



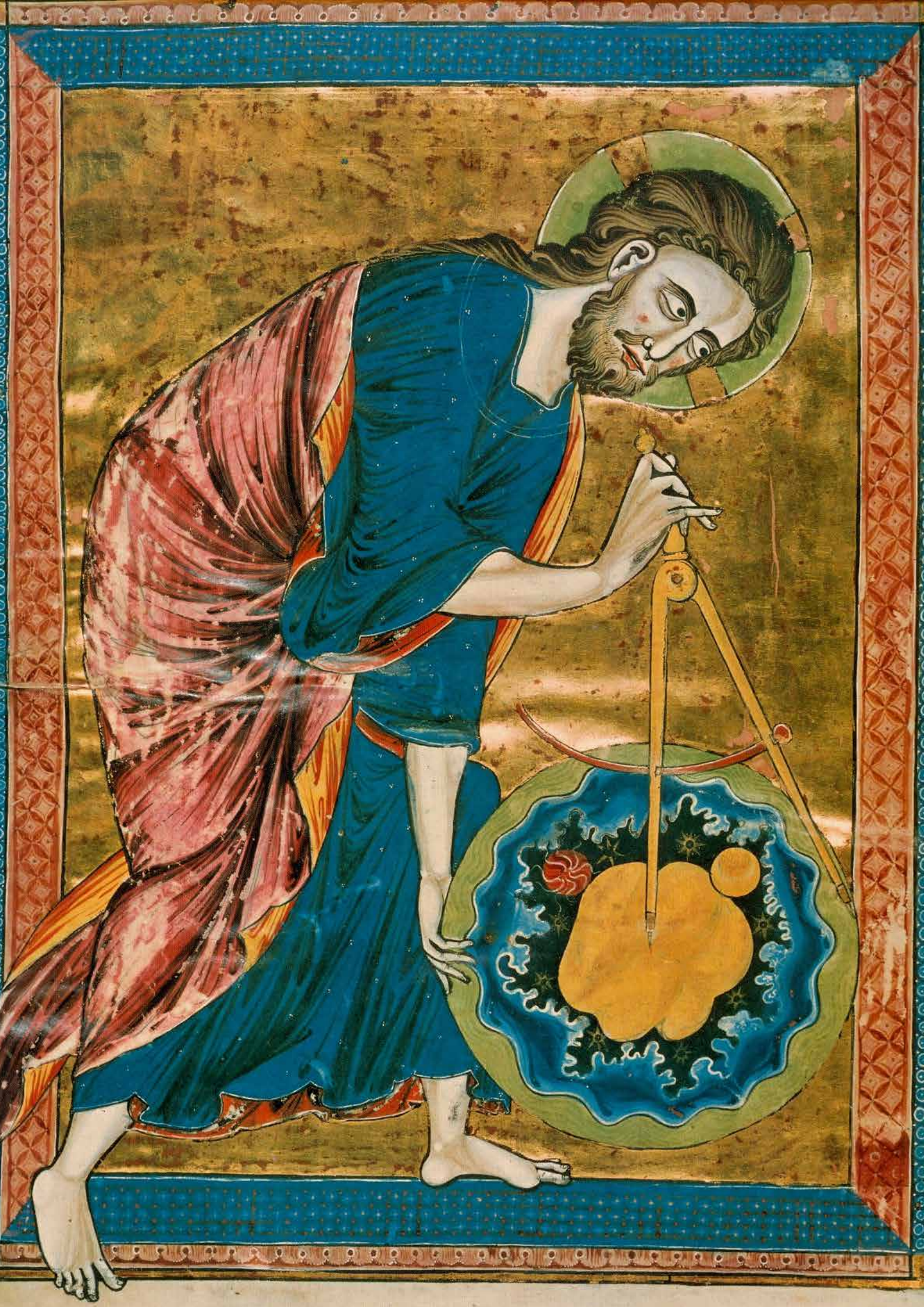
ARCHITECTURE & ORNAMENT

SAM FOGG

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Contents

Preface	6
Introduction	8
Pre-Romanesque	11
Romanesque	25
Gothic	88
Late Gothic	124
Bibliography	167
Photo Credits	170
Colophon	171



Preface

This is our first exhibition on the subject of medieval architecture. It has been a long time in assembling the material. Some we found more than twenty years ago and have never exhibited before, for we have never had clients for non-figurative objects and have not looked for them. But last year we placed two very important works of pure 'decoration' in prominent collections – the arch from the great Cluny Abbey choir screen from the Altounian collection to a UK private collection and a fragment of the south transept window tracery of Canterbury Cathedral to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, where it now stands at the opening of the new British galleries.

So, the time is right. We are in a world now that understands the language of minimal and installation art – a language these fragments can also speak. In recent centuries, architectural elements and ornament have been downgraded in comparison with the art of painting and sculpture, but in the Middle Ages they held equal or greater status. This exhibition of detached objects explores this world.

Sam Fogg



Introduction

‘Neither sculpture nor painting, although both are rooted in elementary creativity and imitative instincts, surrounds us to the same extent as architecture, acts upon us so incessantly and so ubiquitously. We can avoid interaction with what people call the Fine Arts, but we cannot escape buildings and the subtle but penetrating effects of their character, noble or mean, restrained or ostentatious, genuine or meretricious.’¹

– Nicolaus Pevsner

In his introduction to the *Outline of European Architecture*, Nicolaus Pevsner engages with the longstanding theoretical discussion that sets out to compare the merits of architecture, sculpture and painting. Pevsner is correct to emphasise the penetrating effect of architecture, which possesses a spatial quality that neither painting nor sculpture can ever have. Nevertheless, medieval architecture must be placed in a category of its own because it cannot be divorced from painting or sculpture entirely. The works of art that comprise this exhibition demonstrate that very fact: architecture cannot be fully understood in isolation because it is the ornamentation and sculpted detail on buildings that often give them their identity and local character.

Architecture & Ornament provides an overview of the diversity that existed in Romanesque and Gothic architecture, which continually transformed across space and time. The works of art in the exhibition range from the tenth century, when Lombard architecture and sculpture formed the so-called first Romanesque, to the late fifteenth century, when openwork spires towered over cities. The works include fragments from some of the most celebrated medieval buildings in Europe, such as the capital from Madinat al-Zahra (Cat. 3), a palace-

1, Nicolaus Pevsner, *Outline of European Architecture* (1942), pp.16.

city complex just outside of Cordoba, built as a symbol of Umayyad power on the Iberian Peninsula, or the twelfth-century impost from Saint-Remi in Reims (Cat.7), one of the most important royal churches in France and the site where King Clovis was baptised in 508 by Bishop Remigius. The engineering progress of the Gothic period is represented by a 13th century gable from a buttress pinnacle of the York Minster Chapter House (Cat. 31), a building designed to show-off technological advancements and a new kind of decorative character. Finally, the exhibition also features a tracery fragment from Canterbury Cathedral (Cat.36), one of England's most renowned ecclesiastical buildings, and one of the most significant pilgrimage sites in Europe. In addition to these pieces there are many others, and together they take us through architectural history that spans almost seven hundred years.

