this central piece was made of a more valuable material than the walnut of the frame,<sup>26</sup> for instance ivory or precious metal, and this would have been an added incentive to remove it.

#### Antonio di Neri Barili?

Lanz attributed his carving to the woodcarver Antonio di Neri Baril(i) or Barile (1453-1516), proving that he had a very keen eye.<sup>27</sup> Even if he was blinded by the excessive enthusiasm and optimism regarding attributions

that afflicts many collectors, the panel definitely does have clear parallels with Barili's scarce surviving work. The fact that this is not a piece of work dating from the middle or the second half of the nineteenth century, when neo-Renaissance carving in 'Barili style' was produced in Siena by the workshops of Pietro Giusti (1822-1878) and Nicodemo Ferri (c. 1835-1899) with Carlo Bartolozzi (1835-1922), is confirmed by a look at a few typical products of the two workshops (figs. 13, 14).<sup>28</sup> Nineteenth-century carving from Siena is notable for its perfect, smooth, sharp finish, without flaws, and is often found in a combination of different coloured woods. It is also eclectic, reflected in the use of Siennese Renaissance style with motifs that do not belong in that



Fig. 14  
PIETRO GIUSTI,  
*Jewellery Casket*,  
Siena, 1857.  
Walnut and ebony,  
28 x 38 x 26 cm.  
New York,  
Metropolitan  
Museum of Art,  
inv. no. 1998.19; gift of  
John D. Rockefeller,  
by exchange, and  
Rogers Fund, 1998.

repertoire, such as the Régence crest and the guilloche border on a mirror frame by Bartolozzi and Ferri dating from 1870 (fig. 15), and Renaissance decorations on objects that did not exist, or at least not in that form, in the sixteenth century, such as a jewellery casket and even a piano.<sup>29</sup> This time, however, Lanz had not bought a pig in a poke. There can be little doubt that his fine tabernacle was made by a sixteenth-century woodcarver, a

conclusion justified both by the purity of the carving style and by the old signs of use. But is it actually by Barili?

*Maestro di legname* Barili was born in Siena in 1453.<sup>30</sup> Between 1483 and 1504 he worked on the choir furniture for the new Giovanni Battista Chapel in Siena Cathedral.<sup>31</sup> This suite of nineteen stalls was removed in 1661, but seven of them were relocated to the Collegiata of San Quirico d'Orcia in 1749, on the instructions of Marchese

Fig. 15  
ANTONIO DI NERI  
BARILI, *Frieze*,  
*Fragment of the  
Choir Stalls in the  
Chapel of St John  
the Baptist in  
Siena Cathedral*,  
Siena, c. 1483-1502.  
Walnut, 13 x 66.7 cm.  
New York,  
Metropolitan  
Museum of Art,  
inv. no. 16.32.78;  
gift of J. Pierpont  
Morgan, 1916.



Flavio Chigi; an eighth stall, with Barili's self-portrait, signature and the date 1502, ended up in Vienna in 1869, having previously been in the Bandini-Piccolomini Collection in Siena.<sup>32</sup> There is a frieze from one of the choir stalls in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (fig. 15).<sup>33</sup> Barili's artistic development was furthered by his association with Francesco di Giorgio Martini,

in whose entourage in Le Marche he worked for several years. Antonio was active in Fano, near Urbino, with his obscure brother Andrea in 1484 and then in the construction team working on the Palazzo Ducale in Urbino with the Sienese marble sculptors Ambrogio Barocci and Giovanni di Stefano.<sup>34</sup> After his return to Siena, in the years around 1500, Barili became the city's leading woodcarver, able to attract all the important commissions. As well as larger public works, he also undertook private commissions for paneling, picture frames, beds, chairs and chests.<sup>35</sup> The work he did for the most distinguished Sienese families, the Piccolomini, the Petrucci and the Chigi, was of particular importance.<sup>36</sup> For instance, he won the contract to work on the Piccolomini Library choir stalls in the cathedral, and for the celebrations in honour of the appointment of Cardinal Francesco Todeschini Piccolomini as Pope Pius III in 1503, Barili also supplied all sorts of decorative carving. In 1509 he made twelve pilasters for the *camera bella* of Pandolfo Petrucci's palazzo, eleven of which have survived (Pinacoteca Nazionale, Siena). These show how, soon after 1500, he had mastered the latest Renaissance style from Rome with grotesques and candelabra motifs. The sharp, almost crisp way he carved the foliage and floral motifs and the open way the tendrils are composed against the flat background are particularly striking (fig. 16). We find the same crispness in the frieze with two bulls' heads springing out of acanthus leaves, a motif Barili borrowed from Francesco di Giorgio which ultimately derived from bronze door knockers in the Veneto (fig. 15).<sup>37</sup> In every case, the carver used dark-stained walnut with a few highlights in gold paint, in the same way as white marble tabernacles were embellished.<sup>38</sup>

