



THE NAPOLEON
& MARIE LOUISE

— MARBLE BUSTS —

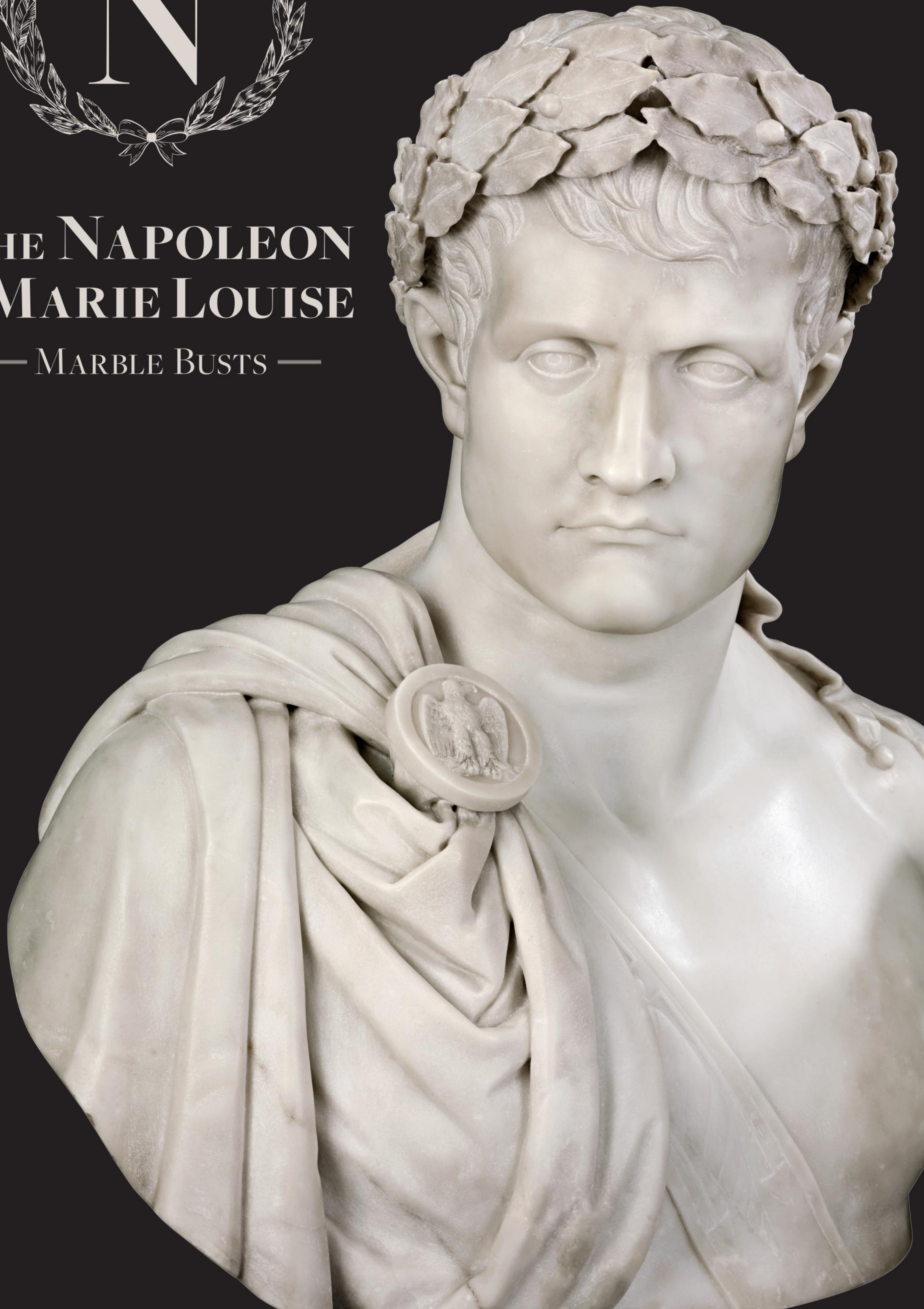








TABLE OF CONTENTS

04

Introduction

06

History & Attribution

16

Provenance

20

Literature

36

Exhibited

48

Conclusion



INTRODUCTION

Napoleon Bonaparte is one of the most legendary—and most recognizable—rulers in history. As the Emperor of France, he ingeniously crafted both an elaborate and powerful public image, leaving behind a legacy of iconic works of art that eternally evoke the grandeur of his reign. The exceptionally rare Carrara marble busts that are the subject of this book are among the finest examples of this legacy of imagery, beautifully depicting Napoleon and his second wife Marie Louise as a regal Roman emperor and his empress. Of all the Napoleonic marbles still in existence, these spectacular busts are the most important examples of Napoleonic sculpture not presently housed in a museum collection.

The history of these remarkable busts is as captivating as the monumental figures they represent. Carved in magnificent detail during Napoleon's reign, these sculptures were made by two of the leading artists of the day, whose famed works graced the palaces of France and beyond. The sculpture of Marie Louise was carved and signed by esteemed Italian sculptor Gaetano Matteo Monti of Ravenna, and the bust of Napoleon has an even more important attribution. Given its unparalleled artistic finesse and similarity to comparable sculptures, Napoleon's bust is attributed to one of the Emperor's favorite and most accomplished sculptors, Lorenzo Bartolini.

After Napoleon's fall, the busts made their way from the Emperor's collection to his nephew, Emperor Napoleon III, who was also an avid patron of the arts. Both busts were proudly displayed together at the important imperial palace, Château de Compiègne, until the end of Napoleon III's reign. The Emperor Napoleon III and Empress Eugénie took both sculptures with them into exile in England after his abdication, two of just a few items they brought with them. After Napoleon III's death, the busts were separated by Empress Eugénie and only reunited later in 1936 by famed Parisian art dealer Élie Fabius. The following pages will detail the remarkable journey of these busts across centuries—from their inspired creation to their storied provenance.

Together again, these busts are a monumental pair with an immense presence, evoking the power of an imperial union that changed the course of history. Forced to marry her nation's greatest adversary, the Austrian archduchess and the French emperor found mutual love and respect in their historic marriage in April 1810. When comparing his two wives, Napoleon once recounted, "I esteemed Marie Louise far more, though perhaps I loved her less than Joséphine."^[1]

A Napoleonic rarity like no other, there is only one other pair like our busts known, housed at the Museo Correr in Venice, and our pair is far superior in artistry, provenance and makers. The only other places to see even a singular bust of Napoleon as a Roman emperor by Bartolini, without Marie Louise, are two of the world's most prestigious institutions: the Louvre and Versailles. From their astonishing sculptural splendor to their complex history, this pair of Napoleonic busts is truly a once-in-a-lifetime wonder.

^[1] *Evangeline Bruce, Napoleon & Josephine: An Improbable Marriage, 1995, p. 509*





THE BUSTS OF EMPEROR NAPOLEON
& EMPRESS MARIE LOUISE

HISTORY & ATTRIBUTION



Circa 1810 | Carrara marble

Signed "GMR" for Gaetano Matteo Monti of Ravenna

Bust: 30 ⁹/₁₆" high x 20" wide x 13 ¹/₈" deep | On Base: 74 ³/₈" high

Circa 1807 | Carrara marble

Attributed to Lorenzo Bartolini

Bust: 30 ¹/₁₆" high x 24" wide x 12 ¹/₂" deep | On Base: 74" high



Jacques-Louis David, *Napoleon Crossing the Alps*, 1801, Château de Malmaison



After Antonio Canova, *Bust of Napoleon*, c. 1808-14, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

As part of his genius, Napoleon masterfully wielded a complex network of images to bolster his rule. In the short years between 1799 and 1804, Napoleon promoted himself from First Consul to Emperor of France, all the while using powerful visual symbols and works of art to legitimize his reign. Perhaps the most important of all of these symbols were those that tied him and his burgeoning empire to ancient Rome, and especially to its famed wartime leaders including Julius Caesar. By mirroring his own image after history's most brilliant rulers and strategists, Napoleon declared himself the rightful heir to the great conquerors of the past.

Extraordinary works of art were created by the era's best artists to proclaim Napoleon a new kind of ruler—not just a king, but an emperor. One of the most iconic images that solidified this message is Jacques-Louis David's monumental portrait of Napoleon crossing the Alps on horseback, completed in 1801. The dramatic equestrian portrait was specifically requested by Napoleon himself, who asked to be depicted as “calm atop a fiery horse.” Importantly, “Bonaparte” is emblazoned on the rock face at the bottom of the composition, followed by the names of Charlemagne and Hannibal—two military giants of antiquity who crossed the Alps before him, in the name of empire and conquest. This magnificent painting draws a direct line of succession from these conquerors to Napoleon himself.

More than any other historical figure, Napoleon's iconography relied heavily on that of the great Roman emperors. A great deal of his official portraiture depicted Napoleon in Roman imperial dress, striking classical triumphant poses and crowned with the laurels of gods and victors. In particular, Napoleon envisioned himself as the next Julius Caesar—one of history's most ingenious military minds and important leaders.

Following the models commissioned by Napoleon from Antonio Canova and Antoine-Denis Chaudet, the period's best sculptors were tasked with creating commanding images of Napoleon as Caesar for display. Among the body of Caesar-inspired Napoleonic sculpture, the present busts stand above the rest in their unparalleled sculptural virtuoso, truly befitting of the all-powerful Emperor. Busts of this superior quality and grand scale would have been installed in the most important palaces and government buildings that Napoleon frequented, and they were also often gifted to crucial foreign allies and dignitaries. Napoleon strategically spread the commanding image of himself as the modern-day Caesar far and wide, bolstering his rule and cementing his legacy as the ultimate heir of the ancient empires he sought to emulate.



**Detail of Gaetano Matteo Monti's signature (above)
on our bust of Marie Louise (below)**

The underside of Marie Louise's bust bears the signature of Gaetano Matteo Monti of Ravenna (1776–1847), a distinguished sculptor whose Neoclassical works garnered widespread acclaim across Europe. Renowned for his mastery in marble and trained by the great Antonio Canova, Monti's works are marked by a refined elegance and intricate detailing, especially visible in Marie Louise's soft features and elaborate tiara. Active in Milan during the latter part of his career, Monti fulfilled several important Napoleonic commissions, including a monumental frieze of Napoleon as King of Italy for Milan's Arco della Pace.

Monti's signature is subtly placed on the underside of Marie Louise's tunic and displays his initials, "GMR." Its small size, hidden placement and stylization caused scholars to misinterpret this signature as the mark of the furniture repository of the French crown, known as "Le Garde-Meuble Royal" (Royal Furniture Storage). This confusion led to the misattribution to Angelo Pizzi until now, when it was confirmed that the signature on our Marie Louise perfectly matches the signature on another period bust by Monti in the Galleria d'Arte Moderna in Milan.

Napoleon's bust features no signature, and its superior quality clearly points to a different sculptor's hand. It would have almost certainly been made earlier, and Marie Louise would have been added on the occasion of their marriage in 1810. It is impossible to know for certain whether our bust of Napoleon attributed to Bartolini was originally a standalone commission or if there was a Josephine bust that of course would have been destroyed upon their divorce in 1809.

Previous scholarship on Napoleon's bust, as well as key stylistic elements, indicate that this Napoleon was carved at an earlier date by the renowned Lorenzo Bartolini (1777-1850). Bartolini was the quintessential Napoleonic artist and was effectively the Bonaparte family's official portrait sculptor even after the fall of Napoleon. Bartolini was a sought-after artist in Paris as early as 1797, and by 1803 he had won the Prix de Rome as well as awards from the Academy. He therefore caught the attention of prominent Parisian patrons—the most important of which was Napoleon.

**“I AM A TRUE ROMAN EMPEROR; I AM OF THE BEST
RACE OF THE CAESARS—THOSE WHO ARE FOUNDERS.”**

NAPOLEON BONAPARTE, 1812



Detail of Bartolini's bronze bust of Napoleon in the Louvre showing the hair (left) and our bust attributed to Lorenzo Bartolini with the same wavy hair falling across the forehead (right)

Before Napoleon personally appointed Bartolini to direct his important Carrara sculpture workshop in 1807, he commissioned Bartolini to create an iconic imperial bust, which remains at Versailles today. When comparing Bartolini's Versailles bust to ours, several identical characteristics stand out. First and foremost, the masterful handling of the berried laurel wreath is a perfect match on these busts. Both headdresses feature leaves with incredibly delicate wavy edges and central veins carved with a lifelike precision only attainable by a highly skilled sculptor. The design and placement of the berries and the arrangement of the leaves in groups of three are also practically identical across both wreaths.

Beyond the laurel crowns, the virtuosic skill of Bartolini's carving is apparent in both of these busts' wonderfully naturalistic and muscular faces. They each have matching furrowed brows and strongly hooded eyes, prominent long noses with similarly wide bridges, and identical Cupid's bow lips and protruding chins. Even the dimples and strong musculature around the mouths are mirrored in both sculptures, along with the same soft wave pattern of the hair that falls across the foreheads. At the Louvre, a similar Bartolini Napoleonic bust in bronze shows the same lock of hair across the forehead and the lifelike berried laurel leaves that are clearly the trademarks of Bartolini's masterful hand.

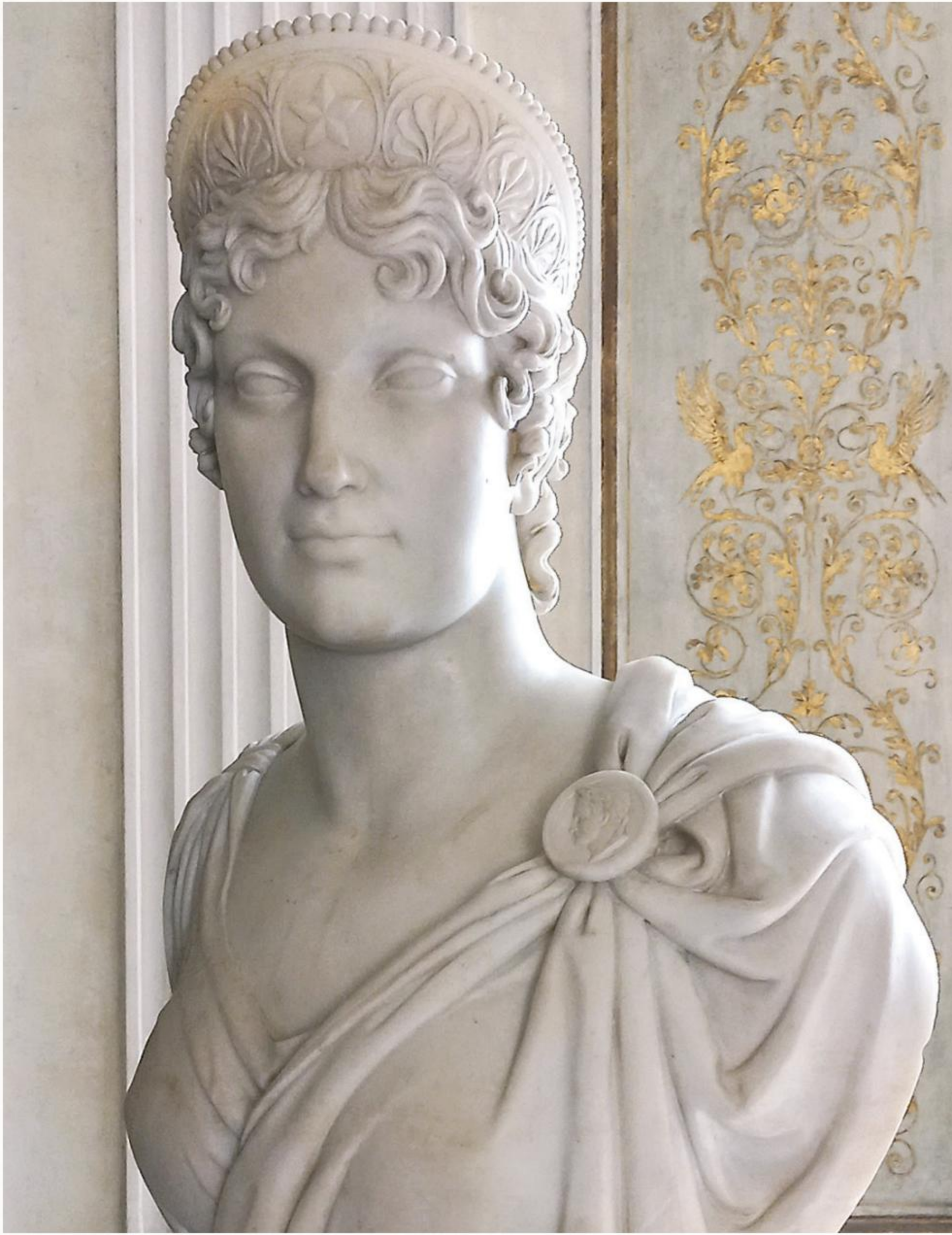


Lorenzo Bartolini, *Napoleon I, Emperor of the French*, c. 1805-06, Château de Versailles (above)

Our bust of Napoleon attributed to Lorenzo Bartolini (below)



Laurel leaves of Bartolini's bust of Napoleon at Versailles (above) and our bust attributed to Lorenzo Bartolini (below)



Bust of Marie Louise by Angelo Pizzi, Museo Correr, Venice



Our bust of Marie Louise by Gaetano Matteo Monti

Even among these examples from museum collections, the present bust of Napoleon stands out for its unparalleled stunning quality, marking it as one of Bartolini's finest creations. From 1964 to 1999, Gérard Hubert attributed this Napoleon to Bartolini in his authoritative book, *La Sculpture dans l'Italie Napoléonienne* (1964). He noted the stylistic similarities to the model by Antoine-Denis Chaudet (to whom our sculpture was attributed during the 1930s), but ultimately determined that the astonishing quality of the marble, the subtlety of the hair and the beauty of the modeling confirmed the attribution to Bartolini.