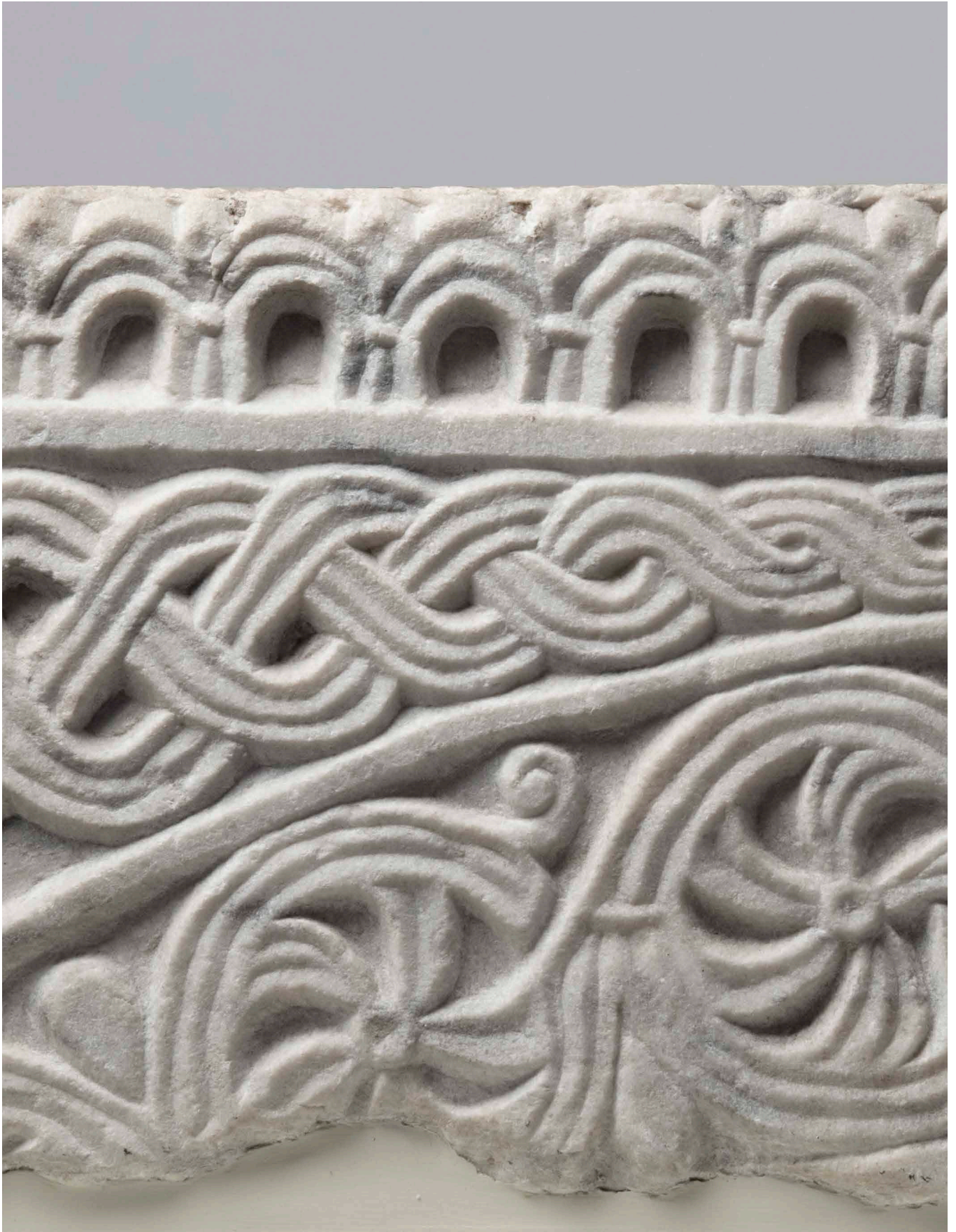
As salvaged architectural fragments, most of the works in the exhibition survived by way of luck, reuse or symbolic significance. Many are difficult to precisely locate because the buildings that they come from may be destroyed, rebuilt or significantly changed. And yet although they may lack some context, they stand as sculptures in their own right. Their refinement testifies to the attention given to every component of a medieval building, no matter how far from view. These architectural fragments also remind us that a building is not one 'thing' or the work of one person. It consists of thousands of sculptured pieces and hundreds of people that came together in order to create an integrated work of art.

Jana Gajdošová



PRE-ROMANESQUE

A Lombard relief from an ambo screen



A Lombard relief from an ambo screen



**Italy, Tuscany
9th century**

31 x 77 x 3 cm; white marble.

Provenance

Private collection, Tuscany

Literature:

Oleg Zastrow, *Scultura carolingia e romanica nel Comasco*; *Inventario Territoriale, Como*, 1979.

This fragment of a large marble relief is carved on one side with spiralling vine-work within a curving arch below a narrow round-headed blind arcade. The space in between is ornamented by a loose three-stranded interlace, which tightens as it reaches the apex of the arch. Half of a loose three-sided knot sits in the spandrel of the arch, just below the interlace. The size of the fragment as well as the span of the arch both suggest that this piece was once a part of a church furnishing, such as an ambo. However, a different context for this piece, such as a portal or a façade, cannot be completely ruled out.

Stylistically, this fragment belongs to a group of very rare relief sculptures associated with the end of the Langobard rule in Northern Italy and Tuscany. The sculptures produced during the Langobard rule have been described to possess a mixture of 'debased Roman', Byzantine and Scandinavian influences. They combine Roman architectural types, such as round-headed arches, with intricate interlace and abstract, icon-like figures. Monuments such as the famous Oratoria di Santa Maria in Valle testify to the way that these influences would have been united (fig. 1). These examples also mark the beginning of medieval experiments that eventually lead to the development of Romanesque architecture in Europe.

The style of this relief is most comparable to sculpture created in the 9th century. An arch section with a closely related spiralling vine-work design is preserved in the Detroit Institute of Arts, and was acquired by the museum from a Florentine

Fig. 1

Adoration of the Magi
Lombard Oratoria di
Santa Maria in Valle
Italy, Cividale del
Friuli
Mid 8th century



dealer (fig. 2). A further example with the same vine-work is the pilaster from the Walters Art Gallery (fig. 3). Among these examples, our relief is unusual because the top ornamental band is decorated by an arcade. This micro-architectural detail suggests that the relief is from a period that straddles Lombard sculpture and proto-Romanesque sculpture, placing it into the 9th century. One similar example is the Tuscan relief with a cross from Carda (fig. 4), which is also framed by a thin band decorated by an arcade.



Fig. 2
Fragment of a relief
Italy, Tuscany?
8th-9th century
31.8 x 81.3 cm; white
marble
Detroit institute of
Arts, inv. 26.148
Friuli
Mid 8th century



Fig. 3
Pillar with Scrolling
Detail
Italy
9th century
The Walters Art
Gallery 27.536

Fig. 4
Lombard Relief
Italy, Tuscany, Carda
9th century



A Lombard relief with interlace ropework



A Lombard relief with interlace ropework



Northern Italy
c. 9th century

59 x 47.5 x 11 cm; marble or metamorphosed sandstone

Provenance

Collection of Professor Van de Walle, Gent, Belgium, acquired prior to 1990

Literature:

Darr, A.P., P. Barnet, A. Boström, C. Avery, et al. *Catalogue of Italian Sculpture in the Detroit Institute of Arts*. London, 2002, 2 vols., I, cat. 2.