The modern repertoire of motifs Barili used, which can also be detected in Lanz's carving, was derived to a sig-



Fig. 16  
ANTONIO DI NERI  
BARILI, *Pilaster*,  
*One of a Set of  
Twelve, for the  
Palazzo Petrucci*,  
Siena, 1509.  
Walnut, 200 x 30 cm.  
Siena, Pinacoteca  
Nazionale/  
Soprintendenza per il  
Patrimonio Storico  
Artistico ed  
Etnoantropologico.  
Photo: Su  
concessione del  
Ministero dei Beni e  
delle Attività culturali  
e del Turismo.  
Polo museale della  
Toscana. Photo  
Archivio Pinacoteca  
Nazionale di Siena.



Fig. 17  
 ANDREA BREGNO,  
 MICHELANGELO et al.,  
*Piccolomini Altar*  
 in the Piccolomini  
 Chapel, 1481-1504.  
 Marble.  
 Siena, Duomo.  
 Photo: Civita, Siena.

nificant extent from the Renaissance decorations on the Piccolomini altar in Siena Cathedral (fig. 17). The slender decorative motifs on the friezes and borders of the little panel are in part simplified grotesques of a kind that came into fashion in Siena soon after 1500.<sup>39</sup> It is not without significance that this *all'antica* style of decoration from Rome was introduced to the city through the patronage of the

Piccolomini family. For instance, the term *grotesche* first appears in 1502 in the detailed contract with Pinturicchio for the decoration of the Piccolomini Library, the intellectual mausoleum for Pope Pius II, for which Antonio Barili supplied the wooden intarsia panels.<sup>40</sup>

In Lanz's panel, with carving that also has a crisp and open character, notwithstanding the much smaller scale, we likewise encounter these style



Fig. 18

ANTONIO DI NERI BARILI, *Pilaster, One of a Set of Twelve, for the Palazzo Petrucci* (detail with lions' heads), Siena, 1509. Walnut, c. 200 x 30 cm. Siena, Pinacoteca Nazionale/ Soprintendenza per il Patrimonio

Storico Artistico ed Etnoantropologico. Photo: Su concessione del Ministero dei Beni e delle Attività culturali e del Turismo. Polo museale della Toscana. Photo Archivio Pinacoteca Nazionale di Siena.

features, as well as a number of the individual motifs on the Petrucci pilasters. The lions' heads springing forth from vines in the lower zone of the tabernacle are a good example; they are present on the pilasters in Palazzo Petrucci in an almost identical but larger form (figs. 4, 18).<sup>41</sup> There are also remarkable parallels between the frieze with alternating cornucopia on Lanz's panel and the marble frieze of the Piccolomini Altar (figs. 3, 19). Here, moreover, we find the pendant wreaths of bellshaped flowers that figure in the vertical bands of the little tabernacle.<sup>42</sup> The classicizing oil lamps with pendant strings of beads likewise appear in a similar form on the Piccolomini Altar (figs. 4, 20). And lastly, there is a striking similarity between the faces of the seated cherubs

on the monumental marble pilasters of the entrance to the Piccolomini Library (Siena, Duomo), by the sculptor Lorenzo di Mariano (called il Marrina) and the head of the angel at the bottom of the Amsterdam panel.<sup>43</sup>

Summing up, we can say that Otto Lanz's little tabernacle is an unusual and personal ornament that must have been made in the same fashionable milieu of the Piccolomini that was responsible for introducing the Roman *all'antica* style in Siena shortly before 1500, with Antonio Barili as its most likely maker. If this attribution holds up, it is even the smallest surviving individual object from Barili's workshop. The escutcheon at the bottom of the panel tells us that it was carved for a member of the Piccolomini family. In that case it would probably have hung in a bedchamber in one of the family's residences in Siena, Rome or Pienza. Anyone hoping to find the panel in the few surviving photographs of Lanz's house, would fail. It is simply not there. I am therefore prepared to wager that Lanz was so smitten with his little Barili that he, too, hung it in his bedroom. Not for private devotions – that would be awkward without a central image – but to cherish as a thing of beauty at intimate moments, as it must have been for centuries.