In 1999, Hubert changed his attribution of our busts to Angelo Pizzi, likely due to a similarly styled pair of Napoleon and Marie Louise busts being attributed to Pizzi in the collection of the Museo Correr in Venice. However, the signature of Gaetano Matteo Monti on our Marie Louise proves that Angelo Pizzi certainly did not make this Marie Louise. When our Napoleon and Marie Louise are compared to the Venice busts, it is clear at every turn that ours are much finer in the quality of the carving and elegance of the compositions. It is probable that the Pizzi busts in Venice were copies made after our magnificent busts by Bartolini and Monti.



Bust of Napoleon by Angelo Pizzi, Museo Correr, Venice



Our bust of Napoleon attributed to Lorenzo Bartolini



**Details of Pizzi's Napoleon bust (above)
and our bust attributed to Bartolini (below)**

Though similar in pose and dress, the modeling of the Pizzi busts in Venice is much more simplistic, with significant flattening of the laurel leaves, the facial musculature and the folds of the drapery. Even their proportions and positions seem more rudimentary, with their heads somewhat oversized and jutting forward at awkward angles. The exceptional finesse in our Napoleon perfectly matches the superbly skilled carving of Bartolini's busts, therefore confirming Hubert's original 1964 attribution of our Napoleon to Bartolini.

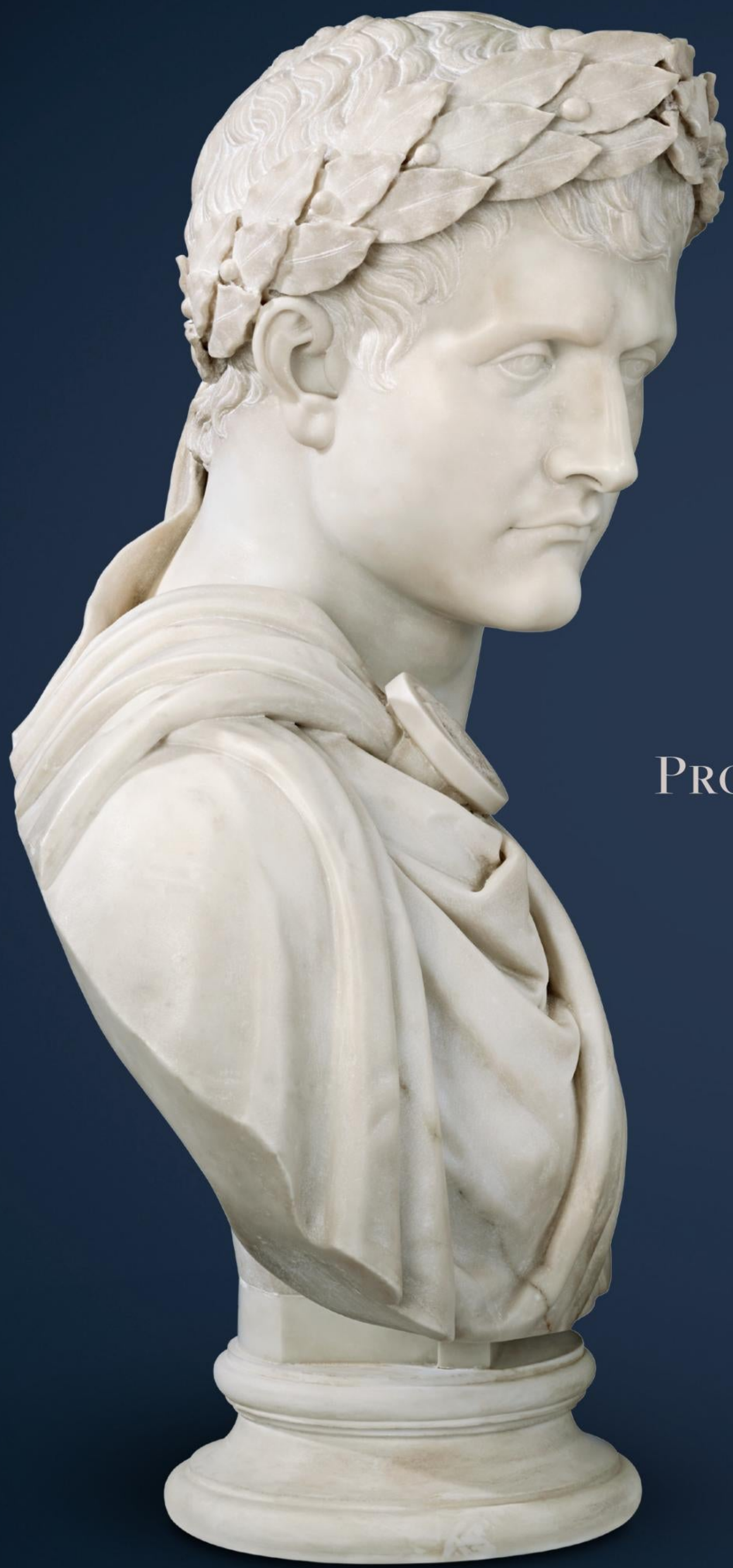
While the attribution of any unsigned Neoclassical marble is always up for academic discussion, what cannot be denied is the extraordinary sculptural quality and rarity of these stunning busts, with the only other similar pair housed at the Museo Correr in Venice. With their amazing lifelike presence and pristine condition, our busts of the Emperor Napoleon and the Empress Marie Louise are the most significant examples of Napoleonic sculpture not presently housed in a museum.





Busts of Marie Louise and Napoleon by Angelo Pizzi on display at the Museo Correr, Venice

PROVENANCE



PROVENANCE OF THE BUST OF NAPOLEON

Commissioned by Napoleon, Château de Compiègne (likely), circa 1807

The personal collection of Emperor Napoleon III at Château de Compiègne

Thence to Napoleon III's widow, Empress Eugénie

Gifted to Firmin Rainbeaux by Empress Eugénie on 18th April 1881

Thence to Félix Rainbeaux from his father, Firmin Rainbeaux

Sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, "Succession de M. Félix Rainbeaux, Fils de Firmin Rainbeaux, écuyer de l'Empereur Napoleon III souvenirs napoléoniens: fusils, pistolets, couteaux de vénerie, dagues, miniatures etc," 23rd October 1936, lot 267, catalogued as: "Buste de Napoléon Ier, en Empereur Romain, en marbre. Haut., 78 cm"

Élie Fabius, purchased from the above sale

Private collection, Stuttgart, Germany

Sale, Galerie Koller, Zürich, 2nd November 1995, lot 4162, with bust of Marie Louise, both illustrated on the front cover

Private collection, Switzerland

M.S. Rau, New Orleans

PROVENANCE OF THE BUST OF EMPRESS MARIE LOUISE

Commissioned by Napoleon, Château de Compiègne (likely), circa 1810

The personal collection of Emperor Napoleon III at Château de Compiègne

Thence to Napoleon III's widow, Empress Eugénie

Sale, Hampton & Sons of London, "English and French Furniture, the Remaining Library, Porcelain, Sculpture, Bronzes, Table Plate, China and Glass Services, Pictures, Drawings, Prints, Vintage Wines etc" from Empress Eugénie's home at Farnborough Hill, Hampshire, 18–27th July 1927, lot 1328, catalogued as: "The Empress Marie-Louise, a life-size bust"

Élie Fabius, purchased from the above sale

Private collection, Stuttgart, Germany

Sale, Galerie Koller, Zürich, 2nd November 1995, lot 4162, with bust of Napoleon, both illustrated on the front cover

Private collection, Switzerland

M.S. Rau, New Orleans

PROVENANCE

The only thing that could make these exceptional busts even more impressive is their illustrious provenance. Because of their extraordinary artistry and Bartolini's place of honor as one of Napoleon's personal sculptors, it is probable that Napoleon himself would have owned these busts first. He likely installed his bust with an earlier bust of Josephine (which would later be replaced with our Marie Louise) in the Château de Compiègne during the major refurbishments he ordered in 1807. Between the First and Second Empires, the decor of Compiègne was stripped of Napoleonic iconography, but it is likely that these busts would have been stored away from public view there and not taken out until the rise of the Second Empire.

After Napoleon I, the next known owner was the second most important person in 19th-century France—his nephew, Emperor Napoleon III. In his 1964 book, *La Sculpture dans l'Italie Napoléonienne*, Gérard Hubert confirms that these busts were owned by Napoleon III and proudly displayed at the Château de Compiègne.[1] This provenance is further supported by art critic Georges Mauguin in 1938, who also cites the provenance of Napoleon III and Empress Eugénie.[2]

Despite the lack of explicit archival records at Compiègne detailing how Napoleon III acquired the busts, he more than likely would have inherited them from the existing Château furnishings from Napoleon's reign. It is well known that Napoleon III preferred to spend his annual budget of 25 million francs on arms and armor and commissions of contemporary artists, rather than purchasing older works. As one of the three most important royal palaces in France since Louis XV—along with Versailles and Fontainebleau—Compiègne was returned to its imperial splendor by Napoleon III, who intentionally curated its decorative program to proclaim at every turn his lineage as Napoleon's heir.



Portraits of Emperor Napoleon III and Empress Eugénie by the studio of Franz Xaver Winterhalter, c. 1860. Framed together: 121 1/4" high x 76" wide x 12 1/2" deep. Collection of M.S. Rau, New Orleans

It is also conceivable that these busts could have been commissioned by Napoleon as a grand gift to a foreign ally, perhaps to the Hapsburg court on the occasion of his marriage to Marie Louise. They could have also been made for one of the many supporters of Napoleon. It would not have been out of the ordinary for these supporters to later gift objects of such artistic and historical significance to Emperor Napoleon III to garner his favor. While it is impossible to know for certain how they acquired the busts, what cannot be doubted is that both sculptures were owned and cherished by Emperor Napoleon III and Empress Eugénie, as they clung to them even in exile.

After the tumultuous events of the Franco-Prussian War (1870–71), the Imperial family was exiled to England, taking the busts with them. When Napoleon III died in 1873, Empress Eugénie brought both of the sculptures to her new estate, Farnborough Hill, in Hampshire, England, indicating their importance as two of her most prized possessions. In 1881, Eugénie gifted the bust of Napoleon to Firmin Rainbeaux (1834–1916), a close friend and equerry to her late husband, beginning the separation of these two busts that would last over 50 years.

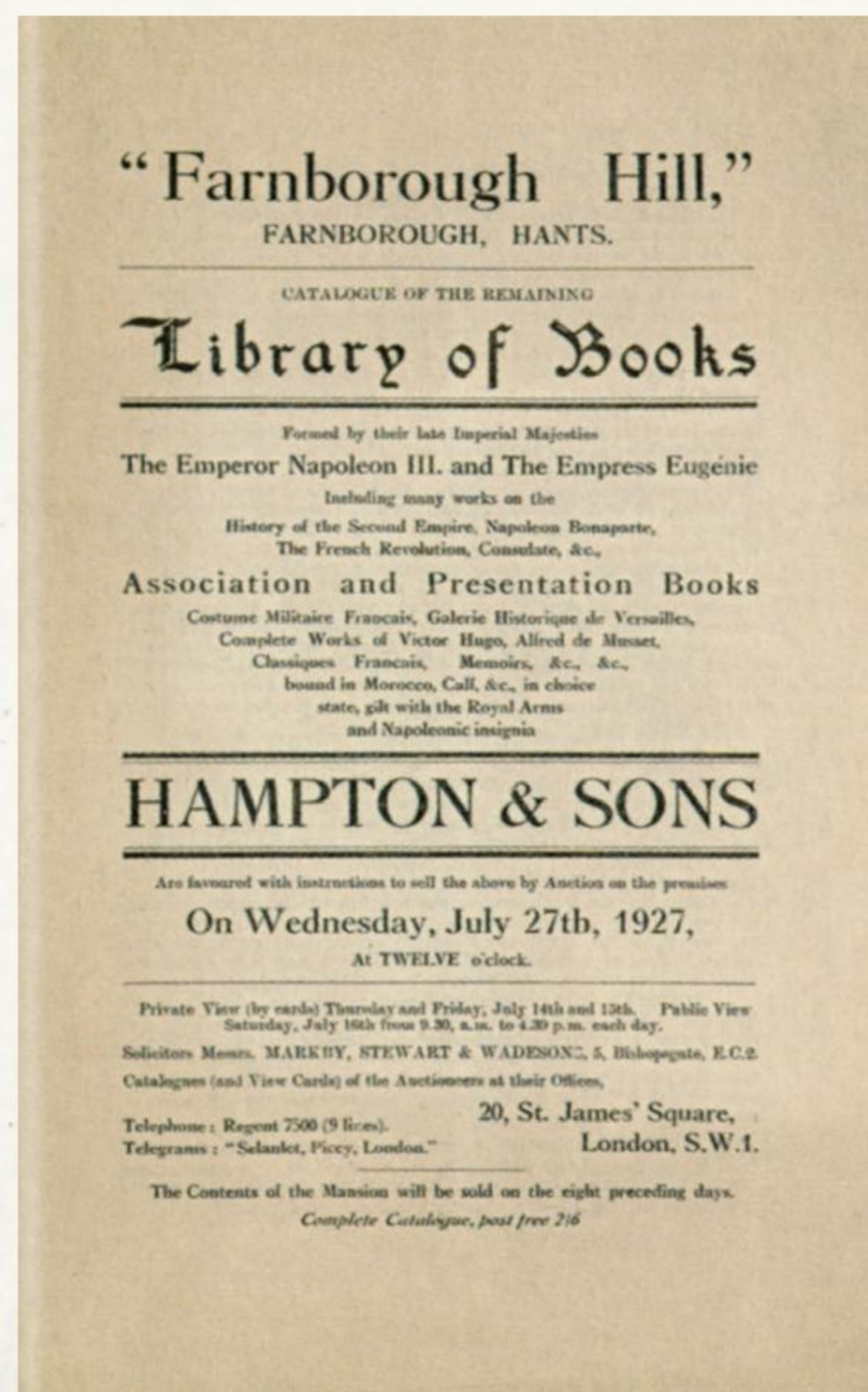
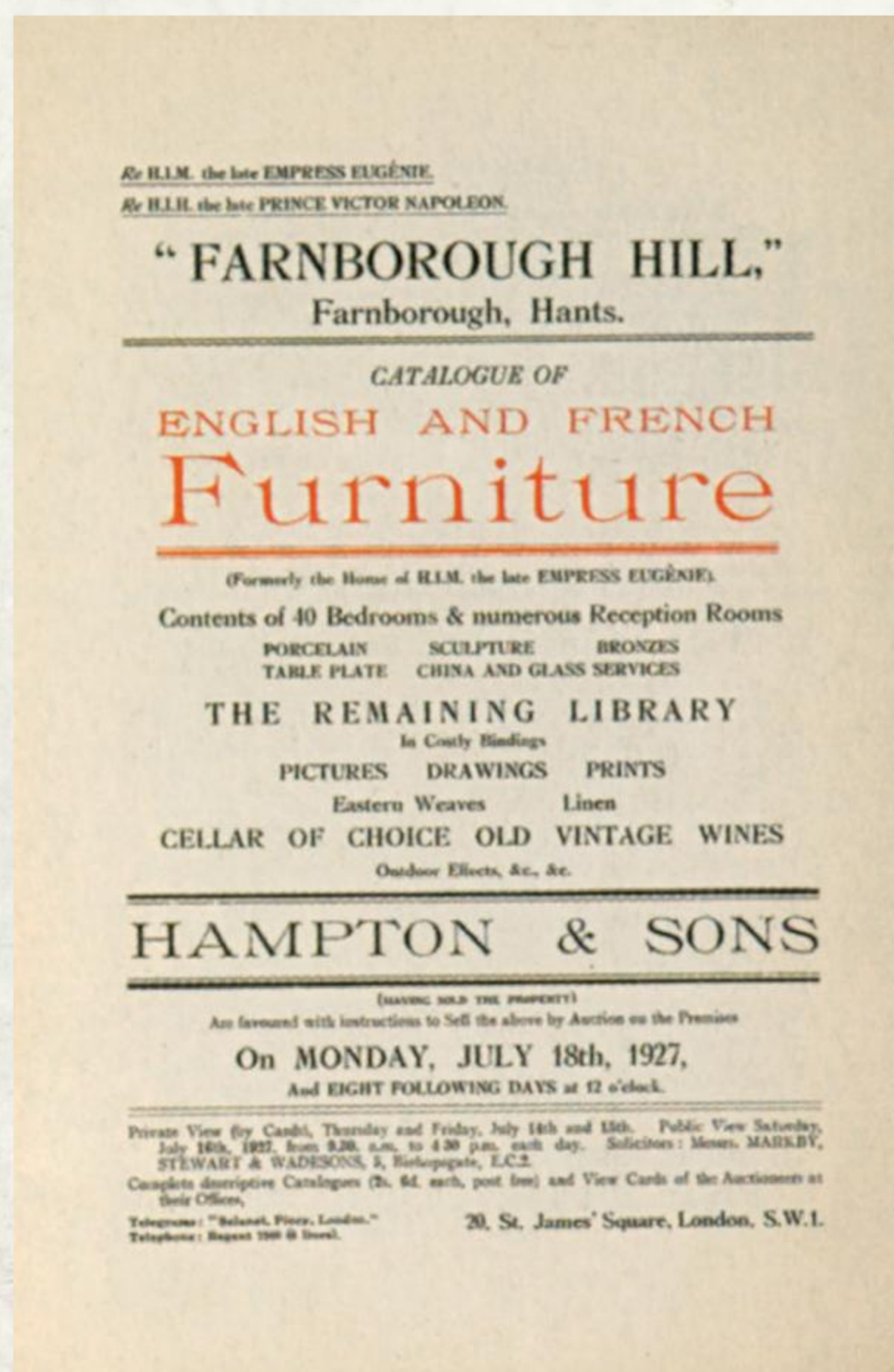
Unlike the bust of Napoleon, Empress Eugénie kept the bust of Marie Louise at Farnborough Hill, proudly displaying it until her death in 1920. Following her passing, the entire contents of Farnborough Hill were auctioned in a series of sales in 1927, during which the prominent Parisian art dealer Élie Fabius (1864–1942) acquired the bust of Marie Louise. In 1936 at an important Hôtel Drouot sale of Félix Rainbeaux's collection, Fabius was able to purchase the Napoleon bust and reunite him with Marie Louise.



