The Department of Western European Arts has been able to acquire a number of interesting sculptures during the past three years. One of these, Andrea della Robbia's St. Michael the Archangel, was the subject of an article by Olga Raggio in the December Bulletin. The six described more briefly in the present article make a varied lot, ranging from the fifteenth through the eighteenth centuries, and are equally diverse in subject and in material.

The earliest, two Sienese bronzes of the late fifteenth century, represent St. John and the Virgin (Figures 2 and 3), and probably were once part of a Crucifixion group of which the Christ and perhaps other figures as well have disappeared. Possessing a monumentality seldom found in sculptures so small, they are typically Sienese in that a strain of medievalism continues in them. In their linearity of form and in their impassioned feeling they present a sharp contrast to the sculptures being made toward the end of the quattrocento in nearby Florence, where the more thoroughly classical modes of the Renaissance were in force.

The Metropolitan Museum is also the owner of a bronze statuette of St. John (Figure 1), purchased a decade ago, which is clearly related to the one recently acquired. Although these two figures were surely made by different masters, and perhaps some years apart, both might well be based on yet another representation of John from a Crucifixion group, perhaps life-size, which may once have existed in a Sienese church. It is hoped eventually to determine the identity of the artist responsible for the Museum’s St. John and the Virgin. For the moment, however, he remains anonymous.

Next in order of chronology is the marble Virgin and Child with the Infant St. John (Figure 4), a group which first attracted public attention in the exhibition The Triumph of Mannerism, held at the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam in 1955. Its composition, like that of so many pieces made at a time when the Renaissance presented a new ideal to French artists, is ulti-

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mately of Italian derivation, recalling various works made by followers of Leonardo during the early sixteenth century. It is, on the other hand, quite French in feeling, and this is evident in the understated way in which the Virgin's draperies follow the contours of the body. Hence, although numerous Italian sculptors were then active in France, it may be presumed to be the work of a native artist, although again it is presently impossible to give him a name.

This master may be said to have been following a style similar to that seen in the sculptures on the tomb of Louis XII at Tours, a monument executed in the atelier of the Juste family between 1516 and 1531. He could therefore be of Touraine origin. His marble sculpture is to be counted among the masterpieces of a period when he and all of his colleagues were engaged in assimilating the spirit of the Renaissance style.

Although Alessandro Algardi, the great contemporary of Lorenzo Bernini, is today remembered for portrait busts, such as the Scipione Borghese in the Museum's collection, and for monumental affairs like the marble relief in St. Peter's in Rome of the Meeting of Pope Leo the Great and Attila, he also made works of a more modest scale. Some of these were in bronze; others were in ivory and silver. Since nearly all the latter have been lost, the Museum's acquisition of Algardi's silver statuette of Christ at the Column (Figure 6) became a matter of special significance.

Although the figure of Christ is just under nine inches high, the forms are large and noble in concept and are presented to us with effortless ease. Sweeping curves, always controlled by the artist's superb mastery of design, make this a

2 and 3. The Virgin and St. John. Italian (Siena), late 15th century. Bronze. Height of both 7 3/4 inches. Rogers Fund, 60.37.1, 2

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wondrously fluent figure. It is correspondingly delicate in detail, as in the treatment of the hands and hair. The column to which Christ is bound is of lapis lazuli, and the pedestal on which he stands—the original, it may be noted—is of black marble, on the front surface of which is a silver plaque with engraved decoration in the form of a crowned column within a baroque cartouche.

The crowned column is the emblem of the Colonna family of Rome. Since it is of precious lapis lazuli, the column to which Christ is bound may also be considered an allusion to that family. Since we know from a passage in Bellori’s *Le Vite* that Algardi offered to Pope Innocent X (Giam-battista Pamphilii) two silver statuettes of the Baptism of Christ, a gift apparently prompted by the fact that the Baptist was the patron of the Pope’s family and also his name saint, we may conclude that the Christ at the Column was a gift or commission of a like order. We do not know which member of the Colonna family originally owned it; he could have been Marcantonio V, who held the post of Spanish ambassador to Urban VIII and Innocent X.

Algardi’s Christ is related, and in execution superior, to the central figure in his Flagellation of Christ, a gilt-bronze group in the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna.

The Museum has received as a loan from Mr. and Mrs. Charles B. Wrightsman a pair of magnificent bronze firedogs cast by Algardi’s assistant, Domenico Guidi, after models made by the master, shortly before his death in 1654, on the order of Philip IV of Spain. In the Jupiter (Figure 5) which surmounts one of the firedogs there is to be observed the same fluency of expression in dealing with figures of godlike proportions, the same easy mastery of composition, and the same concern for significant detail that are to be seen in the silver Christ.