Fig. 19  
ANDREA BREGNO,  
Frieze with  
Alternating  
Cornucopia  
(detail of fig. 17),  
1481-85. Marble.  
Siena, Piccolomini  
Chapel.  
Photo: Civita, Siena.



Fig. 20  
ANDREA BREGNO,  
Panel with  
Pendant Lamp  
(detail of fig. 17),  
1481-85. Marble.  
Siena, Piccolomini  
Chapel.  
Photo: Civita, Siena.

## ABSTRACT

A somewhat neglected late fifteenth-century panel from the collection of the Amsterdam-Swiss surgeon and art collector Otto Lanz, which he cherished, is investigated here. This article argues persuasively that the panel is a devotional tabernacle, intended for private devotion, of a kind that often hung on the wall of a bedchamber in the late Middle Ages. The missing central image may have been a Virgin and Child or a *Pietà*. Lanz attributed the carving to the woodcarver Antonio di Neri Barili or Barile (1453-1516). Barile was the most important woodcarver in Siena, who worked for distinguished clients, among them the Piccolomini family, which was responsible for introducing the Roman *all'antica* style to Siena shortly after 1500. The tabernacle contains the family's coat of arms and various motifs that correspond to documented work by Barili, and was carved in his characteristic crisp, open style. If this panel is indeed by Barili, it would be the smallest surviving object in its own right to come out of his workshop.

## NOTES

- 1 H.W. van Os, 'Otto Lanz en het verzamelen van vroege Italiaanse kunst in Nederland', *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 26 (1978), pp. 147-74.
- 2 'De belangstelling voor de edele lijnenpracht van het Italiaansche Renaissancemeubel, voor

de sierlijke voortbrengselen der kunstnijverheid dezer dagen, blijft verre achter bij die voor de alles beheerschende Italiaansche schilderkunst en plastiek. Ten onrechte.' *Italiaansche Kunst in Nederlandsch bezit*, exh. cat. Amsterdam (Stedelijk Museum) 1934, p. 215.

