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*Fine European Sculpture and Works of Art*



**Flemish, mid-Seventeenth Century  
attributed to Lucas Faydherbe  
(Mechelen, 1617 - 1697)**

## **Jupiter**

Terracotta, painted to resemble bronze

Dimensions: h. 68 x 52 x 31 cm (26¾ x 20½ x 12¼ in)

Provenance: Private collection, France.

Facture: Sculpted fully in the round, the bust is hollowed out from the underside. The terracotta surface has been painted to resemble bronze but nonetheless retains the freshness of the modelling and original surface working. There is a minor restoration to the back of the bust.

This bust of *Jupiter* resembles a number of terracotta busts of mythological subjects associated with a signed example of *Omphale*<sup>1</sup> and its pendant *Hercules*<sup>2</sup>. This pairing recalls the three years that Hercules endured as Omphale's slave as punishment for having murdered his friend, Iphitus. The versions of these two busts in Malines [Mechelen], Stedelijk Museum Hof van Busleyden, were acquired in 1840 upon the death of Lodewijk-Jozef Faydherbe: Lucas's last surviving descendant who had lived in the house built by Faydherbe's son, Jan Lucas (1654-1704).<sup>3</sup> In these vivacious portrayals, *Jupiter* and *Hercules* are depicted with a high degree of naturalism: the contours of their faces, their high cheek-bones, their protuberant lips and the gathered locks of their beards are very freshly modelled and

detailed. In both busts, the right breast is partially exposed, revealing the nipple and the hair around it. In the case of *Hercules*, the hair is only apparent in the example in London, in which the modelling is clearer because it has not been covered with a layer of slip.<sup>4</sup> In both busts, the upper left arm is covered by drapery, while the right shoulders are bare, albeit only partially in the *Hercules*. Among Faydherbe's other surviving mythological subjects,<sup>5</sup> a bust of *Bacchus* in a private collection in Western Flanders displays similar working of the surface of the terracotta.<sup>6</sup> Both the *Bacchus* and *Jupiter* adopt the technique of drapery that overhangs the truncation of the bust at the front to conceal the integral base. The *Bacchus* was among a number of Faydherbe's works which remained in the house in op den Bruul, Mechelen after 1840, subsequently passing into the hands of Emile de Meester de Ravestein<sup>7</sup>. A terracotta *Bacchante* in the same private collection is considered its pendant, but it is stylistically dissimilar to the *Bacchus* and Faydherbe's known oeuvre.<sup>8</sup> These two busts again differ stylistically from another terracotta bust of *Bacchus* in the Rubenshuis, Antwerp, which has also been attributed to Faydherbe.<sup>9</sup> This more animated portrayal of *Bacchus* is reminiscent of the *Jupiter*, which it resembles in the modelling of the beard and the surface-treatment. However the rendition of *Bacchus'* exaggerated pectoral muscles is quite unlike the more natural depiction of *Jupiter's* torso. The present *Jupiter* also bears comparison with Faydherbe's life-size marble of *St Jacob* in the Cathedral of Sts Michiel and Gudule in Brussels.<sup>10</sup> *St Jacob's* expressive face, his deep eye-sockets, high cheek-bones and the great locks of his hair and beard all recall our bust. The broad parallel folds of drapery that sweep over *St Jacob's* shoulder and across his torso are also seen in the bust of *Jupiter*. The portrait of *Gaspar de Craeyer*, ascribed by Frits Scholten to Faydherbe, provides further evidence endorsing the attribution of the present bust of *Jupiter* to him.<sup>11</sup> However, the fresh, pristine surface of *Jupiter* distinguishes it from the de Craeyer portrait, which is considerably abraded. In both of these busts, the thick locks of their hair are layered, and the individual strands are defined within each curl. The drapery is modelled in broad fluid folds around their torsos and hangs just below the truncation of the busts, partially covering their integral bases. The lively eyes of both *Jupiter* and *de Craeyer* are also similarly modelled: in the *Jupiter*, a small segment of the terracotta, in the centre of the eye, emerges from the left side of the iris to denote the pupil; whereas in the *de Craeyer*, the pupils are represented by a square wedge of terracotta attached to the inner front edge of his upper eyelid.<sup>12</sup>

1. Mechelen, Stedelijk Museum Hof van Busleyden (inv. no. B 39 Omphale), h. 76 cm, signed "FAYDH". See: H. de Nijn in *Lucas Faydherbe 1617 - 1697. Mechels Beeldhouwer & Architect*, exh. cat. Mechelen, Stedelijk Museum Hof van Busleyden, 13 September – 16 November 1997, pp. 188-189, no. 61. Further versions (with minor variations) are in: Oxford, Ashmolean Museum, h. 68.5 cm (see N. Penny, *Catalogue of European Sculpture in the Ashmolean Museum. 1540 to the Present Day*, Oxford, 1992, vol. II, pp. 127-128, no. 349); Duffel, private collection, h. 74 cm, (see H. de Nijn in *Mechelen* 1997, pp. 194-195, no. 68, tentatively attributed to Faydherbe).