Oleg Zastrow, *Scultura carolingia e romanica nel Comasco; Inventario Territoriale*, Como, 1979.

A boldly decorated architectural relief, carved with interlinked chains of three-stranded interlace rope-work, set below an overhanging frieze of two round-headed arch motifs encircling petalled rosettes, and with fine spandrel ornaments above.

Probably originally part of the interior of a pre-Romanesque church, this marble fragment has many affinities with sculptural reliefs found across central and northern Italy between the eighth and tenth centuries. Although the ubiquity of three-stranded interlace patterns in Italy precludes definite



Fig. 1

Architectural relief panel
Italy
c. 9th century
Moltrasio, Capella
Lucini-Passalacqua

localisation of this piece, ninth-century parallels in the Cappella Lucini-Passalacqua, Moltrasio (fig. 1), the castle of Sirmione, Lombardy , and particularly the Museo Civico, Como (figs. 2-3), incorporating similar arched motifs would strongly indicate an Italian origin. However, see also a panel of similarly arrhythmic chain-link carving in the Museo Lapidarium Novigrad, also carved with crisp half-rosettes under three-stranded arches (fig. 4).

The panel's size, format, and excellent state of preservation all indicate that it was originally located in a sheltered position.



Two possible reconstructions emerge based on these criteria. Firstly, it may have formed part of a pilaster arrangement, as suggested by its narrow, vertical composition and its stepped upper section. Similar examples, for instance at Como (fig. 5), show how such blocks were incorporated into door jambs and portal surrounds. In this context, the repeat-arch motifs



Fig. 2

A fragment of a Langobardic architectural relief panel believed to have decorated the 'schola cantorum' of the basilica of Sant-Abondio Italy c. 9th century

Fig. 3

A Langobardic decorative relief fragment Italy c. 9th century Como, Museo Civico



would have sat under a broad lintel or below an archivolt, visually echoing and mimicking the form of the adjacent doorway. However, the rebated side sections of the relief may also indicate its creation for a chancel or ambo screen (similar to those in the basilica of Saint-Pierre-aux-Nonnains for example, for which see fig. 6). These stepped right-angled sections could have been locked into place between two fixed stone posts incised with corresponding channels, a construction technique common to sculpted structures of this type during the Langobardic migration era.



Fig. 6
Chancel screen reliefs
France
7th century
France, Moselle,
basilica of Saint-Pierre-
aux-Nonnains



Fig. 4
A Langobardic
architectural relief
9th century
Novigrad, Museo
Lapidarium

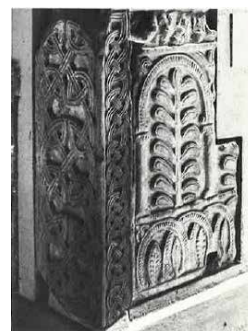


Fig. 5
Langobardic
architectural relief
panels believed to
have decorated the
portal of the 'schola
cantorum' of the
basilica of Sant-
Abondio
Italy
c. 9th century
Como, Museo Civico

Umayyad capital



Umayyad capital



Spain, Cordoba, Madinat al-Zahra
c.970 - 976 CE / 348 - 365 AH

40 x 30 x 30cm; marble, carved volutes lost, large break at the top, which damaged much of the inscription, general surface wear.

Provenance:

With Galerie Lamy, Brussels, 2010

This intricately carved capital has suffered a few losses to its extremities, but its crisp refinement survives in enough detail to suggest an origin from the Madinat al-Zahra, located just outside of Cordoba, Spain. Madinat al-Zahra, which translates as the 'shining city', was the vast palace-city complex built by the Spanish Umayyad Caliph 'Abd al Rahman III as his capital of al-Andalus, located to the west of Cordoba. Further extensions to the palace were made by his son and successor al-Hakam II (r. 961-976), and our sculpture can be dated to this reign. The palace complex was built as a symbol of Umayyad power on the Iberian Peninsula, displaying influences from Syria, as well as local traditions and Roman survivals. Its artistic and architectural heritage represents the culmination of luxury and culture in early medieval Europe.

The capital takes the Classical shape of a fluted Corinthian capital with two rows of acanthus leaves; however, its surface decoration is distinctly different from Roman prototypes. It is carved with a lace-like ornament of stylised acanthus leaves, which is deeply drilled to create a unified pattern across the surface. The upper and lower sections of the capital are divided by a bead and reel ornament. The drill-work extends to the scrolls in the upper part of the capital, which are covered with a scrolling vegetal pattern. There are also some remnants of an inscription on top of the abacus. Sculpted in the round, the capital would have originally been on a freestanding column.

The rich embellishment on the capital is characteristic for capitals that were made for the Madinat al-Zahra. These densely decorated architectural sculptures would have been scored in the workshop but all of the detailed carving and drill-work would have been completed in situ. Analogous examples survive across several museums and private collections, including the Museum of Islamic Art, Berlin, the Met Cloisters, and a superb capital in the Kuwait National Museum (figs. 1). The capitals vary in quality and size, depending on the significance of their placement within the city complex of Madinat al-Zahra. This example, despite some losses, is of the highest quality, suggesting that it would have had an important placement within the city.

Today, the city survives only as a ruined site (fig. 2) as its status was short-lived. The complex fell into disuse after the death of al-Hakam II. It was sacked in 1010 in the political turmoil that engulfed al-Andalus in the so-called Ta'ifa Period (1009-1106). However, we get a glimpse of the richness of this lost city from these surviving architectural fragments that showcase virtuoso carving and the visionary agenda for the city. These remnants of Madinat al-Zahra stand as a testament to an era of strong Islamic influence that was the basis for the subsequent flowering of art in medieval Spain.



Fig. 1
Capital
Spain, Madinat al-
Zahra
972 – 73
Kuwait National
Museum

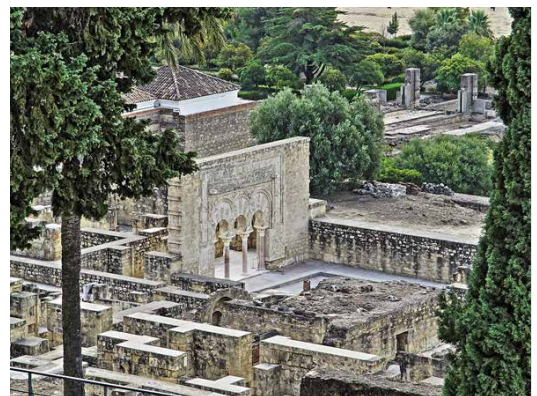


Fig. 2
Madinat al-Zahra site,
Spain
10th century

Marble capital carved with acanthus leaves



Marble capital carved with acanthus leaves



**Southern Italy, Apulia
c. 1150 - 1200**

28.5 x 53.5 x 12.5cm; white marble, some minor losses to the band at the top and some minor surface wear

Provenance:
Joseph Altounian, Mâcon (1890-1954)

A wedge-shaped capital with two acanthus leaves in profile that rise from a narrow stem, curving outwards and away from each other. This ornamentation is repeated on both of the wide faces of the capital. The two shorter faces are decorated by finely carved overhanging acanthus leaf, with sharp edges that curl upwards. The style of carving is characterised by symmetry, elegance and restraint

The unusual shape of this sculpture can be compared to a group of wedge-shaped capitals that originate in Southern Italy. The shape of the capital is indicative of its role in supporting a thick wall above it and springing from a narrow column below. This suggests that the capital may have been a part of an upper story arcade, where an appearance of lightness can be achieved by using such a composition without much structural tension. An example of such an arcade survives in Bitonto Cathedral, Apulia, where a similar style of acanthus leaf carving is also employed (fig. 1).