Firmin Rainbeaux (1834-1916)

[1] Hubert, *La Sculpture dans l'Italie Napoléonienne*, 1964, p. 349

[2] Mauguin, *Revue de l'Institut Napoléon*, 1938, p. 40



Front pages of the sale catalogues of the Farnborough Hill sales of 1927, where Empress Eugénie's collection was sold after her death



LITERATURE



Georges Mauguin, “L’Iconographie Napoléonienne au Palais National des Arts,” in *Revue de l’Institut Napoléon*, 1er trimestre, 1938, p. 40, both busts illustrated

Gérard Hubert, *La Sculpture dans l’Italie Napoléonienne*, 1964, p. 349, bust of Napoleon is illustrated, with reference to its pendant bust of Marie Louise, pl. 165

Gérard Hubert and Guy Ledoux-Lebard, *Napoléon, portraits contemporains bustes et statues*, 1999, p. 98, pl. 70, bust of Napoleon illustrated

Galerie Koller, Zürich, Sale catalogue, *Eine Hochbedeutende Europäische Privatsammlung: Napoleonica, möbel, bronzen, pendulen, skulpturen, gemälde, miniaturen*, 02 November 1995, lot 4162, both busts illustrated on front cover

Olivier Gabet, *Un marchand entre deux empires - Élie Fabius et le monde de l’art*, 2011, p. 77, bust of Marie Louise illustrated; and p. 63–76, for a wider discussion on Fabius’ purchases at the Farnborough Hill sale in 1927 and the subsequent exhibition at the Musée de Malmaison, 1928 (where the bust of Marie Louise was lent by Élie Fabius)

Enrico Noè, “Lo scultore Angelo Pizzi (Milano 1775–Venezia 1819)” in *Saggi e Memorie di storia dell’arte*, vol. 36, 2012, p. 264, pl. 48, bust of Napoleon illustrated; p. 265, pl. 49, bust of Marie Louise illustrated

N° 1

1^{er} trimestre 1938

REVUE
DE
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PHILIPPE SAGNAC. — Introduction à la <i>Revue de l'Institut Napoléon</i>	5
JULES DESCHAMPS. — L'ascension de Bonaparte vue par ses contemporains anglais (de Brumaire à la Paix d'Amiens)	19
Documentation Générale	34
Bibliographie	49
Nécrologie	55
Bulletin	57

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Georges Mauguin, "L'Iconographie Napoléonienne au Palais National des Arts," in *Revue de l'Institut Napoléon*, 1er trimestre, 1938, front cover

LES EXPOSITIONS,
MUSÉES ET COLLECTIONS

L'ICONOGRAPHIE NAPOLEONNIENNE
AU PALAIS NATIONAL DES ARTS

Parmi les chefs-d'œuvre de l'art français rassemblés avenue de Tokio, pour la durée de l'Exposition internationale de 1937, ceux qui sont consacrés à l'époque impériale sont en nombre assez restreint pour que nous puissions essayer de les inventorier, ce qui nous permettra de noter les noms de leurs détenteurs actuels.

Abandonnant le point de vue purement artistique à la compétence d'un parfait technicien tel que M. Louis Gillet (*Revue des Deux-Mondes*), nous désirons nous limiter à signaler les documents d'histoire générale, comment les personnages et les événements de l'épopée ont été choisis et sont représentés. Nous écarterons donc tel portrait ou tel groupe allégorique qui n'ont d'intérêt que pour l'histoire de la peinture elle-même, comme la *Belle Zélie* (1806) ou comme le dernier envoi de la Villa Médicis, fait par Ingres en 1811 : *Jupiter et Thétis*.

Sculpture. — Les bustes de Napoléon I^{er}, en empereur romain, et de Marie-Louise, par Chaudet (de l'ancienne collection de Napoléon III, à M. E. Fabius), accueillent les visiteurs aux entrées de la salle réservée au début du XIX^e siècle, ainsi que celui de la reine Hortense par Bosio, qui figura au Salon de 1810 (à M. E. Fabius; une réplique appartient à M. Bourdier).

Dans une vitrine, une maquette de Carpeaux représente l'Empereur à Sainte-Hélène, accablé et songeur, assis sur un rocher.

Dans le domaine de la peinture, le Musée des Beaux-Arts de Liège a prêté, en ce qui nous concerne, la pièce maîtresse de l'Exposition : c'est le Bonaparte en uniforme rouge et bas de soie, signé et daté Ingres, an XII.

Ce tableau fut commandé par le Premier Consul, en souvenir de sa visite faite à Liège, le 1^{er} août 1803. Le faubourg d'Amercœur, sur la route d'Aix-la-Chapelle, avait été détruit par les canons autrichiens en 1794, un décret accorda aux Liégeois une subvention de 300.000 francs destinés à le rebâtir.

Prévenu par Denon que le portrait était suffisamment avancé, le ministre de l'Intérieur, Chaptal, le 16 mars 1804, prévint le jeune artiste qu'il

In his 1938 article, Mauguin attributes both busts to Antoine-Denis Chaudet and confirms they were displayed at the Château de Compiègne. The busts are illustrated on the following pages (p. 26-27 of this book) and listed as owned by Monsieur Élie Fabius.



BUSTE DE MARIE-LOUISE
Par Chaudet.
(A M. E. Fabius)

Our bust of Marie Louise
illustrated and listed as
sculpted by Antoine-Denis
Chaudet and owned by
Monsieur E. Fabius.

Georges Mauguin, "L'Iconographie Napoléonienne au Palais National des Arts," 1938, opposite p. 40



BUSTE DE NAPOLÉON
Par Chaudet.
(A M. E. Fabius)

Our bust of Napoleon
illustrated and listed as
sculpted by Antoine-Denis
Chaudet and owned by
Monsieur E. Fabius.

Georges Mauguin, "L'Iconographie Napoléonienne au Palais National des Arts," 1938, opposite p. 40

GÉRARD HUBERT

LA SCULPTURE DANS L'ITALIE NAPOLÉONNIENNE

OUVRAGE PUBLIÉ AVEC
LE CONCOURS DU CENTRE
NATIONAL DE LA RECHERCHE
SCIENTIFIQUE

PARIS
ÉDITIONS E. DE BOCCARD
1964

Bartholini (*sic*), deux mille quatre cents francs». Son prix élevé ne permit pas de le reproduire à de nombreux exemplaires. Nous pensons qu'un bel exemplaire de ce type rare (fig. 165), pendant d'un portrait de Marie-Louise, provenant sans doute des collections de Napoléon III à Compiègne, figure depuis longtemps dans la collection d'un antiquaire parisien qui l'attribue à Chaudet. En réalité, la tête de trois quart à gauche, comme dans le type canovien, se rapproche autant de l'œuvre de Canova que de celle de Chaudet. Elle porte une couronne de laurier analogue à celle de la statue du Corps législatif. Le buste, coupé au-dessous des épaules, repose sur un piédoche. La poitrine est ornée d'un baudrier portant un foudre. L'épaule droite est recouverte d'un pan de draperie retenue par un bijou en forme de médaillon timbré d'un aigle, alors que la statue de Chaudet a l'épaule gauche drapée. Bartolini dut imaginer ces modifications vers 1810. La qualité du marbre, la souplesse de la chevelure, la beauté du modelé conservé malgré un polissage très poussé semblent indiquer l'intervention personnelle de Bartolini.

Le même artiste imagina un troisième type de buste, en hermès, de grandeur naturelle, d'après Chaudet, la tête ceinte de la couronne de fer des rois lombards et d'une couronne de laurier attachée par des rubans dont les extrémités retombent sur les épaules. La chevelure est disposée de façon différente. Ce type devait être réservé à l'Italie. Il en existe un exemplaire au Musée de Versailles, d'une exécution assez froide¹ (fig. 163).

Les « établissements » reproduisaient également les bustes de Napoléon et de Marie-Louise par Bosio, en plusieurs grandeurs. Ce dernier buste de l'empereur remplaça le type officiel de Chaudet à la fin du règne. Exécuté cinq ans après celui de Chaudet, les traits en sont empâtés, lourds, plus proches de la réalité, moins héroïques. Le front se dégarnit. Les exemplaires copiés à Carrare, bien moins nombreux que les bustes d'après Chaudet, se présentent en hermès et sont souvent d'une facture molle, la douceur enveloppante du ciseau de Bosio se prêtant mal à la reproduction en série. On en trouve un au Musée de Versailles².

Il est probable que d'autres bustes de Napoléon sortirent encore des ateliers carrarais, plus ou moins modifiés selon la fantaisie des praticiens, mais la grande production se borne aux sept types signalés qui se réfèrent aux modèles de Chaudet, Canova, puis Bosio³. Bartolini se contenta donc de varier la présentation des portraits impériaux.

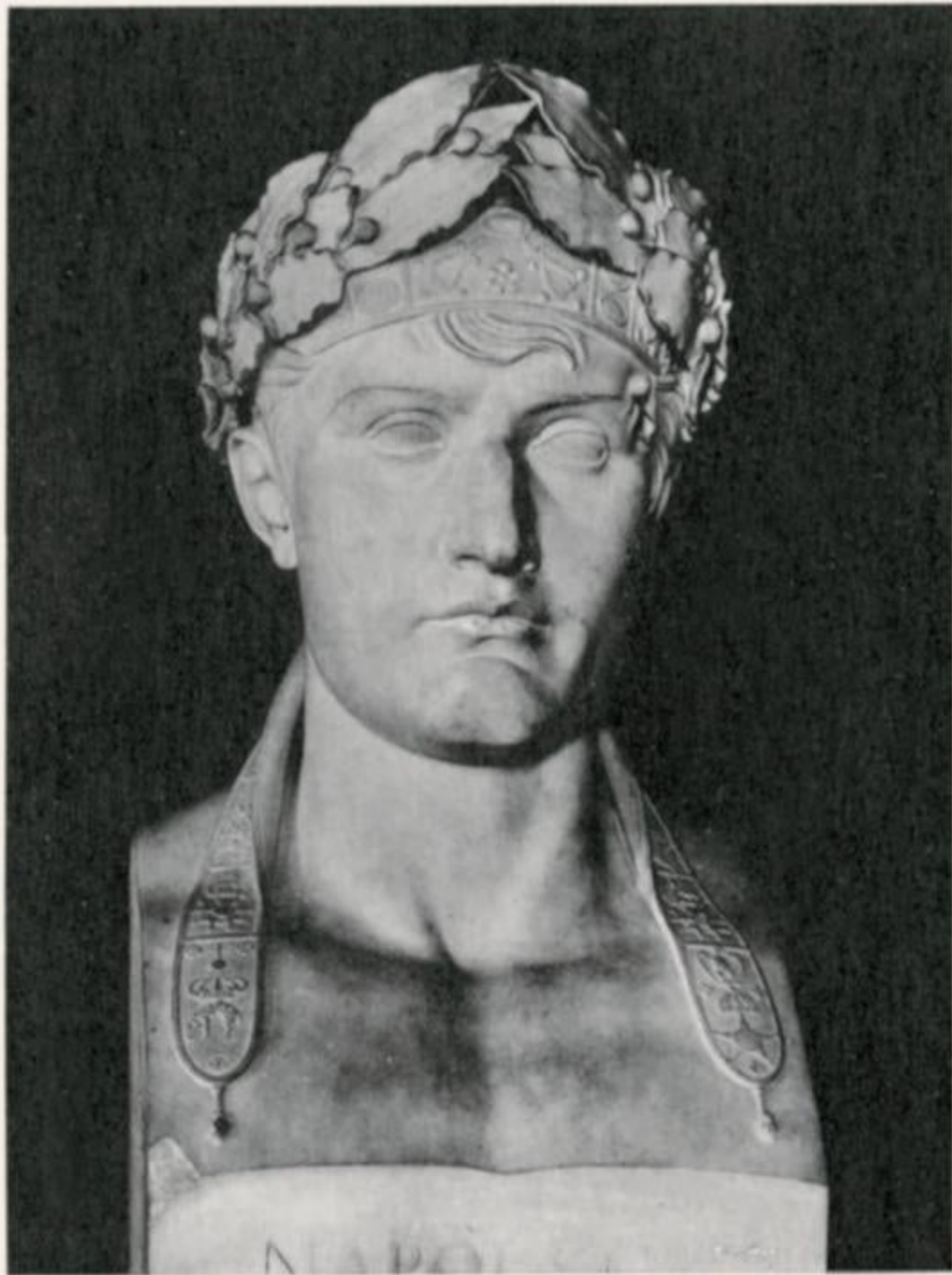
Les bustes des Napoléonides sont naturellement moins répandus que ceux du chef de la Famille. Ils posent certains problèmes d'attribution que l'on peut tenter de résoudre à l'aide des documents recueillis par Marmottan, qui n'en a pas tiré tout le parti souhaitable. Dès 1807, Elisa réunit des moulages en vue d'une collection. Elle s'adresse d'abord à Lucien avec qui elle entretient les meilleurs rapports et lui demande les bustes de sa famille le 13 août. Le 11 février 1808 elle le remercie de l'envoi. Il est probable que les bustes d'*Alexandrine de Bleschamp* et de ses nombreux enfants