2. Mechelen, Stedelijk Museum Hof van Busleyden (inv. no. B 39 Hercules), h. 78.5 cm; see: H. de Nijn in *Mechelen* 1997, pp. 188-189, no. 60; further examples in London, Victoria & Albert Museum (inv. no. A17-1953), h. 66.5 cm and Duffel, private collection, h. 77.5 cm (see M. Trusted and H. de Nijn in *Mechelen* 1997, pp. 141-142, no. 21 & pp. 194-195, no. 67, respectively). There is a smaller variant in Brussels, King Baudouin Foundation, (inv. no. 50 – CVH 12B ) h. 43 cm (S. van Riet in C. Baiser et al. (ed.) *The Van Herck Collection. 17th and 18th Centuries*, [Brussels 2000], vol. II, pp. 58-59, no. 7). In 1997 this was observed to be stylistically quite distinct from the other versions: see H. de Nijn in *Gärten und Höfe der Rubenszeit*, exh. cat., Hamm, Gustav-Lübcke Museum, 15 October 2000-14 January 2001; Mainz, Landesmuseum, 4 March – 24 June 2001, pp. 448-449.

3. See F. Baudouin in *Baiser et al.* 2000, vol. I, p. 94, observing that Jan Lucas died in the Pleasure Gardens at his house while installing the marble *Abduction of Ganymede* by Jérôme Duquesnoy the Younger (the marble now in Münster, Westfälisches Landesmuseum): the scaffolding broke, and he died from injuries sustained when he struggled to break the marble's fall. See also n. 7, below.

4. The lack of a slip is noted in Penny 1992, p. 127; see the photograph in *Mechelen* 1997, p. 141, no.

5. A terracotta relief in the Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique (inv. no. 4613; see Gh. Derveaux-Van Ussel in *La Sculpture au siècle de Rubens*, exh. cat., Brussels, Musée d'Art Ancien, 15 July – 2 October 1977, p. 105, no. 69), which depicts *Jupiter Foudrayant* has been erroneously attributed to Faydherbe: it bears no resemblance to any of his documented works.
6. Collection of Schietere de Loppem, Sijsele, near Bruges; see H. Vleighe in *Mechelen* 1997, p. 203, no. Add. 1.
7. For the subsequent history of other sculptures that remained in the Faydherbe family collection, see H. Bussers, "Faydherbe onderschat of een verkeken kans voor de Koninklijke Musea voor Schone Kunsten", *Bulletin des Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire*, vol. 57, no. 1, 1986, pp. 81-103.
8. H. Vleighe in *Mechelen* 1997, p. 203, no. Add. 2.
9. Antwerp, Rubenshuis (inv. no. B45), h. 77 cm. See Gh. Derveaux-Van Ussel in *La Sculpture au siècle de Rubens* 1977, p. 106, pointing out that it represents *Bacchus*, as opposed to a *Satyr*, and citing Frans Baudouin's earlier attribution of the bust to Faydherbe. See also I. Kockelbergh in *Mechelen* 1997, p. 151, no. 29, describing the bust as "Anoniem".
10. Br. Libertus M., *Lucas Faydherbe. Beeldhouwer en Bouwmeester. 1617 – 1697*, Antwerp, 1938, p. 64 & p. 65, fig. 18.
11. The portrait bust in Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum (inv. no. BK-1977-22), h. 51 cm. F. Scholten, *Gebeeldhouwde portretten. Portrait Sculptures*. Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, Amsterdam, 1995, pp. 28-29, no. 11, noting that the terracotta was "cleaned with lye". Scholten pointed out that the artist and sitter knew each other, and that the bust is a reaction to that of Rubens by Petel (1633) which Faydherbe would have known. Scholten restated the attribution in *Mechelen* 1997, pp. 158-159, no. 17.
12. This technique was subsequently used to great effect by Houdon, for instance in his signed terracotta bust of *Napoleon* in Dijon, Musée des Beaux-Arts (inv. no. CA 1026); see *Jean-Antoine Houdon. Sculptor of the Enlightenment*, exh. cat. by A. L. Poulet et al., Washington D.C., National Gallery of Art, 4 May – 7 October 2003; Los Angeles, The J. Paul Getty Museum, 4 November 2003 – 25 January 2004; Musée et domaine national du château de Versailles, 1 March – 30 May 2004, pp. 323-327, no. 62.