An early example of a wedge-shaped capital is preserved in the Cloisters Collection (MET 49.60.9), dated to the late 11th century and also thought to come from Apulia. Our capital, however, can be dated to the 12th century as it finds stylistic

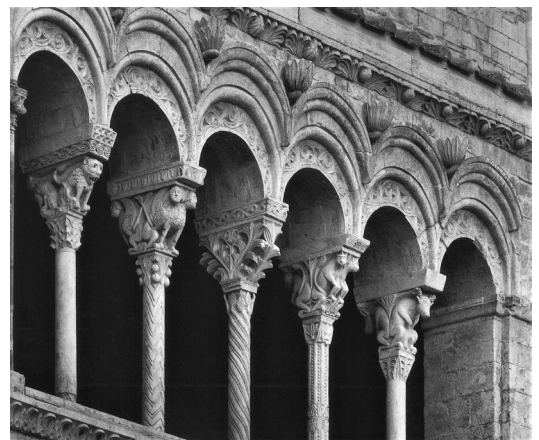


Fig. 1
Arcade detail
Italy, Apulia, Bitonto
Cathedral
c. 1200



Fig. 2
Capital
Cathedral of Troia
Italy, Troia
Early 12th century



Fig. 3
Detail of the Pulpit
Italy, Apulia, Troia
Cathedral
c. 1169

similarities with a more mature style of carving. The crisp refinement of the carving here testifies to the sophistication of Romanesque sculpture in Southern Italy after 1100. The overhanging acanthus leaf on the two narrow faces can be closely compared to the acanthus on the capitals in the nave of Troia Cathedral as well as the relief ornament on the cathedral's pulpit (fig. 2-3). Unlike our sculpture, the stone used in Troia is not white marble. However, Apulia is particularly recognised for its abundance of white marble, which is used profusely in important buildings such as Bari Cathedral or Bitonto Cathedral.

ROMANESQUE



Carved archivolt with classicising ornament



Carved archivolt with classicising ornament



Southern France

c. 1150

142 x 15 x 15 cm; limestone, divided into six sections, in excellent condition with some typical surface wear, survives as a half-arch

Provenance:

Private Collection, France

The curved shape of this fragment suggests that it originally formed part of an archivolt - an ornamental moulding in the shape of a round-headed arch above a portal. Its stylised decoration is formed of four bands of classicising ornament, including bead-and-reel on the innermost band, followed by a crisply carved anthemion ornament, egg-and-dart, and finally a scrolling tendril ornament. The lower portion of the arch is terminated by a chamfered block with the same stylised scrolling tendril. All four bands of this archivolt are carved to a very high standard, demonstrating that this architectural fragment once framed a portal in a lavish setting.

The accomplished and sophisticated style of carving on this archivolt can be compared to some of the most celebrated Romanesque buildings of Southern France. The apocalypse tympanum at St Trophime in Arles, dated to the middle of the 12th century, is framed by a series of similar classicising mouldings, which also include crisply carved egg-and-dart, bead-and-reel and acanthus ornament (fig. 1).

Romanesque portals, surrounded by a series of bands to form a round headed arch, have long been understood to have been influenced by Roman triumphal arches. The confidence of the carving and the precise understanding of the ornament in this example is indebted to those ancient triumphal arches that would have survived locally. The localisation of our archivolt to Southern France is also fitting because so many highly accomplished ancient buildings survived there. One example is the triumphal arch in Orange, which would have presented local sculptors with a model to emulate (fig. 2). Such ancient models provided a stimulus for copying but also for evolution and growth. These influences were then translated into different settings, allowing Romanesque sculptors and architects to learn from such monuments but also to create something completely new.



Fig. 1
Apocalypse portal
France, Arles, St.
Trophime
c. 1130 – 60



Fig. 2
Triumphal Arch
France, Orange

Fig. 3
Triumphal Arch detail
France, Orange



An impost block decorated with rinceaux



An impost block decorated with rinceaux



France, Burgundy
c. 1120 - 1140, altered to form a lantern

51 x 30 x 15 cm; limestone, general surface wear, one corner lost, the top gouged out with eight symmetrically spaced deep, circular holes

Provenance:
Private Collection, France

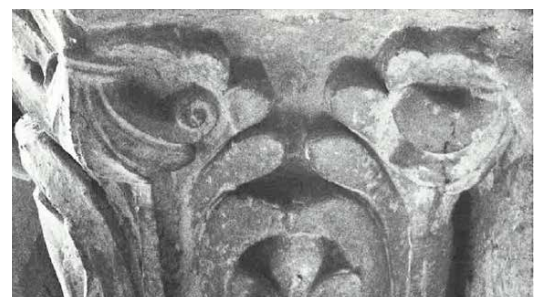
A beautifully carved impost capital with a decorative frieze of down-turned scrolling rinceaux motifs in rhythmical circular registers, punctuated by beaded ornament gathering the various strands together, and terminating in unfurling foliage leaves. The corner between each carved face and the spaces between each leaf are decorated with tightly closed vine fronds. A plain, uncarved frieze sits above the decoration, which covers three sides.

The motifs dominating the design of this impost block are heavily indebted to the stylistic accomplishments of the third abbey church at Cluny, built using the royal funds of Ferdinand I of León at the behest of Abbot Hugh prior to his death in 1109. In particular, the scrolling tendrils and frond 'nubs' that punctuate the designs of the abbey's surviving capitals and frieze masonry bear striking resemblance to the present carving (figs. 1-3). Working closely in the Cluniac tradition in the decades immediately following the Abbey's completion, the sculptor of our impost was likely engaged on one of the many abbeys and foundations established across Burgundy, and particularly in the Brionnais, following Abbot Hugh's precedent. See in this respect a capital at the abbey of Paray-le-Monial, thirty miles to the West of Cluny, carved most probably by the Cluniac masons around 1120 – 1130 (fig. 4).



Fig. 1
Architectural relief
from the third abbey
at Cluny
France, Burgundy
c. 1100
Cluny, Musée Ochier

Fig. 2
Pilaster capital
France, Burgundy
c. 1100
Cluny Abbey, interior,
great transept, eastern
face, second story





During an early alteration following the removal of the impost from its original context, the top was gouged out to form eight, symmetrically spaced circular holes. These would have been filled with tallow or oil and wicked for use as a lantern. A similar block survives from Rievaulx Abbey.