1. H. 0,75, n° 1599.

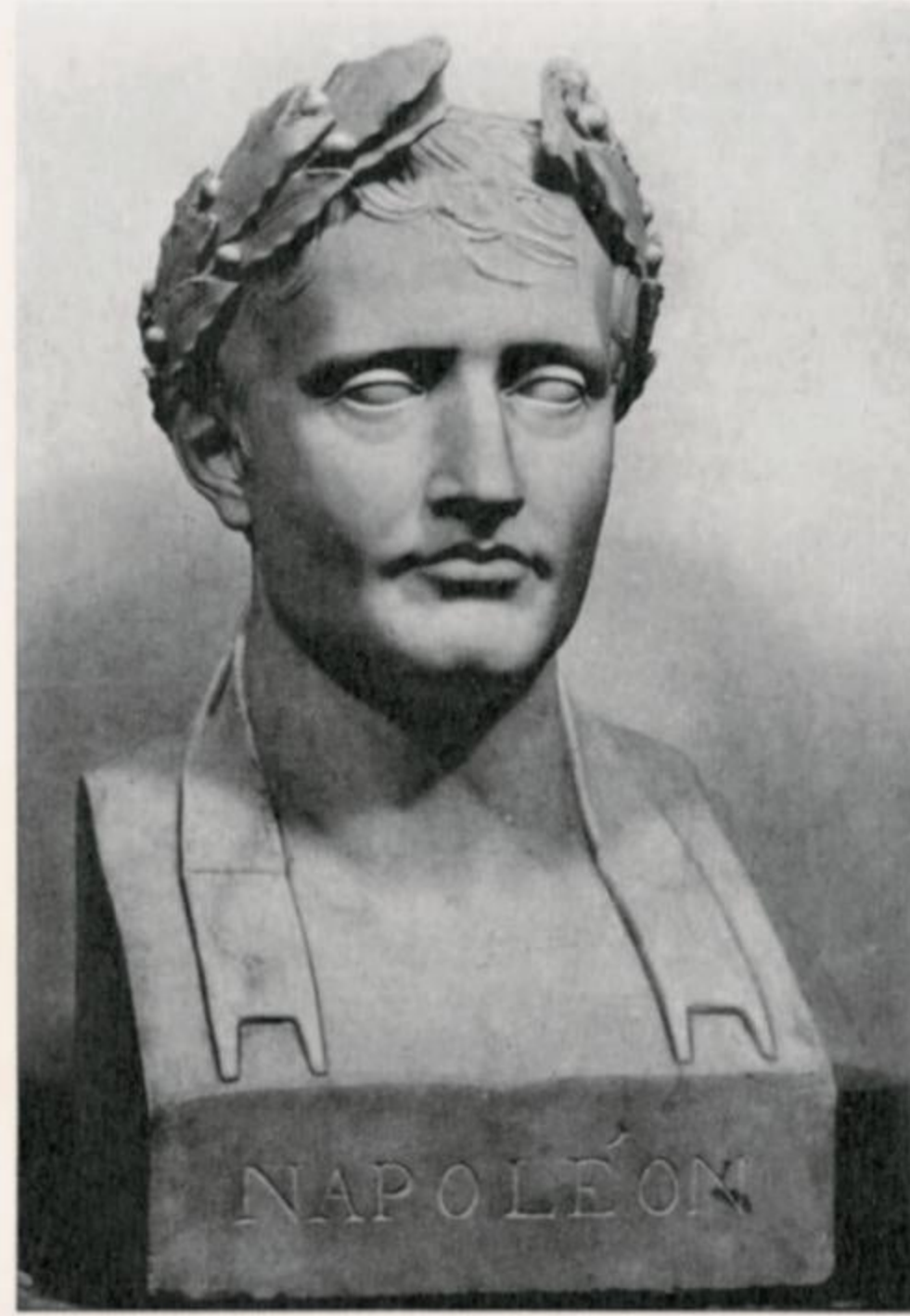
2. H. 0,55, n° 1519. Cf. G. HUBERT, *Les Sculpteurs italiens en France...*, chap. V, p. 88, fig. 45.

3. Outre Bartolini, certains Carrarais n'hésitaient pas à signer leurs copies, en général plus proches du modèle de Chaudet que de celui de Canova. Ainsi un buste de « NAPOLEON », hermès modifié un peu plus grand que nature, exposé au Wellington Museum de Londres, est signé à droite : « A. Tricornia, Carrara », en cursive. Cette œuvre doit être assez tardive puisqu'Alexandro Tricornia, fils de Paolo, a vécu de 1797 à 1867.

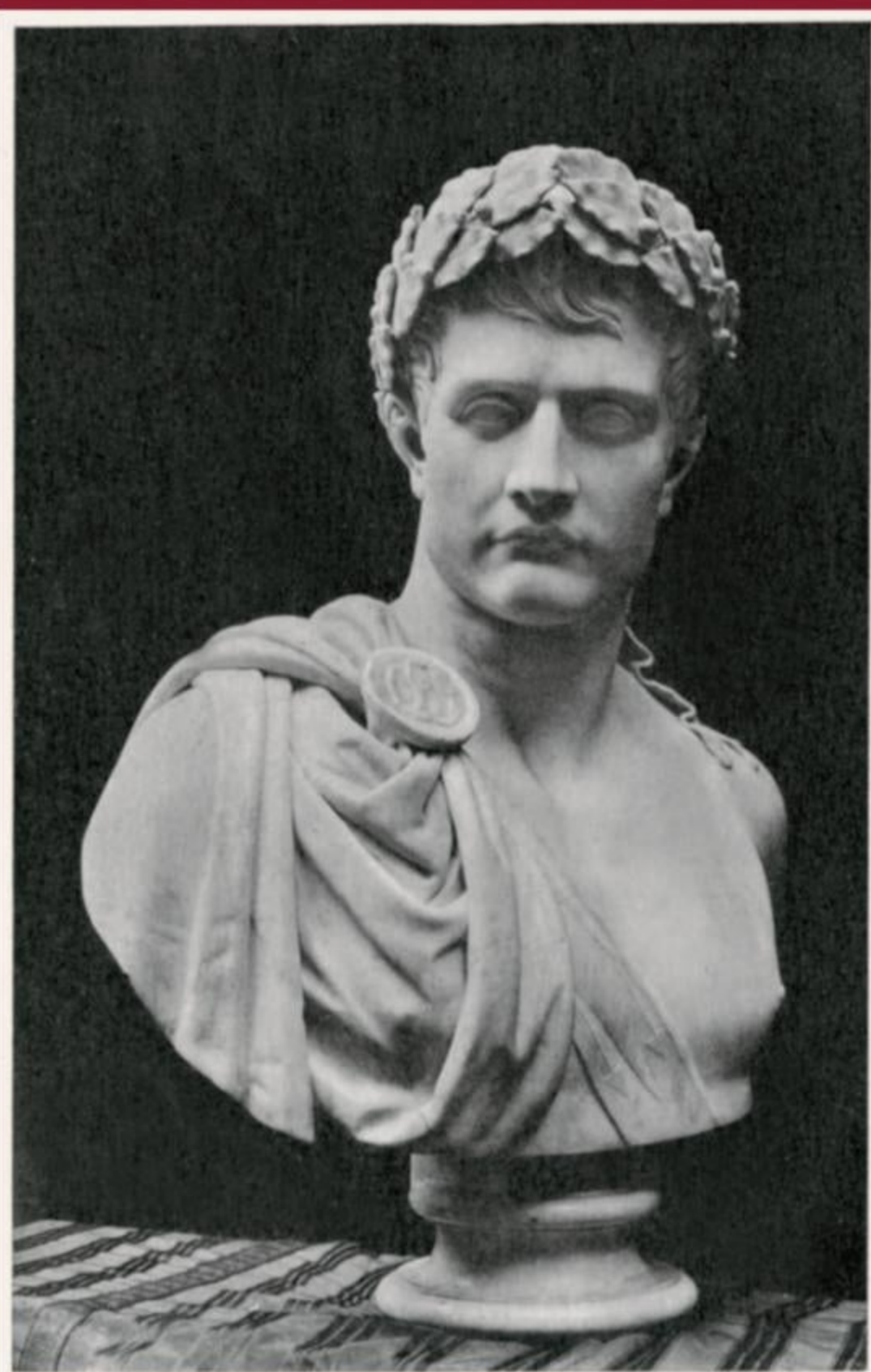
Gérard Hubert, *La Sculpture dans l'Italie Napoléonienne*, 1964, front cover & p. 349



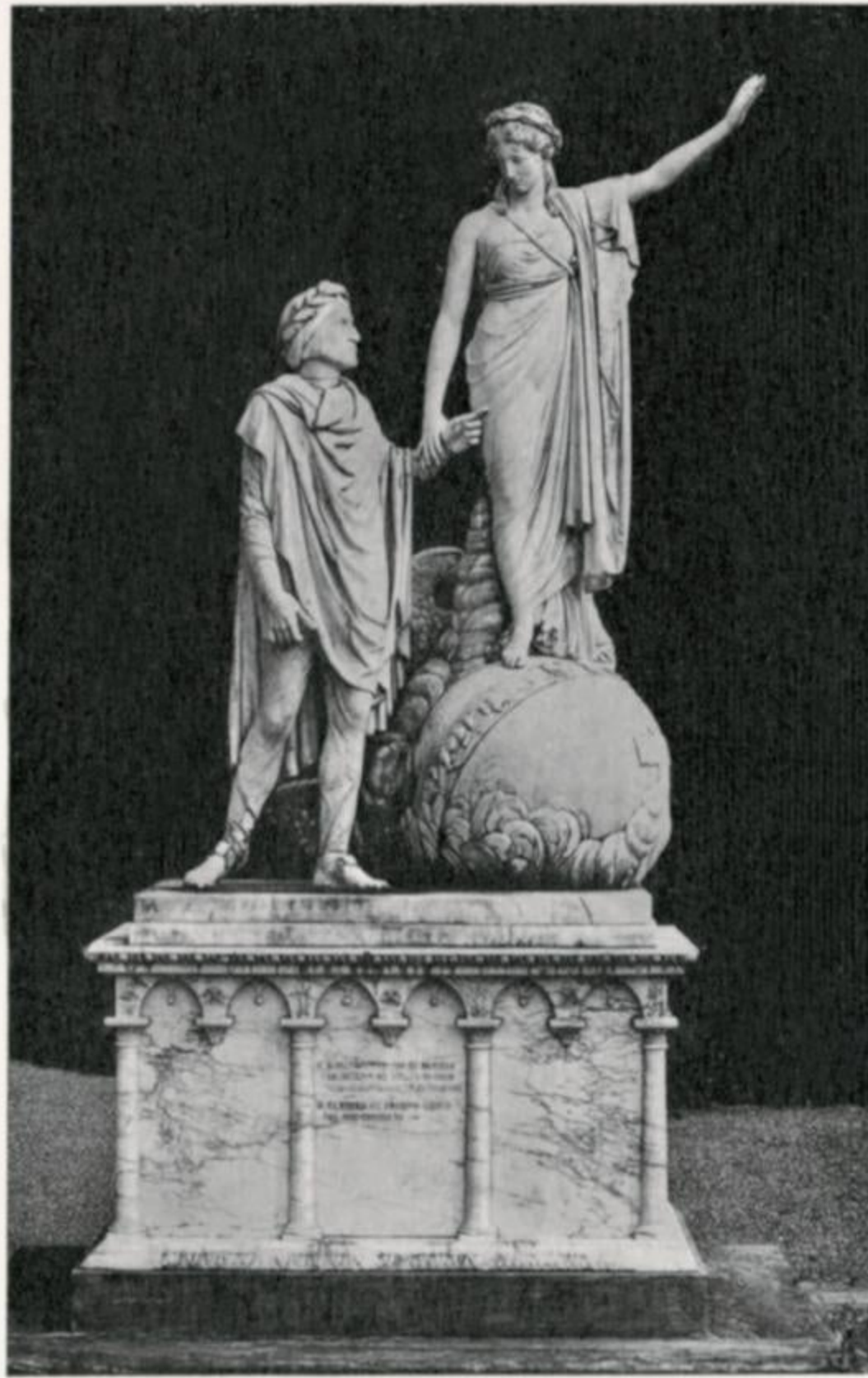
163. BARTOLINI, d'après CHAUDET.
Napoléon. Versailles.



164. BARTOLINI (?), d'après CHAUDET.
Napoléon. Louvre.



165. CHAUDET et BARTOLINI, d'après (?).
Napoléon. Paris. Coll. privée.



166. COMOLLI. Dante et Béatrice.
Villa Melzi.

In his 1964 book, Hubert lists and describes our bust of Napoleon, with reference to its pendant bust of Marie Louise, as having been owned by Napoleon III at Compiègne. In the illustration, he attributes our bust of Napoleon (pl. 165) to Lorenzo Bartolini, after Antoine-Denis Chaudet. Above our sculpture, Hubert also illustrates the comparable Napoleon busts by Bartolini in the collections of Versailles and the Louvre.

Gérard Hubert, *La Sculpture dans l'Italie Napoléonienne*, 1964, pl. 165



Gérard Hubert and Guy Ledoux-Lebard, *Napoléon, portraits contemporains bustes et statues*, 1999, front cover

69- Pizzi,
Napoléon, buste, marbre
(Venise, Galleria dell'Accademia,
en dépôt au musée Correr).

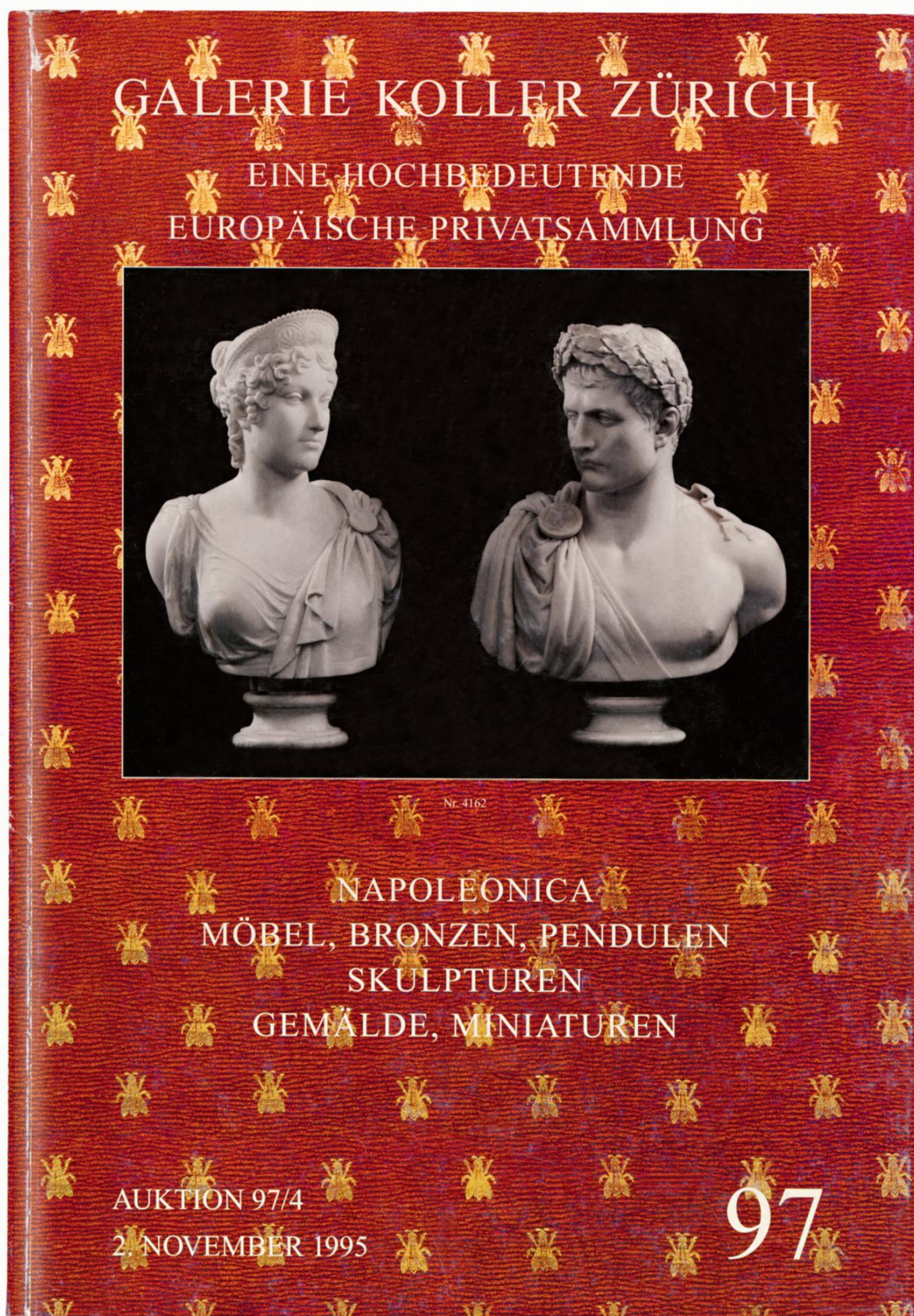


70- Pizzi (attr. à),
Napoléon, buste, marbre
(Zurich, Galerie Koller, 1995).



