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Fine European Sculpture and Works of Art



Chiurazzi (Naples, late 18th century -)

Ganymede and the Eagle

Bronze, after a restored antique Roman marble from the Farnese collection

Height: 25.5 cm / 10 in

Overall with socle: h. 31.5 x 15 x 12 cm / 12³/₈ x 5⁷/₈ x 4³/₄ in

Facture: Cast by the lost wax method, the metal is very coppery and the surface of the bronze retains a warm chocolate brown natural patina. There is an old lead repair to the top of the left wing of the eagle.

The statuette is a copy of an ancient Roman sculpture in marble, which was in a fragmentary state whilst in the Farnese collection in Rome.¹ In the 1780s this and other ancient Roman statuary from the Farnese collection was transferred from Rome to Naples. Carlo Albacini² (1735-1813) undertook the restoration of many of these sculptures for the King of Naples between 1786 and 1800.

For the present model of *Ganymede*, Albacini provided the head and part of the neck; his right arm; his left hand and part of the crook; the lower part of both legs; and the head and left wing of the eagle.³ The earliest known bronze by Chiurazzi which is signed and dated *Chiurazzi presso Masulli 1749* reproduces another ancient statue from the Farnese collection, the *Farnese Bull*, a massive marble group that was shipped to Naples in 1788.⁴ The *Farnese Bull* and the present model of *Ganymede* were both still being reproduced by the Chiurazzi foundry in 1929.⁵

1. P.P. Bober & R.O. Rubinstein, *Renaissance Artists and Antique Sculpture*, Oxford, 1986, p. 473.
2. *Allgemeines Lexicon. Die bildenden Künstler aller Zeiten und Völker*, vol. 2, K.G. Saur 1992, pp. 14-15.
3. A. Ruesch (ed.), *Guida illustrata del Museo Nazionale di Napoli*, Naples 1908, p. 90, no. 278, inv. 6355 & S. Reinach, *Répertoire de la statuaire grecque et romaine ...I*, Paris 1897, p. 191, pl. 408, no. 698. From the same collection, Albacini created a similar statue of *Ganymede and the eagle* accompanied by a seated dog (Ruesch 1908, p. 70, no. 240 and Reinach 1897, p. 192, pl. 410, no. 699).
4. The bronze, h. 47 cm / 18 ½ in, was sold at Sotheby's London, 7 July 1988 as lot 111. For the *Farnese Bull*, see F. Haskell & N. Penny, *Taste and the Antique*, Yale U.P. 1981, p. 165, no. 15.
5. S. Chiurazzi *Catalogo Chiurazzi S/A, fonderie, ceramica marmoraria*, Napoli 1929, the *Ganymede* no. 173 & *Farnese Bull* no. 160.