Fig. 3
Pier capital
France, Burgundy
c. 1100
Cluny Abbey, interior,
choir, freestanding pier

Fig. 4
Column capital
France, Burgundy
c. 1120 - 1130
Paray-le-Monial,
interior, ambulatory,
colonnade



The Saint-Remi Workshop

Impost with two harpies and a grotesque head



The Saint-Remi Workshop

Impost with two harpies and a grotesque head



This monumental block of limestone is carved on one side in deep relief with fantastical figures which can be closely associated with the sculpture from the Romanesque abbey of Saint-Remi in Reims. Its form suggests that it is an impost: a projecting block of stone which may have been on top of a pilaster, supporting a springing arch.

The impost is decorated with a large head with flame-like hair and pointed ears in the centre. The flaming head opens its mouth as two harpies appear to fly out of it – the tips of their tails still stuck inside. The harpies have their wings stretched behind them, their hoofs in front of them and they turn their heads to look back at the flaming head. This composition complements a symmetry that was favoured in Romanesque sculpture. The faces of all three creatures are carved with bulging almond shaped eyes, deep wrinkles and distinctively thick moustaches which start just above the nostrils. The diagonal chisel marks on the sides, which would not have been visible, are characteristic of carving from the 12th century. The extended depth of the stone behind the carved moulding is evidence that this impost once carried a heavy load. Sometime in its post-medieval history, the stone was removed from its original setting and turned into a basin by hollowing the top of the impost block and drilling a hole for drainage.

The fine carving of this piece survives in a very good condition and its style closely resembles sculptures from the second phase of the basilica of Saint-Remi in Reims, dated to c. 1140. It is the carving of the flame-like hair, the modelling around the eyes and the moustache that starts above the nostrils that is analogous to those same features on the

France, Reims, Basilica of Saint-Remi?
c. 1140

17 x 85 x 55cm; limestone, surface slightly abraded caused by weathering, impost later transformed into a basin, diagonal chisel marks visible on the undecorated sides of the block.

Provenance:

By repute Joseph Altounian Collection

Literature:

Cahn, Walter. Review: Saint-Remi de Reims: l'oeuvre de Pierre de Celle et sa place dans l'architecture gothique by Anne Prache. In *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* (1980) 39 (1): 68.

Prache, Anne. Saint-Remi de Reims: l'oeuvre de Pierre de Celle et sa place dans l'architecture gothique. Geneva, 1978.

surviving capitals and corbels of Saint-Remi in Reims (figs 1 – 3). The small heads on the corners of the capital from the Philadelphia Museum of Art, with their bulging eyes, flame-like hair and curly moustaches, find particular parallels with our sculpture (fig. 1). Additionally, the shape of the moulding upon which the two corbels heads now in the Musée de St. Rémi are positioned is the same as the moulding profile of our piece (fig. 2).



Fig. 1
Capital from the
Cloister of the
Monastery of Saint-
Rémi
France, Reims
c. 1140
Philadelphia Museum
of Art 1945-25-39

Some of the most highly accomplished sculpture of Romanesque and Gothic France survives in Reims because of its status as the site where King Clovis was baptised on Christmas Day in 508 by Bishop Remigius and where the later kings of France were crowned. According to tradition, the oil used in the baptism of King Clovis came from a sacred phial that was brought down from heaven by a dove and this phial is said to have been kept in the basilica of Saint-Remi, which was built on the site where Remigius was buried. The basilica of Saint-Remi went through several phases of rebuilding, starting in the 11th century and ending with the rebuilding of the choir in c.1180. The monsters, harpies, scaly figures and biblical scenes that survive in the Musée de Saint-Remi and the Philadelphia Museum of Art come from the second phase of rebuilding, which occurred in c. 1140 under



Fig. 2
Corbel head (above)
Musée St Rémi, Reims
c. 1140
(Detail of corbel head from St Rémi (above) and
the head on our impost (below))







Fig. 3
Capital from Saint-Denis, Paris
c. 1140
Musée de Cluny 18925a

Abbot Odo, a contemporary of Abbot Suger of Saint-Denis. It is this phase that our sculpture belongs to. The relationship between the Saint-Remi sculptures and those that survive in and around Paris, such as the capitals from the cloister of Saint-Denis, should not escape mention because their dating, the style of their carving and their iconography are extremely similar (fig. 3). The possibility that these sites shared the same masons thus cannot be excluded.

The iconography of our piece, depicting a grotesque head with creatures emerging from its open mouth, is a common theme in Romanesque churches, and examples survive in the basilica of Saint-Remi and in Saint-Denis (fig. 1, 3 - 4). In these examples, the creatures depicted were a visual representation of the devil – resembling scenes of the mouth of hell in reverse. Such visual descriptions of hell were common in the margins of medieval churches. To the distress of reformers, such as Bernard of Clairvaux, such sculptures were not only disturbing but also highly entertaining. As Bernard wrote in his *Apologia* in 1125: ‘in cloisters, where the brothers are reading, what is the point of this ridiculous monstrosity, this shapely misshapenness, this misshapen shapeliness? In one place you see many bodies under a single head, in another several heads on a single body. In short, so many and so marvelous are the various shapes surrounding us that it is more pleasant to read the marble than the books!’ Sculptures such as these would have enlivened the stone, yet they themselves were trapped within it – forever supporting the weight of the building on their heads and reminding the viewer of their fate, should their mind wander further.

The style of this magnificent impost suggests that it likely originated in the basilica of Saint-Remi or that it may have at the least been carved by the same workshop.



Fig. 4
Capital from St Remi
c. 1140
France, Reims

Monumental capital with a snake-like head



Monumental capital with a snake-like head



France, Southern Burgundy
c. 1100

45 x 52 x 37; limestone, some general surface wear and minor breaks at the base of the capital

Provenance:

Collection of Jacques Pouillon (1935-2011), French sculptor and the winner of the grand prix de Rome for sculpture in 1959 at the age of 24.

This monumental capital consists of a ribbon with beaded ornament that wraps around the semi-cylindrical core. The ribbon is arranged on the capital in a random fashion, suggesting movement and liveliness, and it is carved to look as if held in place by a five-stranded rope that wraps around it in four places. Emerging from beneath one part of the ribbon is a small snake-like head, which has deeply carved bulging eyes and an open mouth that reveals a tongue. The base of the capital consists of a simple roll moulding. The capital is carved only on two sides, suggesting that it would have originally been in a corner, where it may have supported a wooden roof or an arch.