98

In their 1999 book, Hubert and Ledoux-Lebard attribute our bust of Napoleon (pl. 70) to Pizzi, due to the similar bust of Napoleon at the Museo Correr in Venice (pl. 69). While their compositions are similar, it is clear that the bust by Pizzi in Venice cannot have been carved by the same hand as our Napoleon. Displaying a much more superb carving technique and elegance in its composition, our Napoleon bust is attributed to the masterful Lorenzo Bartolini. Pizzi's version in Venice was more than likely a copy made after the bust attributed to Bartolini.



Our busts of Napoleon and Marie Louise illustrated on the cover of Koller's 1995 auction catalogue.

Galerie Koller, Zürich, Sale catalogue, *Eine Hochbedeutende Europäische Privatsammlung: Napoleonica, möbel, bronzen, pendulen, skulpturen, gemälde, miniaturen*, 02 November 1995, lot 4162, front cover

4162* PIZZI, ANGELO (Mailand 1775–1819 Venedig), nach Büsten von D.-A. CHAUDET (1763–1811), A. CANOVA (1757–1822) und L. BARTOLINI (1777–1850). Büste von Napoleon und Marie-Louise als römisches Kaiserpaar, Venedig um 1811/1812. Weisser Marmor. Napoleon, den Blick nach rechts geneigt, ist als römischer Caesar dargestellt mit blätterbeschnitztem Lorbeerkranz und faltenreicher Toga, welche durch ein Medaillon mit reliefiertem Reichsadler zusammengehalten wird. Auf profiliertem Rundsockel. Marie-Louise, den Blick nach links geneigt, trägt als römische Kaiserin ein feines Diadem als Kopfschmuck und eine leichte Tunika, die von einem Medaillon mit der Profildarstellung von Napoleon zusammengehalten wird. Monogrammiert GMR. Auf profiliertem Rundsockel. H mit Sockel je 81 cm. (300000.–/400000.–)

Provenienz (Napoleon-Büste):

- *Ehemals persönliche Sammlung des Kaisers Napoleon III, Compiègne.*
- *Geschenk der Kaiserin Eugénie an F. Rainbeaux, Stallmeister von Napoleon III.*
- *Sammlung F. Rainbeaux.*

Ausstellungen:

- *Chefs d'Œuvre de l'Art Français, Paris 1938 (Nr. 1105).*
- *Cinq Siècles d'Histoire de France à travers l'Art français, New York 1939 (Nr. 322, im Katalog abgebildet auf Tafel LV).*

Provenienz (Eugénie-Büste):

- *Ehemals persönliche Sammlung des Kaisers Napoleon III, Compiègne.*
- *Sammlung der Kaiserin Eugénie in Farnborough.*

Ausstellungen:

- *Souvenirs de la Famille Impériale, Musée de Malmaison 1928 (Nr. 15, Abb. im Katalog).*
- *Souvenirs du Roi de Rome, Musée de l'Orangerie, Paris 1932 (Nr. 209).*
- *318 Lettres du Napoleon à Marie-Louise, Paris 1935 (Nr. 10).*
- *Chefs d'Œuvre de l'Art Français, Paris 1937 (Nr. 1106).*
- *Cinq Siècles d'Histoire de France à travers l'Art français, New York 1939 (Nr. 323, im Katalog abgebildet auf Tafel LIV).*

Die Napoleon-Büste ist abgebildet in G. Hubert, Tafel 165 (als Chaudet et Bartolini).

Herausragendes museales Paar von bestechender Qualität, an welchem einerseits in exemplarischer Weise die Einflüsse von D.-A. Chaudet, A. Canova und L. Bertolini aufgezeigt werden können und andererseits die meisterhafte, aber eigenständige Verbindung dieser Elemente durch A. Pizzi evident wird.

G. Hubert, der diesbezüglich kompetenteste Fachmann, weist in seiner umfangreichen Darstellung der italienischen Skulptur in der napoleonischen Epoche auf die komplexe gegenseitige Einflussnahme französischer und italienischer Bildhauer hin, ausgehend von den Figuren und Büsten von D.-A. Chaudet und A. Canova. Dieser Umstand erschwert eine Zuschreibung, was an dem hier angebotenen Paar sehr schön aufgezeigt werden kann. Diese beiden Büsten galten lange Zeit als unsignierte Skulpturen von D.-A. Chaudet und wurden als solche sowohl in der Literatur erwähnt als auch an Ausstellungen präsentiert. G. Hubert wies 1964 in obig erwähntem Werk, beziehend auf die hier

angebotene Napoleon-Büste, mit folgender Argumentation auf L. Bartolini hin: »Nous pensons qu'un bel exemplaire de ce type rare (fig. 165), pendant d'un portrait de Marie-Louise, provenant sans doute des collections de Napoléon à Compiègne, figure depuis longtemps dans la collection d'un antiquaire parisien qui l'attribue à Chaudet. En réalité, la tête de trois quart à gauche, comme dans le type canovien, se rapproche autant de l'œuvre de Canova que de celle de Chaudet. Elle porte une couronne de laurier analogue à celle de la statue du Corps législatif... l'épaule droite est recouverte d'un pan de draperie retenue par un bijou en forme de médaillon timbré d'un aigle, alors que la statue de Chaudet a l'épaule gauche drapée. Bartolini dut imaginer ces modifications vers 1810. La qualité du marbre, la souplesse de la chevelure, la beauté du modèle conservé... semblent indiquer l'intervention personnelle de Bartolini«, in: Ibid.; S. 348.

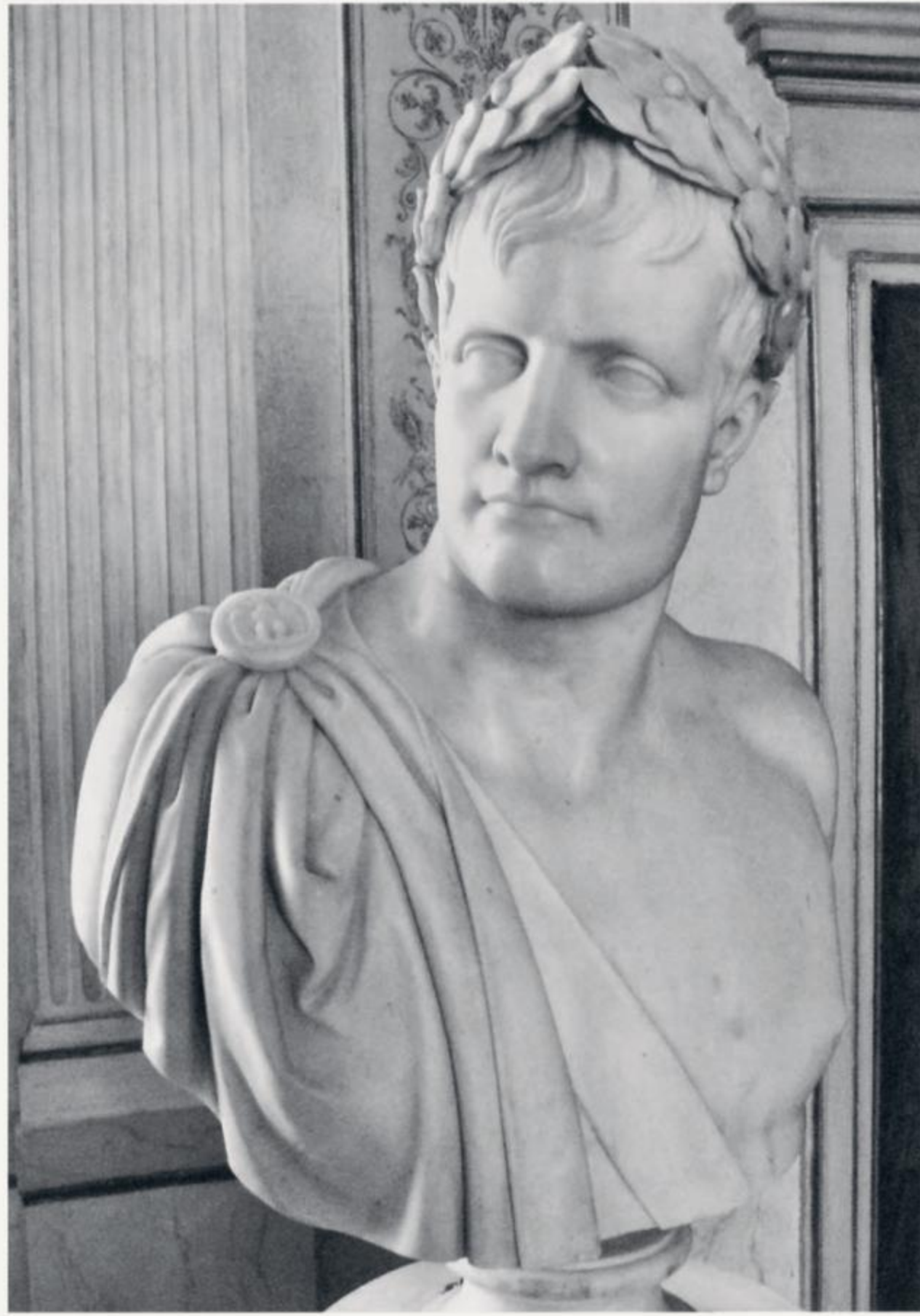
In jüngster Zeit kommt derselbe Autor jedoch zum Schluss, dass das hier angebotene Paar von A. Pizzi gefertigt wurde. Wir meinen zu Recht, ist ein nahezu identisches, jedoch weniger prunkvoll erscheinendes Paar von A. Pizzi Bestand der Sammlung der Accademia delle Belle Arti in Venedig. Währenddem der Napoleon oder Marie-Louise nie persönlich kennengelernt habende Künstler die Büste des Napoleon nach seiner eigenen – dem Vorbild A. Canova verpflichteten – Alabaster-Statue »demi-colossale« schuf, orientierte er sich für Marie-Louise nach den Vorbildern von D.-A. Chaudet sowie der Büste von L. Bartolini. Er schuf insgesamt 5 Büsten von Napoleon, von welchen die eine als »copie fidèle« derjenigen von A. Canova bezeichnet werden muss und für das Liceo in Macerata bestimmt war. Eine zweite – nach Vorbild der Alabaster-Statue – war Besitz des Friulaner Malers Politi und eine letzte ist Bestand des Collegio Foscarini in Venedig. Während seiner Professoren-Tätigkeit in Carrara und Mailand schuf er zwischen 1805 bis 1812 zahlreiche Büsten von Familienmitgliedern des Kaisers in Marmor: Lucien, Jérôme, Joseph, Louis, Caroline, Pauline Bonaparte und Eugène de Beauharnais – alle verkauft in der Auktion Davidoff am 8. 5. 1839 (Katalognr. 287–294). Durch den frühen Tod von A. Pizzi sind Skulpturen von ihm sehr selten, und die hier angebotenen Büsten können als bedeutendste Prunkbeispiele seines Schaffens bezeichnet werden.

A. Pizzi genoss seine Ausbildung in der Mailänder Akademie bei A. Franchi. Zu den verschiedenen Auftragsarbeiten und Reliefs für die Villa Reale gehörte auch eine Büste – nach der Totenmaske – von General Savary im Jahre 1805. Zwischen 1804 und 1807 war er als Professor in der Akademie in Carrara tätig und schuf zwei grosse Reliefs, »La mort de Socrate« und eine mythologische Szene zu Ehren des Dichters Alpiéri. 1807 erhielt er die »cattedra« an der Accademia von Venedig, wo er unter anderem auch Büsten von Franz I von Österreich, eine Bacchus-Statue (heute im Museo Correr in Venedig) und 7 Wachs-Medaillons mit Darstellung der Götter im Pantheon (heute in der Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Mailand, Inventarnr. 635) schuf und 1819 verchied.

Lit: G. Maugin, L'iconographie napoléonienne au Palais National des Arts, in: Revue de l'Institut Napoléon, 1er trimestre 1938; S. 40 (als Werk von D.-A. Chaudet). G. Hubert; S. 249–252 (Abb. 125 und 126 – das Büstenpaar aus der Accademia in Venedig) und S. 342–355 (mit Hinweisen zu D.-A. Chaudet und L. Bartolini).

Siehe Abb.

**Galerie Koller, Zürich, Sale catalogue, Eine Hochbedeutende Europäische Privatsammlung,
02 November 1995, catalogue entry for our busts (Lot 4162), with an estimate of
300,000-400,000 Swiss Franc, plus premium**



46. Angelo Pizzi (?),
Busto di Napoleone.
Venezia, Museo Correr
(deposito delle Gallerie
dell'Accademia)

do busto, invece, è probabilmente da identificarsi col marmo del Museo Civico di Udine (fig. 44). Nel citato elenco di opere recentemente prodotte dagli artisti del Regno italico, inviato a Cicognara il 28 novembre 1809, Pietro Edwards menzionava un "Busto colossale di Napoleone vestito alla foggia degli Imperatori Romani, in plastica"¹³⁹. Il marmo udinese non è firmato; si sa solo che giunse al Museo nel 1882, dono degli eredi di Odorico Politi¹⁴⁰. Questi, compagno di viaggio di Hayez a Roma nel 1809, insegnò pittura all'accademia veneziana dal 1831 al 1846, come successore di Teodoro Matteini, e per diretta tradizione del luogo ben poteva conoscere l'autore del busto. Si tratta di un'opera completamente diversa dal modello canoviano come dalla statua dello stesso Pizzi. Vi è perfetto il paludamento imperiale romano; il manto è fissato da una

fibula posta sulla spalla destra, recante un bustino femminile nel quale, secondo Hubert, si deve vedere Maria Luisa; il gioco chiaroscuro delle pieghe è particolarmente curato al sommo del petto. Lo spillaccio a destra porta una piccola panoplia con strumenti (il caduceo, l'attrezzo per trebbiare) allusivi più alla figura di Napoleone come protettore del commercio che a lui come guerriero. Speranze di pace, dunque, suscitate nel popolo, e quindi anche nello scultore, dal matrimonio tra l'imperatore e l'arciduchessa austriaca. Dal punto di vista formale è particolarmente interessante la resa della capigliatura, nella quale le ciocche, piatte e minutamente incise, si sovrappongono a strati le une alle altre, partendo dal sommo della nuca. Raffinato è l'esito del volto, soprattutto nella zona della bocca e nel trapasso dalle labbra alle guance. L'effetto generale è quindi di un'opera abilissima, eseguita con sapienza antiquaria e con quella freddezza di *straniamentum* che ormai era parte integrante del bagaglio mentale di uno scultore veramente neoclassico.