The marble sculpture of St. Bartholomew (Frontispiece) is a small version of the heroic figure of the saint, also in marble, which Pierre Legros II, one of a number of French sculptors working in Rome, executed between 1703 and 1713 for the basilica of San Giovanni Laterano. The latter is still in situ. First notice of the small version appears in a letter dated December 1, 1778 from the sculptor Jean-Jacques Caffieri to M. d’Angeviller, *Directeur des Bâtiments* for Louis XVI. It reads as follows: “Monsieur, In regard to the inquiries you are making concerning major works in painting and sculpture, I feel obliged to inform you that a very beautiful figure in marble by Le Gros, which represents St. Bartholomew, is about to be sold in the collection of Abbé Terray. It is the small figure which he has executed in large size in the church of San Giovanni Laterano at Rome. This marble, which I knew very well in Rome, belonged to the widow of M. de Troy, and Abbé Terray purchased it from her heirs. This figure has a great deal of soul, is very masterly, and is of great beauty in the quality of its workmanship. I feel that it merits being placed in the cabinet of the King or in the halls of the Academy, considering that in Paris there are but few works of this able sculptor. . . .” De Troy, it may be noted, had been director of the French Academy in Rome from 1738 to 1752, and Caffieri was there as a Fellow from 1749 to 1753.

On January 20, 1779, the Terray collection was sold at public auction. Item seventeen in the catalogue reads as follows: “*Le Gros. St. Bartholomew standing and holding the instruments of his martyrdom. Marble of thirty-four pouces. 1,002 livres. Feuillet.*” It is to be noted that the catalogued measurement corresponds to the height of our St. Bartholomew, thirty-four inches. Whether or not Feuillet, to whom it was sold, was an agent of the king is not known, nor is anything known of its subsequent history until it reappeared a short time ago in a Belgian private collection.

Bartholomew was one of the Twelve Apostles commissioned for the basilica; Legros also executed one of St. Thomas. The design for all of the figures had been established by the Roman painter Carlo Maratti, a master who continued to adhere to the monumental tradition of the high baroque style. Hence the close stylistic relationship of the Bartholomew to the sculptures that correspond to the height of our St. Bartholomew, thirty-four inches. Whether or not Feuillet, to whom it was sold, was an agent of the king is not known, nor is anything known of its subsequent history until it reappeared a short time ago in a Belgian private collection.

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*The Virgin and Child with the Infant St. John.
French (possibly Touraine), about 1530. Marble.
Height 27 ¼ inches. Purchase, Joseph Pulitzer Bequest, 59.12*

of Lorenzo Bernini, created a generation or more earlier. That our marble varies significantly in detail from the Lateran monument shows that it was no mere reduced copy; it may be considered an original creation, made probably at the same time work was progressing on the Lateran figure.

In the Peñard y Fernandez sale held in Paris in December of 1960 the Museum succeeded in acquiring a most unusual wall fountain (see Figure 7). It is of lead and marble, as were so many fountains of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. An Eros, dart in hand and placed against a screen of reeds, sits astride a tiny dolphin out of whose opened mouth water could trickle into the semicircular basin below. The Eros and its reedy background are of lead, and were undoubtedly originally gilded.

In its charm and elegance this little figure anticipates the work of such later masters as Falconet, although it is more robust in the manner in which details of the infant form are delineated. The basin over which he presides is of veined red marble, the exterior surfaces carved to suggest undulating waves. Supporting the basin is a low pedestal of the same marble, the carved decoration of which consists of cartouche and foliate forms of the type used in France during the 1720s and 1730s. It was during this period that the fountain may be presumed to have been made.

Although no wall fountains immediately comparable to it are known to us, they once may have

been fairly common. Included in Pierre-Jean Mariette’s *L'Architecture française*, first published in 1727, is an engraved design by Nicolas Pineau for a section of a wall of a dining room on which there is a similar fountain. It stands at one side of a buffet, and from the caption beneath we learn that a balancing fountain is indicated for the other side, and that their basins would be of marble surmounted by sculptures of gilded lead, from which water would issue for use in rinsing glasses and washing hands. Our fountain would seem to have been planned for such a setting and such usage, and evidently comes from one of the numerous hôtels or châteaux furnished during the Regency or the early years of the reign of Louis XV.