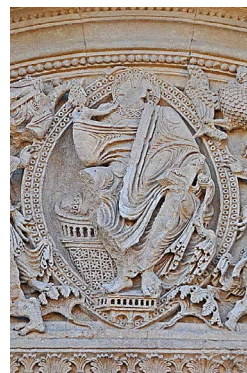


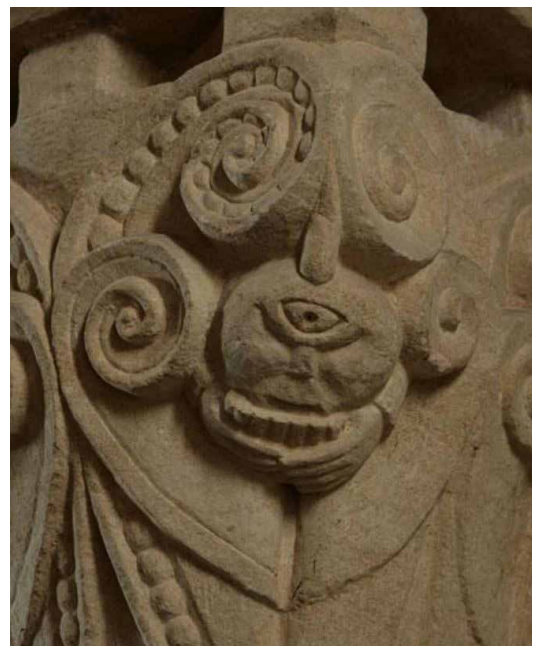
Fig. 1
West Portal of Saint-Fortunat and detail of capital in narthex
France, Burgundy, Charlieu
c. 1150

Stylistically, this capital is a fine example of Romanesque sculpture from Southern Burgundy, an area that enjoyed great stability in the 11th century. The stability created an ideal environment for a monastic boom, which resulted in an architectural and sculptural flowering. A great number of Romanesque buildings still survive in the region, standing testament to Burgundy's status as one of the most important centres of Romanesque architecture in France, and to the density of Romanesque buildings that would have existed here.

The massive size of the capital as well as the beaded ornament find parallels in sculpture from Charlieu and Iguerande (fig. 1 – 2). In both of these examples, the carved ornament is defined by clarity and precision. The portal sculpture in Charlieu is singled out on account of the beaded ornament that forms the mandola surrounding Christ, which is the same as that on our capital. The iconography of our piece is also particularly reminiscent of the capitals at the church of St André in Iguerande, where the small head of a cyclops playing the pan pipes hides beneath scrolling volutes. (fig. 2). Such monstrous iconographies are a testament to the blurred lines between the sacred and the profane in medieval art, emphasising the strange creatures that lurked in the margins of medieval buildings.



Fig. 2
Capital in the church of
St-André
France, Southern
Burgundy, Iguerande
c. 1100



Double capital with lattice work



Double capital with lattice work



Southern France
c. 1100

45 x 52 x 37; limestone, some general surface wear and minor breaks at the base of the capital

Provenance:

Collection of Jacques Pouillon (1935-2011), French sculptor and the winner of the grand prix de Rome for sculpture in 1959 at the age of 24

This double capital is carved with an intricate latticework, composed of two-part, flat bands that interlace with one another. The interlace is carved in low relief, terminating at the top in loops. The two capitals that are joined closely together to form this sculpture are carved with no space between them. The capital is wider at the top and tapers down, terminating at the abacus, which would have surmounted two slender columns. This capital almost certainly originated in a cloister setting, where it would have been an integral part of the arcade that separated the garden from the cloister walk. Capitals decorated with such patterns were often interspersed with figurative capitals within an iconographic series. This form of capital is a type commonly found in South-western France, where many Romanesque cloisters still survive. Such intricate interlace ornament, however, traces its history back to the early Middle Ages, when interlace, braiding and knotting was commonly used in manuscripts, on jewellery and on stone elements. Comparable examples from southern France include the double capitals with interlace carving in the cloister of Saint-



Fig. 1
Cloister
France, Saint Bertrand
de Comminges
12th century



Fig. 2
Cloister double capital
France, Saint Bertrand
de Comminges
12th century
(scan from Ganter,
Romanesque Art in
France)

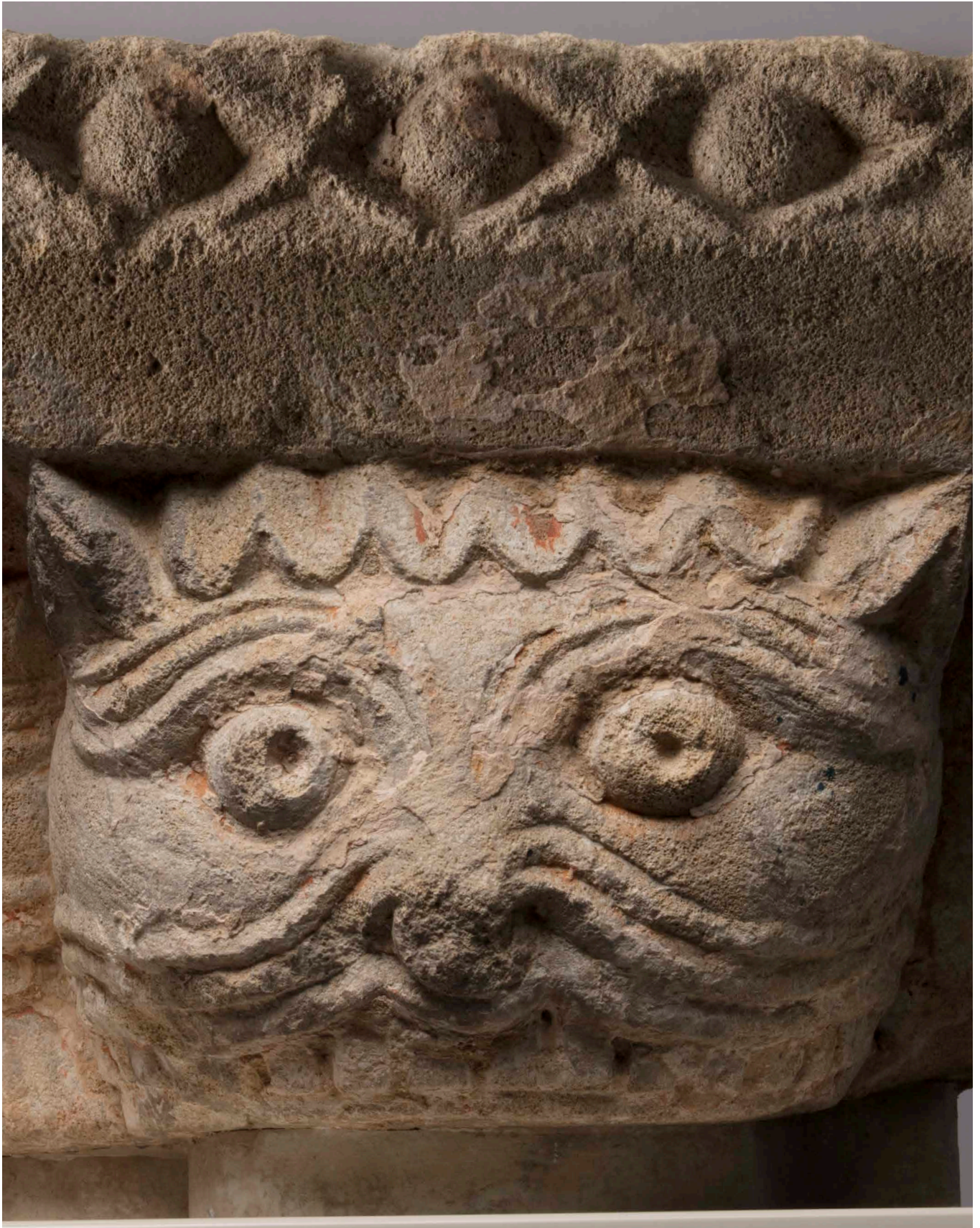
Bertrand de Comminges, dated to the last quarter of the twelfth century (fig. 1 – 2), and another from the cloister of the Cathedral of Saint-Lizier, south-western France, of the same date (Marcel Aubert, *La sculpture romane*, Paris, 1937, pl. VIII and XL respectively). An analogous interlace double capital from the Collegiate Church of Saint-Gaudens also survives in the Glencairn Museum (fig. 3). Although this capital is carved with more rounded interlace bands, its proportions and more conjoined composition finds parallels with our example.