Uno sviluppo del tipo ritrattistico creato da Pizzi nel busto di Udine potrebbe scorgersi nel marmo attribuitogli da Hubert e Ledoux Lebard, che apparve nel commercio antiquario parigino nel 1999 (fig. 45)¹⁴¹. La testa qui è volta di prospetto, la capigliatura, col ciuffo ricadente sulla fronte, pare direttamente ispirata dal modello di Canova, la corazza ripete, rovesciata, quella adottata dall'opera udinese. Sebbene la fotografia riprodotta dagli autori francesi non sia buona, non stentiamo a creder loro quando asseriscono che nel busto parigino abbiamo "des chairs polies, des souples drapés", e che il viso è poco espressivo "dans sa perfection canovienne". Interessante, tuttavia, lo sviluppo chiaroscuro del manto sul petto, che sembra superare le secchezze del prototipo.

Esistevano altri busti napoleonici, per i quali non si dovrebbe dubitare della paternità di Pizzi, ma che risultano scomparsi. Al 1810 veniva assegnato quello posto nel Convitto nazionale "Marco Foscarini" di Venezia, fondato dal viceré Eugenio nel 1807. Secondo una pubblicazione scolastica del 1882 il busto rimase a lungo nascosto; poi nel 1874, passata la dominazione austriaca, fu posto in onore nel principale salone dell'istituto e collocato sopra una colonna, alla quale venne apposta l'iscrizione "NAVPOLEO I / HOC EPHE-

In his 2012 article, Noè illustrates the similar bust of Napoleon (pl. 46) by Angelo Pizzi at the Museo Correr in Venice.

Enrico Noè, "Lo scultore Angelo Pizzi (Milano 1775–Venezia 1819)"
in Saggi e Memorie di storia dell'arte, vol. 36, 2012, p. 262, pl. 46

BEVM / VENETIIS DEDIT / PRID. ID. MART. / MDCCCVII¹⁴². Il busto compare in una piccola fotografia, riprodotta in un libretto commemorativo del 1907. Era collocato nel salone al primo piano, allora denominato "Salone Napoleone I"; lo si nota a sinistra, in secondo piano; dal poco che si riesce a scorgere, doveva essere molto semplice, a testa nuda, senza accessori di panneggio e con poco petto¹⁴³. Nel 1923 fu esposto alla mostra del *Ritratto veneziano dell'Ottocento*, curata da Nino Barbantini¹⁴⁴. In seguito scomparve, nonostante le ripetute citazioni di Hubert¹⁴⁵: dovrebbe aver subito le vicende connesse alla temporanea soppressione del Convitto, avvenuta nel 1938, e poi dell'occupazione dei locali da parte dei profughi giuliani, dopo il 1945. Oggi sussiste solo il cippo iscritto, eretto, come abbiamo visto, nel 1874, sopra il quale amministratori poco accorti hanno sovrapposto, e vi è tuttora, il busto del rettore Mosca, scolpito da Carlo Lorenzetti nel 1900.

Altri busti napoleonici attribuiti ad Angelo Pizzi apparvero alla vendita della collezione Demidoff a Parigi nel 1839, segnalata da Gérard Hubert, il quale opinava trattarsi di opere eseguite nel periodo carrarese¹⁴⁶. La serie, completamente dispersa e non riconoscibile, comprendeva i ritratti di otto Napoleonidi: oltre allo stesso Napoleone c'erano Giuseppe, Luciano, Girolamo, Luigi, Carolina, Paolina ed Eugenio Beauharnais. I documenti finora disponibili, tuttavia, tacciono di questi ritratti, ad eccezione dell'ultimo, quello di Eugenio, molto probabilmente il medesimo che Pietro Edwards, il 28 novembre 1809, aveva visto nel modello in gesso: "Busto Colossale di S. A. I. il Principe Vice Re d'Italia, in plastica"¹⁴⁷.

Esaminiamo ora l'unica coppia di busti imperiali rimasta a Venezia nelle pubbliche collezioni. Viene sempre citata tra le opere di Pizzi, pur non recando – ma il fatto, come abbiamo visto, non è nuovo – alcuna firma. Si tratta del *Napoleone* e della *Maria Luisa*, un tempo nel Palazzo Reale di Venezia e che oggi, dopo un lungo soggiorno al Museo Archeologico e poi alle Gallerie dell'Accademia, sono visibili in una delle nuove sale del Museo Correr nelle Procuratie Nuove (figg. 46, 47). La prima citazione che li riguarda pare essere contenuta in alcuni documenti inediti della Biblioteca Marciana. In data 24 settembre 1842 l'imperial regia Direzione Generale delle Pubbliche costruzioni comunica al bibliote-



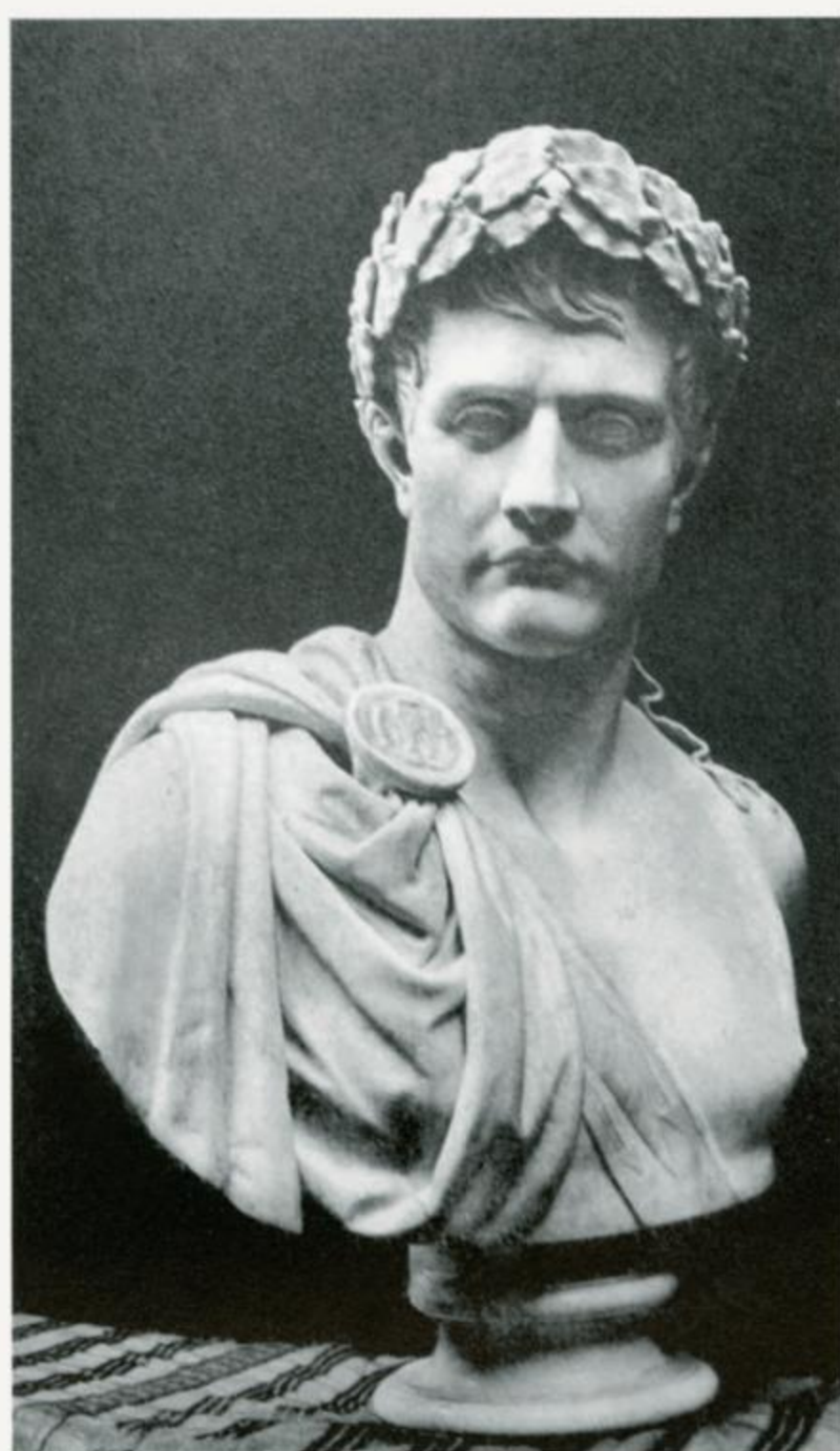
cario della Marciana, Pietro Bettio, che il Vice Re del Lombardo Veneto, il principe Ranieri, su proposta della stessa Direzione ha ordinato di trasferire dal Palazzo Reale alla Biblioteca, allora ubicata nel Palazzo Ducale, "il busto di marmo e la statuetta di getto di bronzo del già Imperatore Napoleone, come pur il busto di S. M. l'Arciduchessa Maria Luigia, ed altro piccolo busto in marmo di Carrara", affinché "siano regolarmente depositati in luogo adattato e conveniente in questo Palazzo ex Ducale"¹⁴⁸. Il successivo 28 settembre viene steso il protocollo verbale di consegna (App. Doc., 19). Una successiva nota di Bettio al Governo delle province venete (22 ottobre 1842) comunica l'avvenuto ricevimento delle sculture, e aggiunge: "Col Sig. Pigazzi si opinò di unire li quattro predetti oggetti, insieme con altri nella Marciana esistenti, non archeologici,

47. Angelo Pizzi (?), *Busto di Maria Luisa d'Asburgo-Lorena*. Venezia, Museo Correr (deposito delle Gallerie dell'Accademia)

In his 2012 article, Noè illustrates the similar bust of Marie Louise (pl. 47) by Angelo Pizzi at the Museo Correr in Venice.

Enrico Noè, "Lo scultore Angelo Pizzi (Milano 1775–Venezia 1819)" in *Saggi e Memorie di storia dell'arte*, vol. 36, 2012, p. 263, pl. 47

48. Angelo Pizzi (attr.),
Busto di Napoleone.
Collezione privata



ma moderni in qualche stanzino presso il futuro Museo¹⁴⁹.

Il museo cui alludeva il bibliotecario Bettio era naturalmente l'Archeologico, allora dipendente dalla Biblioteca Marciana; ivi infatti i due busti appaiono, e per la prima volta col nome di Angelo Pizzi, nella monografia dedicata alla collezione da Giuseppe Valentini nel 1872¹⁵⁰. Nel 1887 la coppia, col nome d'autore ormai definitivo, si trovava già alle Gallerie dell'Accademia¹⁵¹. Dapprima esposta nella Loggia Palladiana, in data imprecisata la coppia fu trasferita al Museo del Risorgimento, istituito nel 1935 presso il Correr; dopo il recente scioglimento del museo è stata collocata nella sala ovale dell'ex Palazzo Reale. La bibliografia che riguarda le due sculture, infoltitasi nei tempi recenti, è in prevalenza segnaletica. Fanno eccezione gli interventi di Giuseppe Pavanello, il quale però afferma, erroneamente, che le opere sono citate come proprie dallo stesso Pizzi nel memoriale del 1812, e di Michela Luce che compie un tentativo di analisi formale: "i volti tradiscono una serafica serenità nello sguardo che accenna ad un moto del capo per rompere la rigi-

da frontalità". Mentre l'effigie di Maria Luisa, continua la Luce, "nella pettinatura a riccioli inanellati, e soprattutto nel copricapo a diadema con bassorilievo a stelle e conchiglie, sembra ispirata dalle sontuose acconciature dell'età flavia", il *Napoleone*, per parte sua, "nella corona a foglie d'alloro risente di un classicismo di tono più accademico"¹⁵².

Cerchiamo di esaminare i busti senza pregiudizi. Napoleone è raffigurato volto alla sua destra, con corona d'alloro in capo; sul petto nudo si dispongono un manto appoggiato alla spalla destra, trattenuto da una fibula con l'aquila imperiale, e il balteo, pur esso passante per la spalla destra. Nel retro è ancora visibile il numero dell'inventario del Palazzo Reale, "6613"¹⁵³. Maria Luisa volge il capo dalla parte opposta, alla sua sinistra, porta una veste assai scollata, solo in parte coperta da un manto che le scende dalla spalla sinistra, trattenuto da una fibula con medaglione raffigurante Napoleone laureato. La testa, sulla quale si dispone un'elaborata pettinatura scriminata sulla fronte e con riccioli scendenti a cascata fino alle orecchie, ove sono conclusi da boccoli, è coronato da un grande diadema, con stella a cinque punte nel centro e decorazioni a palmette (non a conchiglie), concluso alla sommità da un giro di perle. Anche questo busto mantiene visibile nel retro il vecchio numero d'inventario, il "6614".

Se ammettiamo che il busto napoleonico di Udine sia della mano di Angelo Pizzi, non possiamo accettare nel suo catalogo, senza adeguata riflessione, anche questi due ritratti, specialmente quello dell'imperatore. Certo, come ho detto all'inizio, la scultura neoclassica è il campo che meno si presta al riconoscimento attributivo su base stilistica; nondimeno, a parte il dato iconografico, alcuni elementi di stile presenti nei due busti del Correr divergono troppo sensibilmente da quanto conosciamo di Pizzi, per non imporci un attimo di sospensione. Il viso di Napoleone, ben lungi dal mostrare la "grinta" severa ed autoritaria presente nella statua del 1809 al Collegio delle Fanciulle, nel busto di Udine o, come vedremo a suo luogo, nella statua Mocenigo del 1812, è improntata ad una mollezza rotonda, che trasforma in melliflua apatia l'imperioso taglio del mento. Il manto, sia nel busto dell'imperatore sia in quello dell'imperatrice, è condotto con sommaria levigatezza, e non tenta neppure quella complessa ed

In his 2012 article, Noè illustrates our bust of Napoleon (pl. 48) using the attribution of Angelo Pizzi.

Enrico Noè, "Lo scultore Angelo Pizzi (Milano 1775–Venezia 1819)"
in *Saggi e Memorie di storia dell'arte*, vol. 36, 2012, p. 264, pl. 48

acuta analisi che sappiamo propria di Pizzi e del suo pensiero estetico.

Vicino al *Napoleone* veneziano è un busto già appartenuto alla collezione di Napoleone III al castello di Compiègne, a lungo sul mercato parigino, dove era attribuito a Chaudet, e la cui più recente apparizione pubblica è stata un'asta nel 1995 (fig. 48)¹⁵⁴. Hubert nel 1964 lo aveva attribuito alla Banca Elisiana, l'officina carrarese specializzata nella riproduzione in serie dei ritratti dei Napoleonidi, e aveva ritenuto possibile, data la sua alta qualità, che fosse opera di Lorenzo Bartolini. Molti anni dopo, nel 1999, e apparentemente senza rammentarsi del suo precedente parere, lo accostò al *Napoleone* di Venezia, di conseguenza attribuendolo ad Angelo Pizzi. In effetti la posa della testa e la corona coincidono col ritratto veneziano; sembra invece abbastanza diversa l'espressione, che nel marmo ex Napoleone III si direbbe un po' più dura e "napoleonica".

Sulla scia di questo busto, e ritenendo sicuro il riferimento a Pizzi della coppia veneziana, nel mercato antiquario sono apparsi, e riferiti al nostro scultore, nuovi esemplari dello stesso tipo. Mi riferisco alla coppia di busti rappresentanti *Napoleone* e *Maria Luisa*, già nella collezione S. Hildebrand (fig. 49)¹⁵⁵, e ai due busti dell'imperatrice *Maria Luisa*¹⁵⁶. Questi ultimi sono speculari e si distinguono fra loro per l'invertito movimento della testa, per la posizione del mantello e della fibula, e per il contenuto di quest'ultima, in un caso un'aquila, nell'altro esemplare il cammeo dell'imperatore.