- 3 Arjan de Koomen, 'The Exposition of 1934', in A.W.A. Boschloo, E. Grasman and G.J. van der Sman (eds.), *'Aux quatre vents', a Festschrift for Bert W. Meijer*, Florence 2002, pp. 363-68.
- 4 'kleinood van snijwerk'.
- 5 Otto Lanz, 'Het meubilair der Renaissance', in *Italiaansche Kunst in Nederlandsch bezit* (note 2), pp. 214-26, esp. pp. 218, 224, 226.
- 6 'den beroemden Sieneschen houtsnijder Antonio Barile'.
- 7 Fee van 't Veen, *Het Nederlandse palazzo/ The Dutch Palazzo. Verzamelingen van vroeg-Italiaanse kunst/Collections of Early Italian Art*, Amsterdam 2008, pp. 22, 23.
- 8 After this they liked to pronounce their name with a French accent, as 'Amburgé'. With thanks to Jan Daan van Dam. *Gazette de l'Hôtel Drouot*, 7 March 1911 (front page, under 'Bois sculptés').
- 9 The Parisian art dealer Jules Jacques Lowengard (?-1909) was married to Esther Duveen, the sister of the art dealer Joseph Duveen. Their son, Armand Lowengard (1893-1943), was co-director of the Duveen gallery with Edward Fowles, see e.g. *Biographical Index of Collectors of Pastels* (<http://www.pastellists.com/collectors.htm>; consulted 8 October 2017). After Jules's death, the stock in his shop was sold at two auctions, in 1910 and 1911. The collection consisted primarily of Flemish tapestries, medieval art and Italian Renaissance decorative art.
- 10 *Catalogue d'objets d'art et de haute curiosité ... dont la vente par suite du décès M. Lowengard aura lieu à Paris*, sale cat. Paris (Drouot), 3, 4 March 1911, no. 96.
- 11 For comparison, the highlight of this sale – a pair of eighteenth-century Japanese porcelain vases in ormolu mounts – went for 31,000 francs, but most of the lots made only a few hundred francs.
- 12 For the term micro-architecture see F. Bucher, 'Micro-Architecture as the "Idea" of Gothic theory and style', *Gesta* 15 (1976), nos. 1, 2, pp. 71-89, and C. Kratzke and U. Albrecht (eds.), *Microarchitektur im Mittelalter. Ein gattungübergreifendes Phänomen zwischen Realität und Imagination*, Leipzig 2008.
- 13 'Here is the bread of life descending from heaven.' Hans Caspary, *Das Sakraments-tabernacle in Italien bis zum Konzil von Trient. Gestalt, Ikonographie und Symbolik, kultische Funktion*, Trier 1964, pp. 22-23; Alison Wright, 'Tabernacle and Sacrament in Fifteenth-Century Tuscany', in Peta Motture, Emma Jones and Dimitrios Zikos (eds.), *Carvings, Casts & Collectors: The Art of Renaissance Sculpture*, London 2013, pp. 42-57, esp. p. 49; Michaela Kalusok, *Tabernacle und Statue. Die Figurennische in der Italienischen Kunst des Mittelalters und der Renaissance*, Münster 1996.
- 14 Onno ter Kuile, *Rijksmuseum. Koper en Brons*, Amsterdam/The Hague 1986, nos. 85, 86. Volker Krahn, *Bronzetti veneziani. Die Venezianischen Kleinbronzen der Renaissance aus dem Bode-Museum Berlin*, Berlin 2003, no. 53.
- 15 T. Newbery, G. Bisacca and L.B. Kanter, *Italian Renaissance Frames*, New York 1990, nos. 7-34.
- 16 'I tabernaculum parvum cym ymagine beate Marie de ebore.' Victor M. Schmidt, *Painted Piety: Panel Paintings for Personal Devotion in Tuscany, 1250-1400*, Florence 2005, pp. 59, 63.
- 17 Schmidt 2005 (note 16), p. 63.
- 18 *Ibid.*, p. 36 and fig. 18.
- 19 For an example of a small tabernacle like this with a relief after Donatello in the centre, see Marta Ajmar-Wollheim and Flora Denis (eds.), *At Home in Renaissance Italy*, exh. cat. London (Victoria and Albert Museum) 2006, p. 190, fig. 14.2 (cat. no. 172) and pp. 192, 193 (fig. 14.3) for a painting by Vittore Carpaccio of a bedroom, in which there is a *tabernaculoletto* on the side wall, with a candle-holder in front of it for extra light and a small holy-water stoup below.
- 20 Ajmar-Wollheim and Denis 2006 (note 19), p. 93; the same illustration was used again later in Lodovico Dolce's *Dialogo nel quale si ragiona del mondo di accresce in conservar la memoria*, Venice 1562, see Peter Thornton, *The Italian Renaissance Interior 1400-1600*, London 1991, p. 264.
- 21 Thornton 1991 (note 20), p. 350, no. 374.
- 22 Schmidt 2005 (note 16), pp. 90-94. See also Glenn Burger, 'In the Merchant's Bedchamber', in Elina Gertsman and Jill Stevenson (eds.), *Thresholds of Medieval Visual Culture: Liminal Spaces*, Woodbridge 2012, pp. 239-59.
- 23 J. Leeuwenberg, *Beeldhouwkunst in het Rijksmuseum*, The Hague/Amsterdam 1973, no. 708.
- 24 Cf. F. Scholten, *European Sculpture and Metalwork: The Robert Lehman Collection*, XII, New York/Princeton (The Metropolitan Museum of Art) 2011, nos. 143, 144.
- 25 Cf. the tabernacle-shaped pax made of wood, coral and ivory, with a silver-gilt Lamentation relief in the centre, dating from 1513, by Moderno, and the small tabernacle-shaped altar with a Flagellation of