Fig. 3
Double capital
France, Collegiate
Church of Saint-
Gaudens
c. 1150 – 1175
Glencairn Museum of
Art 09.SP.240

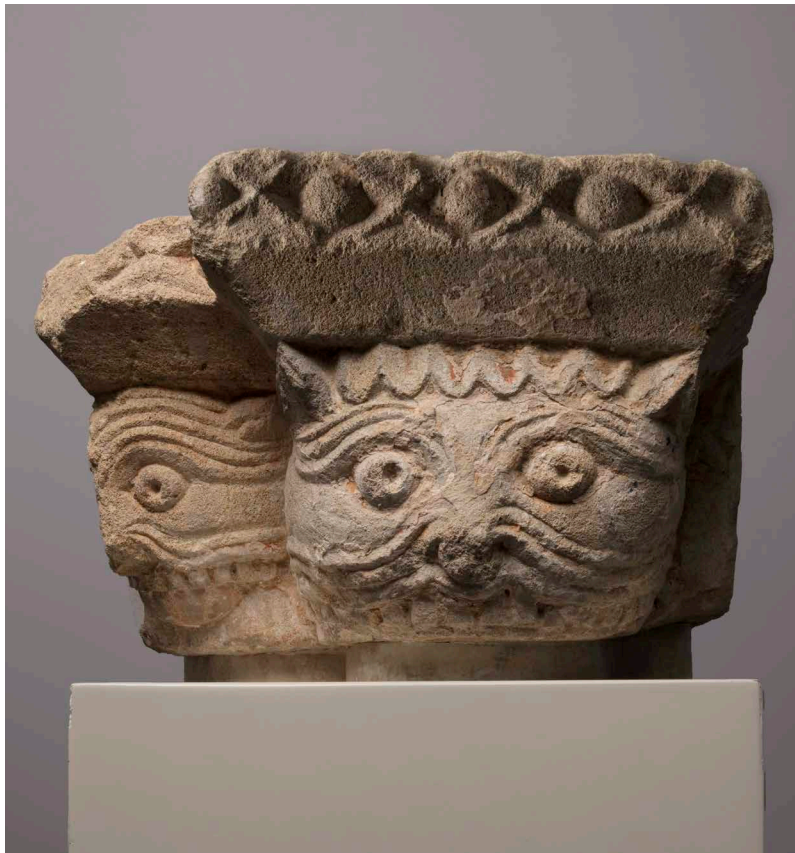
The Old Sarum Workshop

A column swallowing capital



The Old Sarum Workshop

A column swallowing capital



This rare capital with two heads is carved to appear as if the heads are swallowing the columns that would have been beneath it. The capital is composed of a large head facing forward and a smaller head, set at a forty-five-degree angle. Both heads have small, cat-like ears and bulbose oval eyes with drilled pupils. The eyes are topped by a series of incised lines that curve around the top and stretch out towards the back of the heads. A similar set of lines repeat under the eyes, forming a long moustache and revealing a set of teeth that would have wrapped around the top of the columns. The heads are surmounted by a heavy impost, decorated with a double chevron variation with round buttons. The size of the capital and its state of preservation suggests that this was probably on the interior of a church, possible near the crossing where shafts of varying sizes would have formed a large supporting pier or at a doorway in the cloister.

Stylistically, the capital is analogous to the sculptures that survive from Old Sarum and to those sculptures that are thought to be by the same workshop. Examples include the

England, Wiltshire

c. 1130 - 50

100 x 40 x 40 cm; limestone, a break on the left corner above the smaller head; surface wear typical of a stone sculpture of this age, traces of surviving polychromy

Provenance:

Professor Charles Reginald Dodwell, Pilkington Professor of History of Art and Director of Whitworth Gallery, Manchester University 1966-89; and thence by descent

Literature:

Brodie, Allan and David Algar. 'Architectural and Sculpted Stonework.' In *Salisbury and South Wiltshire Museum: Medieval Catalogue*. Salisbury, 2012.

McNeill, John. *Old Sarum*. English Heritage Guidebooks, 2006.



Fig. 1

Head of a dog
St Mary, Codford, St
Mary, Wiltshire
Mid 12th century

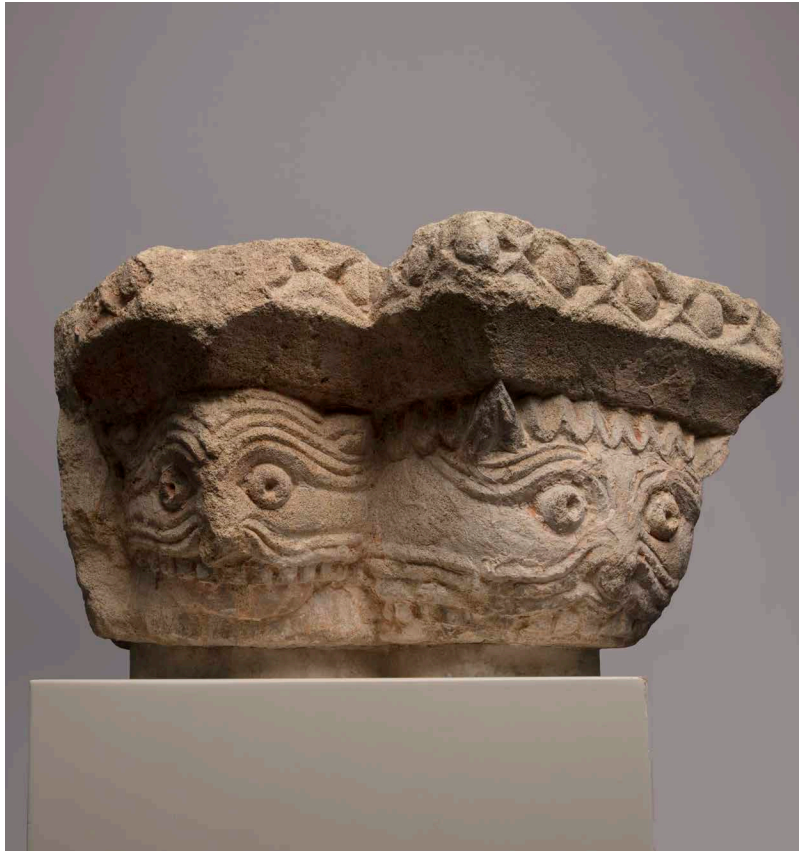


Fig. 2
Corbel of a bearded
creature
England, Old Sarum
c. 1130

sculptures excavated from Old Sarum and those at St Mary in Codford, where a carved head of a creature, called a dog, survives with similarly carved eyes and whiskers (fig. 1 - 3). The bulbous oval eyes with drilled pupils, the linear whiskers and eyebrows, the beaded ornament decorating the stones from Old Sarum also survive on our sculpture (fig. 2 - 3). Further stylistic comparisons can be found with numerous churches in and around Wiltshire, such as the sculpture at Avington, Great Shefford, and Elkstone (fig. 5 - 6).