Questi busti dell'imperatrice, a ben vedere, solo apparentemente appartengono al filone "carrarese", ossia alla serie di ritratti derivati, secondo Hubert, da un prototipo di Lorenzo Bartolini. La creazione dello scultore toscano, ideata a Carrara attorno al 1810 e diffusa capillarmente grazie alle officine della Banca Elisiana, era molto diversa sia dal modello francese di Bosio sia dal tipo canoviano rappresentato dalla statua poi denominata *Concordia*. Ma se noi ci rapportiamo ad un importante esemplare del tipo bartoliniano, il *biscuit* eseguito a Sèvres e appartenente alla Galleria d'arte moderna di Firenze, ci avvediamo di profonde differenze rispetto alla nostra Imperatrice, nel taglio dell'abito, nella resa del volto, nel diadema. Assai più vicini al busto di Venezia (e di conseguenza ai tre

segnalati sul mercato) sono invece due marmi eseguiti da Gaetano Monti di Ravenna, che li firmò, per il Palazzo Reale di Milano (figg. 50 e 51)¹⁵⁷. A parte l'identità delle pose, dell'abito e del diadema, si osservi un particolare rivelatore e quasi "morelliano" quale lo sporgere dei seni sotto la veste leggera, particolare comune al marmo attribuito ad Angelo Pizzi (fig. 47) come al secondo busto di Milano (fig. 51). Anche per quanto riguarda l'immagine di Napoleone ci sorprende l'affinità con due busti, sempre opera del ravennate Monti. Entrambi erano un tempo visibili nella sala del trono del Palazzo Reale di Milano: uno è oggi esposto alla Galleria d'Arte moderna, ed è firmato e datato 1809 (da Roma, ove allora l'artista era pensionato), l'altro è nei depositi della Soprintendenza ai beni architettonici di Milano (figg. 52 e 53)¹⁵⁸. Non è necessario sottolineare quanto il tipo adottato dal Monti sia vicino a quello dei nostri busti: la corona d'alloro, il manto imperiale, il balteo, sono tutti elementi caratterizzanti.

Ciò non significa, necessariamente, che anche i busti veneziani siano *tout court* opera di Gaetano Monti ravennate: come si può intuire nei casi in cui i modelli dei ritratti non erano disponibili per lo studio dal vero, gli artisti dovevano accontentarsi di opere precedenti, e quindi tendevano a "tipizzare". Mi sembra comunque che il problema resti aperto, e soprattutto che non è più possibile accettare, senza ampie riserve, il tradizionale riferimento al Pizzi delle due effigi veneziane.

Nuova attività per il duomo di Milano

Sebbene ormai abituato o forse rassegnato all'ambiente veneziano, Angelo non smetteva di pensare alla sua città, e riprese i contatti con la Fabbrica del Duomo, ora forte della cattedra accademica. Nell'autunno del 1808 (la lettera non ha data) egli si rivolge agli amministratori della Fabbrica narrando di essersi appena recato a Milano per affari privati e per compiti del suo istituto veneziano, e di aver saputo della necessità della Fabbrica di far eseguire nuove statue per la facciata. Si offre di eseguirne una, sia come "attestato di attaccamento", sia per "l'onore, e vantaggio" da arrecare al Duomo, e anche "per l'amor della Patria" (App. Doc., 20). La missiva, ricevuta dalla Fabbrica il 14 novembre, reca alcuni importanti attergati: nel primo l'architetto Car-



49. Angelo Pizzi (attr.), *Busto di Maria Luisa d'Asburgo Lorena*. Collezione privata

In his 2012 article, Noè illustrates our bust of Marie Louise (pl. 49) using the attribution of Angelo Pizzi, unaware that it is signed by Gaetano Matteo Monti of Ravenna.

Enrico Noè, "Lo scultore Angelo Pizzi (Milano 1775-Venezia 1819)" in *Saggi e Memorie di storia dell'arte*, vol. 36, 2012, p. 265, pl. 49



EXHIBITED



Musée National de Malmaison, *De Napoleon Ier à Napoleon III, Souvenirs de la Famille Impériale, Conservés par l'Impératrice Eugénie dans sa Résidence de Farnborough et Provenant de sa Succession*, 1928, no. 15, p. 10, bust of Marie Louise illustrated

Musée de l'Orangerie, Paris, *Souvenirs du Roi de Rome*, 1932, no. 209, described as a marble bust of the Empress Marie-Louise by [Jacques] Spalla, from the collection of the Empress Eugénie at Farnborough Hill, England, at Musée de Malmaison

Bibliothèque National, Paris, *318 Lettres de Napoléon à Marie-Louise*, 1935, no. 10, described as a marble bust of Marie-Louise by Jacques Spalla, lent by Monsieur E. Fabius

Palais National des Arts, Paris, *Chefs d'Oeuvre de l'Art Français*, 1937, nos. 1105 & 1106; no 1105 described as a bust of Napoleon I as a Roman Emperor by Antoine-Denis Chaudet, lent by M. Élie Fabius, Paris; no. 1106 described as a bust of Marie-Louise as a Roman Empress by Antoine-Louis [sic] Chaudet, lent by M. Élie Fabius, Paris

The World's Fair, New York, *Five Centuries of History Mirrored in Five Centuries of French Art*, 1939, p. 83, nos. 322 and 323; bust of Napoleon illustrated as pl. LV; bust of Marie Louise illustrated as pl. LIV



Musée National de Malmaison, De Napoleon Ier à Napoleon III, Souvenirs de la Famille Impériale, Conservés par l'Impératrice Eugénie dans sa Résidence de Farnborough et Provenant de sa Succession, 1928, front cover



15 Marie-Louise

Archiduchesse d'Autriche, seconde femme de Napoléon.
Buste marbre.

Par JACQUES SPALLA, de Turin.

Haut. : 0,81.

— 10 —

Our bust of Marie Louise was catalogued in this 1928 exhibition as no. 15: "Marie-Louise Archduchess of Austria, second wife of Napoleon, marble bust, by Jacques Spalla of Turin."

**Musée National de Malmaison, *De Napoleon Ier à Napoleon III,*
Souvenirs de la Famille Impériale, 1928, p. 10, no. 15**



Musée de l'Orangerie, Paris, *Souvenirs du Roi de Rome*, 1932

207. STATUETTE DE NAPOLÉON I^{er}.

Elle se trouvait d'habitude sur le bureau de son fils.

En bronze.

*A Madame la Princesse Thérèse de Liechtenstein,
Autriche.*

208. PORTRAIT DE MARIE-LOUISE

De profil à gauche.

Bas-relief en cire rose, sur fond bleu, de travail
italien.

Donné par Marie-Louise à son fils.

*A Madame la Princesse Thérèse de Liechtenstein,
Autriche.*

SPALLA

209. BUSTE DE L'IMPÉRATRICE MARIE-LOUISE.

Marbre.

A fait partie des collections de l'Impératrice
Eugénie à Farnborough, Angleterre.

Au Musée de Malmaison.

210. BUSTE DU DUC DE REICHSTADT.

Fonte de fer exécutée par la maison GLANZ de
Vienne.

A M. le Baron J. de Bourgoing, Vienne.

Our bust of Marie Louise was catalogued in this 1932 exhibition as no. 209: "Bust of the Empress Marie-Louise by Jacques Spalla, marble, from the collection of the Empress Eugénie at Farnborough Hill, England, at Musée de Malmaison."

BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE

EXPOSITION

DES

318 Lettres de Napoléon
à Marie-Louise

récemment acquises par le Gouvernement français

NOTICE HISTORIQUE

suivie de la liste des objets exposés



ÉDITIONS

DES

BIBLIOTHÈQUES NATIONALES

DE FRANCE

FÉVRIER-MARS 1935

Bibliothèque National, Paris, 318 Lettres de Napoléon à Marie-Louise, 1935, front cover

6. MARIE-LOUISE, portrait dans le médaillon d'une tasse, par M^{me} Jaquotot (1778-1855).

Porcelaine dure de Sèvres, 1810.
Don de l'Empereur Napoléon III.

Au Musée céramique de Sèvres.

7. L'IMPÉRATRICE MARIE-LOUISE, portrait par Pierre Prud'hon (1758-1823).

Dessin au crayon noir rehaussé, 1811. H. 0,36; L. 0,22.
Projet pour un portrait peint qui ne fut jamais exécuté.
J. Guiffrey, *Prud'hon*, n° 448.

Au Musée du Louvre.

8. MARIE-LOUISE, portrait par J.-B. Isabey.

Miniature.
Salon de 1810.

Au Musée du Louvre.

9. MARIE-LOUISE, buste par Jacques Spalla, élève de Canova.

Marbre. H. 0,61. 1810.
Cat. Nolhac et Péroté n° 1523.

Au musée de Versailles.

10. MARIE-LOUISE, buste par Jacques Spalla.

Marbre.

A Monsieur E. Fabius.

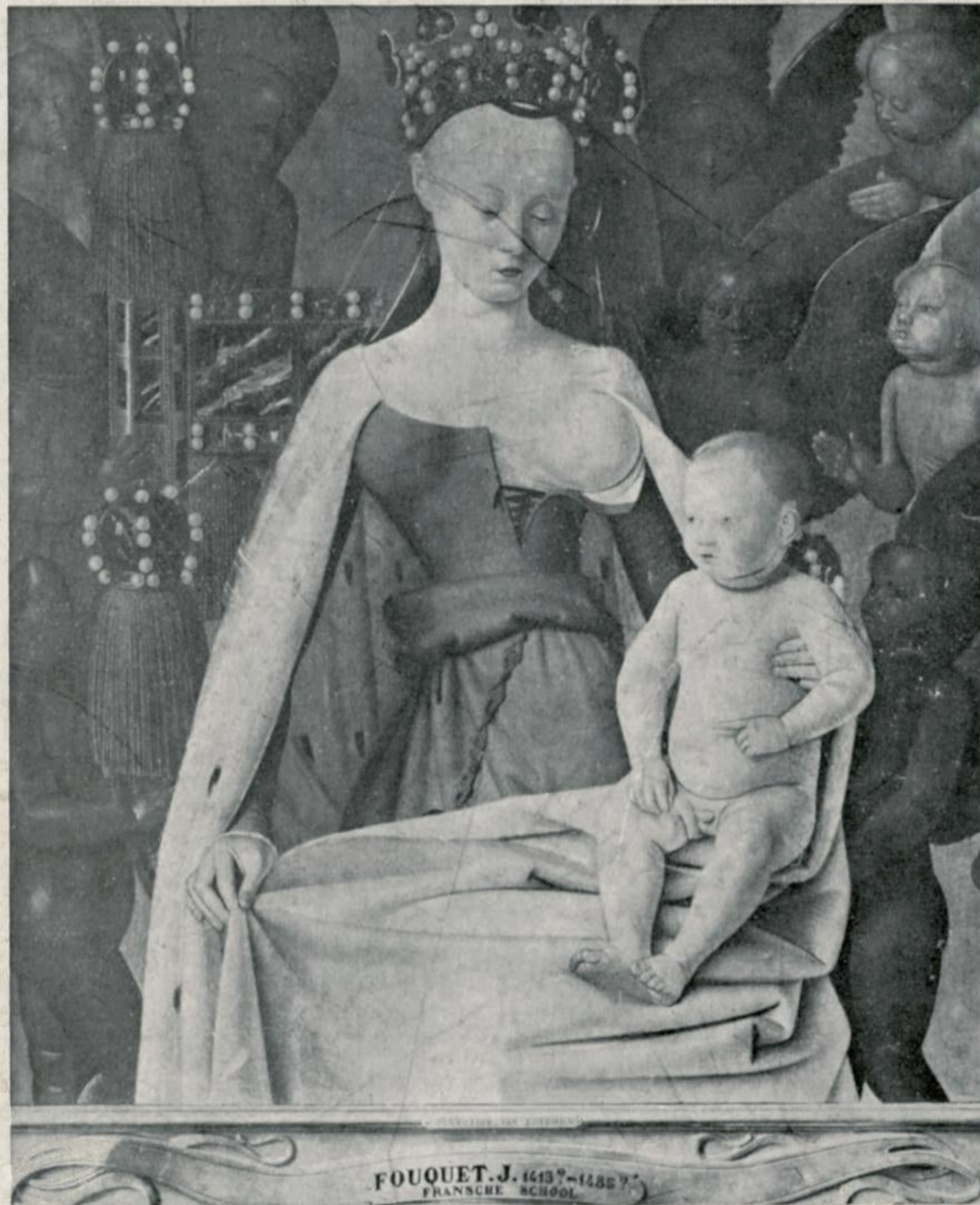
11. L'IMPÉRATRICE MARIE-LOUISE, buste par Brachard.

Biscuit exécuté par Oger en 1811. H. 0,69; L. 0,34.

Au Musée céramique de Sèvres.

Our bust of Marie Louise was catalogued in this 1935 exhibition as no. 10: "Marie-Louise, bust by Jacques Spalla, after Canova, marble, lent by Monsieur E. Fabius."

CHEFS D'OEUVRE
DE L'ART FRANÇAIS



La Vierge et l'Enfant.
de JEAN FOUQUET (1415?-1481?).

PALAIS NATIONAL DES ARTS
AVENUE DE TOKIO

PARIS

1937

GUIDE
TOPOGRAPHIQUE

Tous les jours, de 10 h. à 19 h.
MARDI et JEUDI, de 21 h. à 23 h.

3 frs.

Palais National des Arts, Paris, *Chefs d'Oeuvre de l'Art Français*, 1937, front cover

Salle 20

En sortant de la salle 19, entre les portes :

- Chardin (J.-B.) (1699-1779) :
136. JEUNE DESSINATEUR TAILLIANT SON CRAYON.
M. et Mme Edme Sommier, Paris.
137. Chardin (J. B.) (1699-1779). LA MAITRESSE D'ÉCOLE.
National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin.
155. Duplessis (Joseph) (1725-1802). PORTRAIT DE JOSEPH PÉRU.
Musée de Carpentras.
70. Desportes (François) (1661-1743). NATURE MORTE OISEAUX, FRUITS ET ORFÈVRE. *Musée National, Stockholm.*
130. Boucher (François) (1703-1770). FEMME ÉTENDUE.
M. Otto E. Bemberg, Paris.
166. Greuze (J.-B.) (1725-1805). PORTRAIT DE GEORGES WILLE.
Musée Jacquemart-André, Paris.
153. Duparc (Françoise) (vers 1705-1778). LA TRICOTEUSE.
Musée des Beaux-Arts, Marseille.

en face, à droite :

1066. Pigalle (J.-B.) (1714-1785). BUSTE DU NÈGRE PAUL, DOMESTIQUE DE DESFRICHES. *Musée d'Orléans.*

A gauche :

1106. Chaudet (Antoine-Louis). BUSTE DE MARIE-LOUISE EN IMPÉRATRICE ROMAINE. *M. Élie Fabius, Paris.*
- Prud'hon (Pierre-Paul) (1758-1823).
711. LA SOURCE. *MM. J. Seligmann et Cie, New-York.*
709. PAYSAGE. *M. et Mme Chevrier-Marcille, Paris.*
208. PORTRAIT DE GEORGES ANTHONY. *Musée de Dijon.*
212. VÉNUS ET ADONIS. *M. et Mme Chevrier-Marcille, Paris.*
209. PORTRAIT DU PRÉSIDENT DE MESMAY.
Mmes Fournier et Schlaer, Paris.
211. PORTRAIT DE M. JOHNSON. *Le duc de Trévise, Paris.*
207. PORTRAIT DE Mme ANTHONY AVEC SES ENFANTS.
Palais des Beaux-Arts, Lyon.
710. ÉTUDE DE NU. *M. Laporte, La Roche-Migennes.*
705. PORTRAIT DE Mlle MAYER. *Musée du Louvre.*
1105. Chaudet (Antoine-Denis) (1763-1810). BUSTE DE NAPOLEON I^{er} EN EMPEREUR ROMAINE.
M. Élie Fabius, Paris.
- En face, à droite :**
1065. Pigalle (J.-B.) (1714-1785). BUSTE DE THOMAS AIGNAN DESFRICHES. *Musée d'Orléans.*