- Christ by an anonymous sculptor from the circle of Amadeo, see Vittorio Sgarbi (ed.), *La scultura al tempo di Andrea Mantegna tra classicismo e naturalismo*, Milan 2006, pp. 172, 173, and 164, 165. For a small ebony devotional tabernacle from Augsburg, late sixteenth century, with a silver Flagellation of Christ, see M. Leithe-Jasper and P. Wengraf, *European Bronzes from the Quentin Collection*, exh. cat. New York (The Frick Collection) 2004, p. 118, fig. 1.
- 26 An argument in favour of this idea is that no traces that the central image has been cut away can be found in the base of the niche.
- 27 For Barili see G. Milanesi, *Documenti per la storia dell'arte senese*, 3 vols., Siena 1854-56, vol. 2 (1854), pp. 398-99, vol. 3 (1856), pp. 17, 29, 42, 52, 73, 147-48; S. Borghesi and L. Banchi, *Nuovi documenti per la storia dell'arte senese*, Siena 1898, pp. 342, 386, 407; S. Frascchetti, 'Antonio di Neri Barilli', in *Domenico Beccafumi e il suo tempo*, exh. cat. Siena (Pinacoteca Nazionale) 1990, pp. 548-51; A. Angelini, 'Il lungo percorso della decorazione all'antica tra Siena e Urbino', in A. Angelini (ed.), *Pio II e le arti. La riscoperta dell'antico da Federighi a Michelangelo*, Siena 2005, pp. 307-85.
- 28 New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, inv. no. 1998.19; Chicago, The Art Institute, inv. no. 1997.333 (mirror by Nicodemo Ferri and Carlo Bartolozzi).
- 29 There is a collector's cabinet made by the firm of Ferri & Bartolozzi in Tyntesfield, a house and estate in Somerset, England, owned by the National Trust, inv. no. NT 11120. See [www.nationaltrustcollections.org.uk/object/11120](http://www.nationaltrustcollections.org.uk/object/11120). The firm's best-known work is the Siena Piano or Immortal Piano, made in Turin over a period of some forty years by the piano maker Sebastiano Marchisio and his sons Giacomo and Enrico. The instrument was exhibited at the World's Fair in Paris in 1867. The case was elaborately carved in neo-Renaissance style by Ferri & Bartolozzi. Nicodemo Ferri, incidentally, was a grandson of Enrico Marchisio. The piano, whose sound board was purportedly made of wood from two pillars of King Solomon's Temple that had ended up in Italy, was given by the City of Siena to Crown Prince Umberto and Princess Margherita on the occasion of their marriage in 1868. In the Second World War the instrument was stolen by the German army and ended up in the desert in El Alamein in 1942. It was recovered by British troops and sold to a Jewish piano tuner in Tel Aviv in 1943. See Avner Carmi and Hannah Carmi, *The Immortal Piano*, New York 1960 and the entry under 'Siena piano' by Peggy Flanagan Baird in Robert Palmieri (ed.), *The Piano: An Encyclopedia*, London 2003.
- 30 See online: [http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/antonio-barilli\\_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/antonio-barilli_(Dizionario-Biografico)) (entry by M. Lenzini Moriondo; consulted 8 January 2017).
- 31 Milanesi 1854-56 (note 27), vol. 2 (1854), pp. 398-99.
- 32 A. Schestag, *Das k.k. Österreichisches Museum für Kunst und Industrie*, Vienna 1914, pl. 125. See online: [http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/antonio-barilli\\_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/antonio-barilli_(Dizionario-Biografico)) (entry by M. Lenzini Moriondo; consulted 8 January 2017). This piece has disappeared since the Second World War, see also Silas Kopf, *A Marquetry Odyssey: Historical Objects and Personal Work*, Manchester (VT) 2008, pp. 38-40 and fig. 46.
- 33 New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, inv. no. 16.32.78.
- 34 Angelini 2005 (note 27), figs. 14, 31, 32, 35, 36.
- 35 Luke Syson et al., *Renaissance Siena: Art for a City*, London 2007, p. 276.
- 36 Giovanni Agosti and Vincenzo Farinella, 'Interni senesi "all'antica"', in *Domenico Beccafumi e il suo tempo*, exh. cat. Siena (Pinacoteca Nazionale) 1990, pp. 578-99, esp. fig. 20 (Barili's pilaster in Palazzo Chigi alla Postierla, Siena).
- 37 See also Angelini (ed.) 2005 (note 27), p. 345, fig. 36 (Ambrogio Barocci, led by Francesco di Giorgio Martini, *Cappella del Perdono*, Palazzo Ducale, Urbino; frieze). For the door knocker see Frits Scholten and Monique Verber, *From Vulcan's Forge: Bronzes from the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, 1450-1800*, London 2005, no. 7.
- 38 Angelini 2005 (note 27), p. 328, fig. 17 (Giovanni di Stefano, *Tabernacle for the Head of St Catherine of Siena*, Siena, San Domenico).
- 39 Agosti and Farinella 1990 (note 36), pp. 578-99.
- 40 The project of Francesco Todeschini Piccolomini (1439-1503), the Archbishop of Siena and Pope Pius III in 1503. He was the nephew of Pope Pius II, Enea Silvio Piccolomini, in whose honour Francesco had a library built on to the *Duomo*, see G.V.G. Shepherd, *A Monument to Pope Pius II: Pintoricchio and Raphael in the Piccolomini Library in Siena*, diss. Harvard University 1993, p. 412.
- 41 Frascchetti 1990 (note 27), pp. 549, fig. 1.4 and 551, fig. 7.
- 42 Angelini 2005 (note 27), pp. 409, fig. 21, and 432, fig. 40.
- 43 Angelini 2005 (note 27), pp. 364, 365.