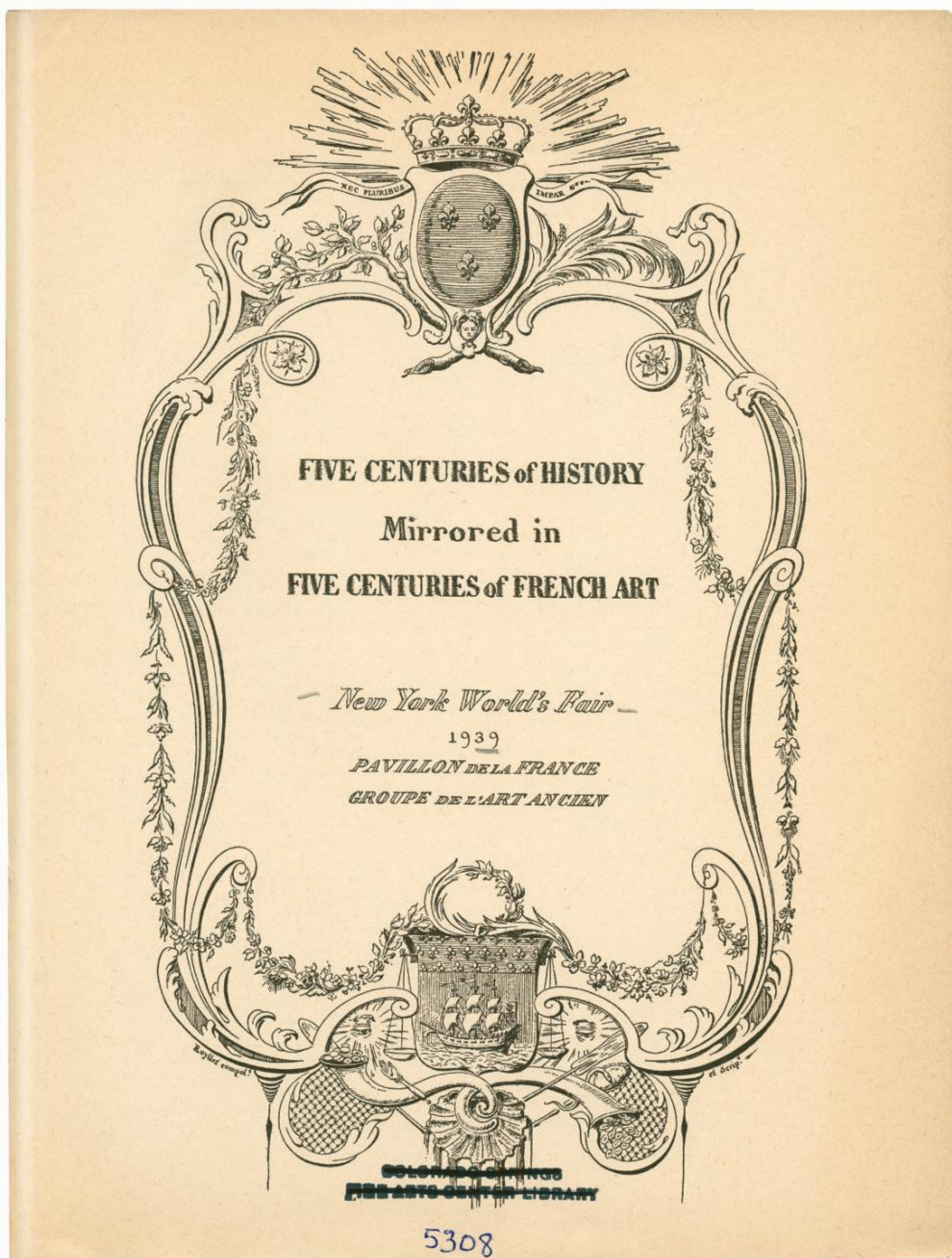
Pénétrer SALLE 20.

SALLE 20

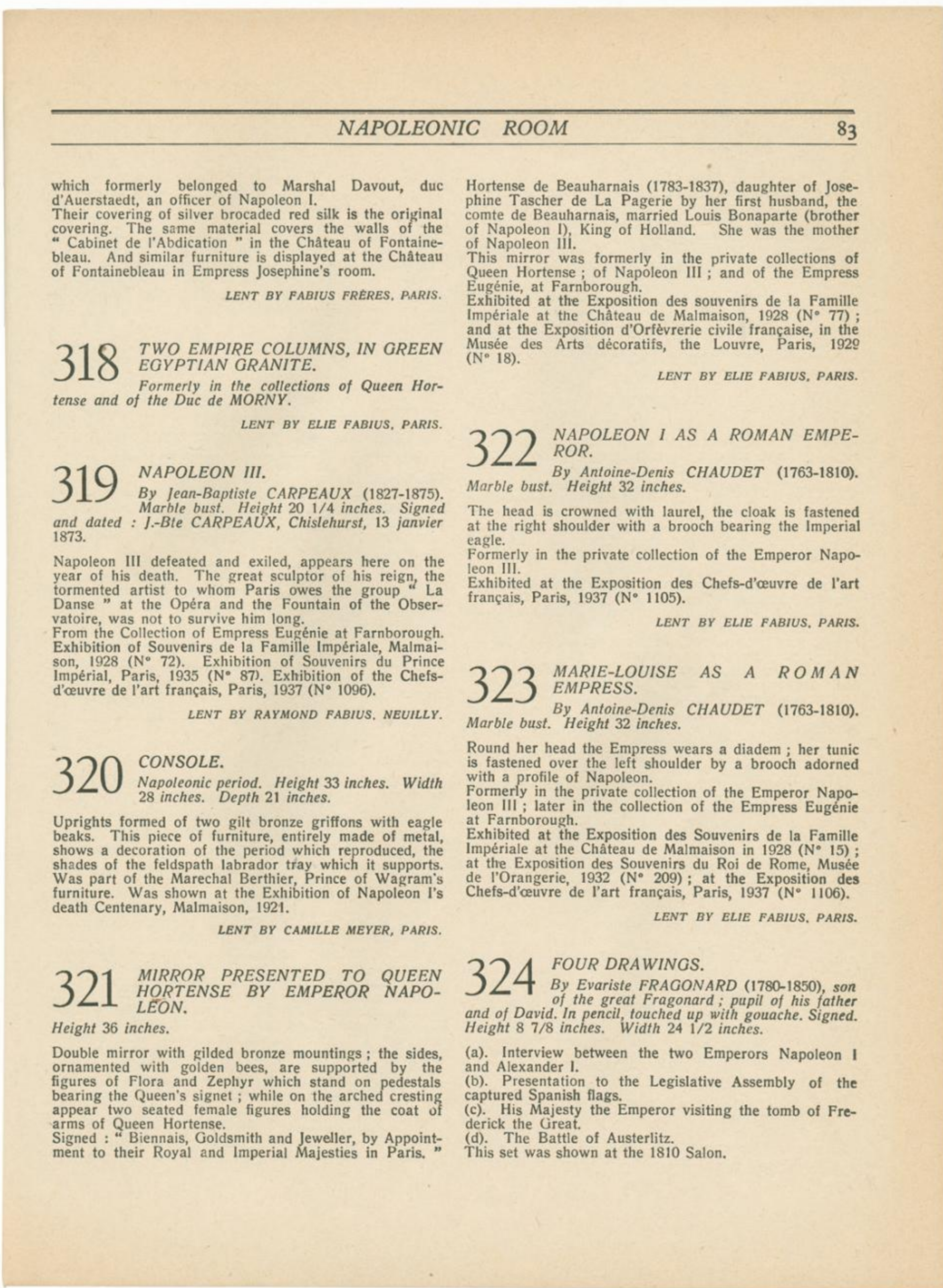
330. Gérard (François, baron) (1770-1837). PORTRAIT DE PIERRE LASSUS.
Faculté de Médecine, Paris.
210. Prud'hon (Pierre-Paul). PORTRAIT DE TALLEYRAND.
Comtesse Jean de Castellane, Paris.
- Gros (Jean-Antoine, baron) (1771-1835). PORTRAIT DE FRANÇOISE SIMONNIER.
M. Biart d'Aumet.
- David (Jacques-Louis) (1748-1825) :
293. LE SERMENT DES HORACES.
MM. Wildenstein et Cie, Paris.
298. PORTRAIT DE Mlle JOLY. *Comédie-Française, Paris.*
343. Gros (Jean-Antoine, baron) (1771-1835). PORTRAIT DU LIEUTENANT LEGRAND.
Duc de Trévise, Paris.
- Girodet-Trioson (Anne-Louis) (1767-1824). TÊTE D'HOMME.
M. Schmit.

— 30 —

Our bust of Napoleon was catalogued in this 1937 exhibition as no. 1105: "Bust of Napoleon I as a Roman Emperor by Antoine-Denis Chaudet, lent by M. Élie Fabius, Paris." Our bust of Marie Louise was also displayed and catalogued as no. 1106: "Bust of Marie-Louise as a Roman Empress by Antoine-Louis Chaudet, lent by M. Élie Fabius, Paris."



The World's Fair, New York, *Five Centuries of History Mirrored in Five Centuries of French Art*, 1939, front cover & p. 83, nos. 322 & 323



which formerly belonged to Marshal Davout, duc d'Auerstaedt, an officer of Napoleon I. Their covering of silver brocaded red silk is the original covering. The same material covers the walls of the "Cabinet de l'Abdication" in the Château de Fontainebleau. And similar furniture is displayed at the Château of Fontainebleau in Empress Josephine's room.

LENT BY FABIVS FRÈRES, PARIS.

318 TWO EMPIRE COLUMNS, IN GREEN EGYPTIAN GRANITE.
Formerly in the collections of Queen Hortense and of the Duc de MORNAY.

LENT BY ELIE FABIVS, PARIS.

319 NAPOLEON III.
By Jean-Baptiste CARPEAUX (1827-1875). Marble bust. Height 20 1/4 inches. Signed and dated: J.-Bte CARPEAUX, Chislehurst, 13 janvier 1873.

Napoleon III defeated and exiled, appears here on the year of his death. The great sculptor of his reign, the tormented artist to whom Paris owes the group "La Danse" at the Opéra and the Fountain of the Observatoire, was not to survive him long. From the Collection of Empress Eugénie at Farnborough. Exhibition of Souvenirs de la Famille Impériale, Malmaison, 1928 (N° 72). Exhibition of Souvenirs du Prince Impérial, Paris, 1935 (N° 87). Exhibition of the Chefs-d'œuvre de l'art français, Paris, 1937 (N° 1096).

LENT BY RAYMOND FABIVS, NEULLY.

320 CONSOLE.
Napoleonic period. Height 33 inches. Width 28 inches. Depth 21 inches.

Uprights formed of two gilt bronze griffons with eagle beaks. This piece of furniture, entirely made of metal, shows a decoration of the period which reproduced, the shades of the feldspathic labrador tray which it supports. Was part of the Marechal Berthier, Prince of Wagram's furniture. Was shown at the Exhibition of Napoleon I's death Centenary, Malmaison, 1921.

LENT BY CAMILLE MEYER, PARIS.

321 MIRROR PRESENTED TO QUEEN HORTENSE BY EMPEROR NAPOLEON.
Height 36 inches.

Double mirror with gilded bronze mountings; the sides, ornamented with golden bees, are supported by the figures of Flora and Zephyr which stand on pedestals bearing the Queen's signet; while on the arched cresting appear two seated female figures holding the coat of arms of Queen Hortense. Signed: "Biennais, Goldsmith and Jeweller, by Appointment to their Royal and Imperial Majesties in Paris."

Hortense de Beauharnais (1783-1837), daughter of Josephine Tascher de La Pagerie by her first husband, the comte de Beauharnais, married Louis Bonaparte (brother of Napoleon I), King of Holland. She was the mother of Napoleon III.

This mirror was formerly in the private collections of Queen Hortense; of Napoleon III; and of the Empress Eugénie, at Farnborough.

Exhibited at the Exposition des souvenirs de la Famille Impériale at the Château de Malmaison, 1928 (N° 77); and at the Exposition d'Orfèvrerie civile française, in the Musée des Arts décoratifs, the Louvre, Paris, 1929 (N° 18).

LENT BY ELIE FABIVS, PARIS.

322 NAPOLEON I AS A ROMAN EMPEROR.

By Antoine-Denis CHAUDET (1763-1810). Marble bust. Height 32 inches.

The head is crowned with laurel, the cloak is fastened at the right shoulder with a brooch bearing the Imperial eagle.

Formerly in the private collection of the Emperor Napoleon III.

Exhibited at the Exposition des Chefs-d'œuvre de l'art français, Paris, 1937 (N° 1105).

LENT BY ELIE FABIVS, PARIS.

323 MARIE-LOUISE AS A ROMAN EMPRESS.

By Antoine-Denis CHAUDET (1763-1810). Marble bust. Height 32 inches.

Round her head the Empress wears a diadem; her tunic is fastened over the left shoulder by a brooch adorned with a profile of Napoleon.

Formerly in the private collection of the Emperor Napoleon III; later in the collection of the Empress Eugénie at Farnborough.

Exhibited at the Exposition des Souvenirs de la Famille Impériale at the Château de Malmaison in 1928 (N° 15); at the Exposition des Souvenirs du Roi de Rome, Musée de l'Orangerie, 1932 (N° 209); at the Exposition des Chefs-d'œuvre de l'art français, Paris, 1937 (N° 1106).

LENT BY ELIE FABIVS, PARIS.

324 FOUR DRAWINGS.

By Evariste FRAGONARD (1780-1850), son of the great Fragonard; pupil of his father and of David. In pencil, touched up with gouache. Signed. Height 8 7/8 inches. Width 24 1/2 inches.

(a). Interview between the two Emperors Napoleon I and Alexander I.

(b). Presentation to the Legislative Assembly of the captured Spanish flags.

(c). His Majesty the Emperor visiting the tomb of Frederick the Great.

(d). The Battle of Austerlitz.

This set was shown at the 1810 Salon.



XIXth CENTURY

Lent by E. Fabius.

323.— THE EMPRESS MARIE-LOUISE.
by A.-D. CHAUDET



XIXth CENTURY

Lent by E. Fabius.

322. — NAPOLEON AS A ROMAN EMPEROR
by A. D. CHAUDET

The World's Fair, New York, *Five Centuries of History Mirrored in Five Centuries of French Art*, 1939, no. 322/pl. LV & no. 323/pl. LIV

Our bust of Napoleon was catalogued and illustrated (pl. LV) in this 1939 exhibition as: "Napoleon I as a Roman Emperor by Antoine-Denis Chaudet, formerly in the collection of the Emperor Napoleon III, lent by Élie Fabius, Paris."

Our bust of Marie Louise was also catalogued and illustrated (pl. LIV) as: "Marie-Louise as a Roman Empress by Antoine-Denis Chaudet, formerly in the private collection of the Emperor Napoleon III, later in the collection of the Empress Eugénie at Farnborough, lent by M. Élie Fabius, Paris."

CONCLUSION

These exceptional period marble busts, with their stunning sculptural quality and incredible provenance, are a once-in-a-lifetime discovery. They represent a remarkable confluence of artistic mastery, historical significance and symbolic power. Not only are they some of the finest examples of Neoclassical portrait sculptures ever made, but they are also imbued with the monumental legacy of Napoleon's world-changing empire, the weight of which can still be felt in their immense presence.

In the realm of Napoleonic artifacts, many have brought strong prices at auction. In 2014, one of his 20 surviving iconic bicorne hats sold for \$2.4 million, and another went for \$2.1 million more recently in 2023. These marble busts are more than artifacts, however. Similar masterpieces of Napoleonic artwork have sold for record prices, including Jacques-Louis David's 1810 study, *The Distribution of the Eagle Standards*, which sold for \$2.35 million at Christie's in 2019. Period marble sculptures by leading Napoleonic sculptors such as Lorenzo Bartolini and Antonio Canova continue to be highly coveted. In 2014, Bartolini's sculpture, *Sisters Dancing the Waltz*, sold for \$867,000, and Canova's *Bust of Peace* set his highest record in 2018, selling for \$7 million.

It is significant that the only other busts of Napoleon as Roman Emperor by Bartolini reside in the Louvre and Versailles. What's more, the Museo Correr in Venice is the only museum where Napoleon and Marie Louise are still united as a pair, and their busts by Angelo Pizzi pale in comparison to ours from every angle. Our busts of Napoleon and Marie Louise, therefore, are the only examples of this superb caliber not currently housed in a museum collection—making them an extraordinary, collection-defining find. Ultimately, they are a testament to the power of art in shaping the legacy of one of history's most gifted military minds and iconic leaders, Napoleon Bonaparte.







M.S. Rau
FINE ART • ANTIQUES • JEWELS