Fig. 3
Old Sarum Stones



Fig. 4
Old Sarum Stones

Some of the examples that survive locally also share a common iconography with this piece. The theme of the column swallower is not known in classical art but it appears in the margins of early medieval manuscripts, such as the Book of Kells, where satanic heads swallow (or spew out) arches, borders or foliage. By the early 12th century, column swallowers become a part of the repertoire of medieval marginalia, which blurs the lines between the sacred and the profane. In architecture, the column-swallower is extremely popular in France, with regions such as Aquitaine especially densely populated. In England, however, the column swallower is also favoured and can be found throughout the south. Notable examples exist in Barfreton. Elkstone and South Wootton (fig. 5 – 6).



Fig. 5
Column swallower
St Mary, Great
Shefford, Berkshire
12th century



Fig. 6
Font with column
swallowers
England, Wootton
12th century



Capital with scrollwork and a bearded face



Capital with scrollwork and a bearded face



England, East Yorkshire
Early 12th century

100 x 40 x 40 cm; l; limestone, a break on the corner above the head; surface wear typical of a stone sculpture of this age

Provenance:

Professor Charles Reginald Dodwell, Pilkington Professor of History of Art and Director of Whitworth Gallery, Manchester University 1966-89; and thence by descent

This striking capital is decorated by a head of a bearded man, positioned on an angle and flanked by scrollwork. The two sculpted sides have crudely carved scrollwork, which is uneven in size. The left side has two smaller scrolls while the right side has one large scroll – all of these carved boldly, giving the stone a dough-like quality. Apart from a delicate incised line, there is no decoration above this sculpted band. The angle of the decoration and the robustness of the capital suggests that it would have been seen from a considerable distance and that it supported something substantial. Based on local tradition, sculpted capitals of this size can be expected to decorated the piers that support the chancel arch in Romanesque English churches.

Stylistically, this capital finds analogies with Romanesque sculpture in Yorkshire. The face with its bulging eyes, drilled pupils and long stylised beard is especially reminiscent of sculpture in and around East Riding. A corbel of a ram's head, excavated in Beverley, is one comparable example (fig. 1). The pale oolitic limestone used here as well as the small, outlined eyes with drilled pupils and incised decoration

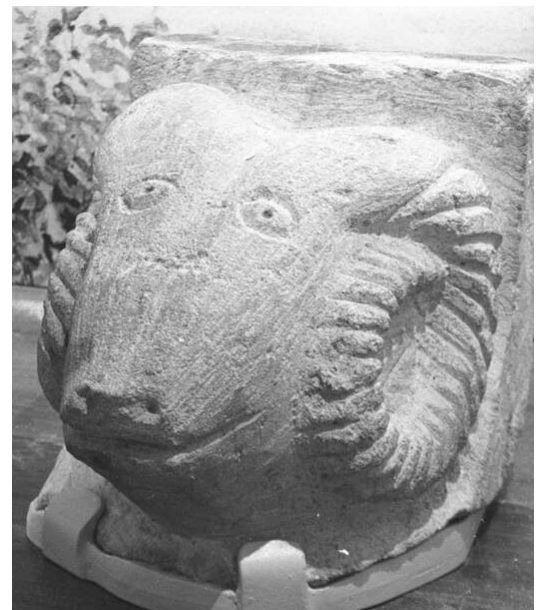


Fig. 1

Corbel of a Ram's Head
England, excavated
at 33-35 Eastgate,
Beverley
England, Yorkshire,
East Riding Museum
c. 1150

share characteristics with our capital. The scrollwork, though unusually flaccid, is typical of 12th century sculpture from this region. Although well-known examples of such scrollwork, such as those at Selby Abbey or Ely Cathedral, are more sophisticated, our capital illustrates the way that sculptors in rural areas, such as parish churches, copied these models. An analogous example can be found in scallop capitals supporting the chancel arch of St Hilda's in Sherburn (fig. 2). Although more sophisticated, the scrollwork here is also made up of thick tubes that have a soft quality.



Fig. 2
Chancel Arch Capital
England, Yorkshire,
East Riding, Sherburn,
St Hilda
Early 12th century

Free-standing column on a base supporting a capital carved with shields and feline beasts



Free-standing column on a base supporting a capital carved with shields and feline beasts



France, Languedoc, Toulouse
Late 12th century

Capital: 64.5x28.5x21.5cm; 163 x 28.5 x 21.5 cm, limestone, surface slightly abraded, the column a modern replacement

Provenance:

Joseph Altounian (1890 – 1954), Mâcon (c.1908-1947)

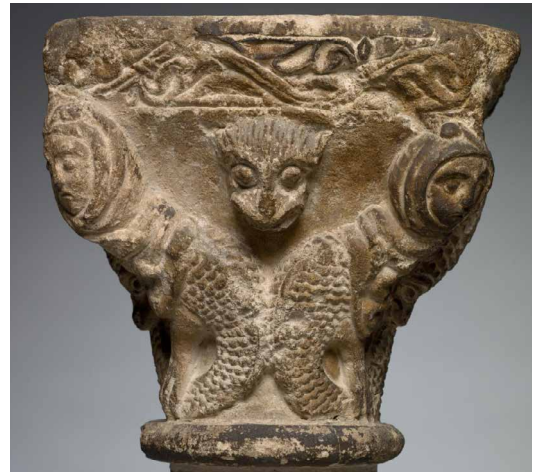


Fig. 1
Capital with Addorsed
Harpies
Southwest France,
Languedoc, Toulouse
(?)
1200s
Cleveland Museum of
Art 1916.1983

This limestone capital is carved in the round with beasts on each corner. The sheep-like animals' heads flank undecorated shields on the two narrower sides, suggesting that this capital was almost certainly once polychromed in order to identify the shields. On the wider sides of the capital, the animals are depicted facing away from each other, while another head of a beast is carved above their backs. The abacus, which is an integral part of the capital, is decorated by a running scroll with stylised foliage. The base of column is also decorated with beasts on the front, the left and the right-hand sides, with a roll moulding linking the base to the column.

The size of this capital and the fact it is carved on all sides suggests that it probably originally occupied the cloister arcade in a monastic setting. The overall composition of our capital is related to a group that are thought to have been made in Toulouse, a major centre of sculpture production in the 12th century. Two analogous examples survive in the Cleveland Museum of Art (fig. 1 – 2). Although the quality among these examples varies, they are all based on the same model. Such decorated cloisters were common in Southern France, home to many famous pilgrimage routes. The pilgrimages brought enormous wealth to the communities here because monasteries were often used as pilgrims' lodges. By the end of the 12th century, many monasteries and churches here acquired enough wealth to transform and embellish their buildings. And it is examples such as this capital that give us a glimpse into these transformations.

The column base is probably from a similar context though stylistically is probably not from the same site as our capital. The two were likely put together by the collector and dealer Joseph Altounian.

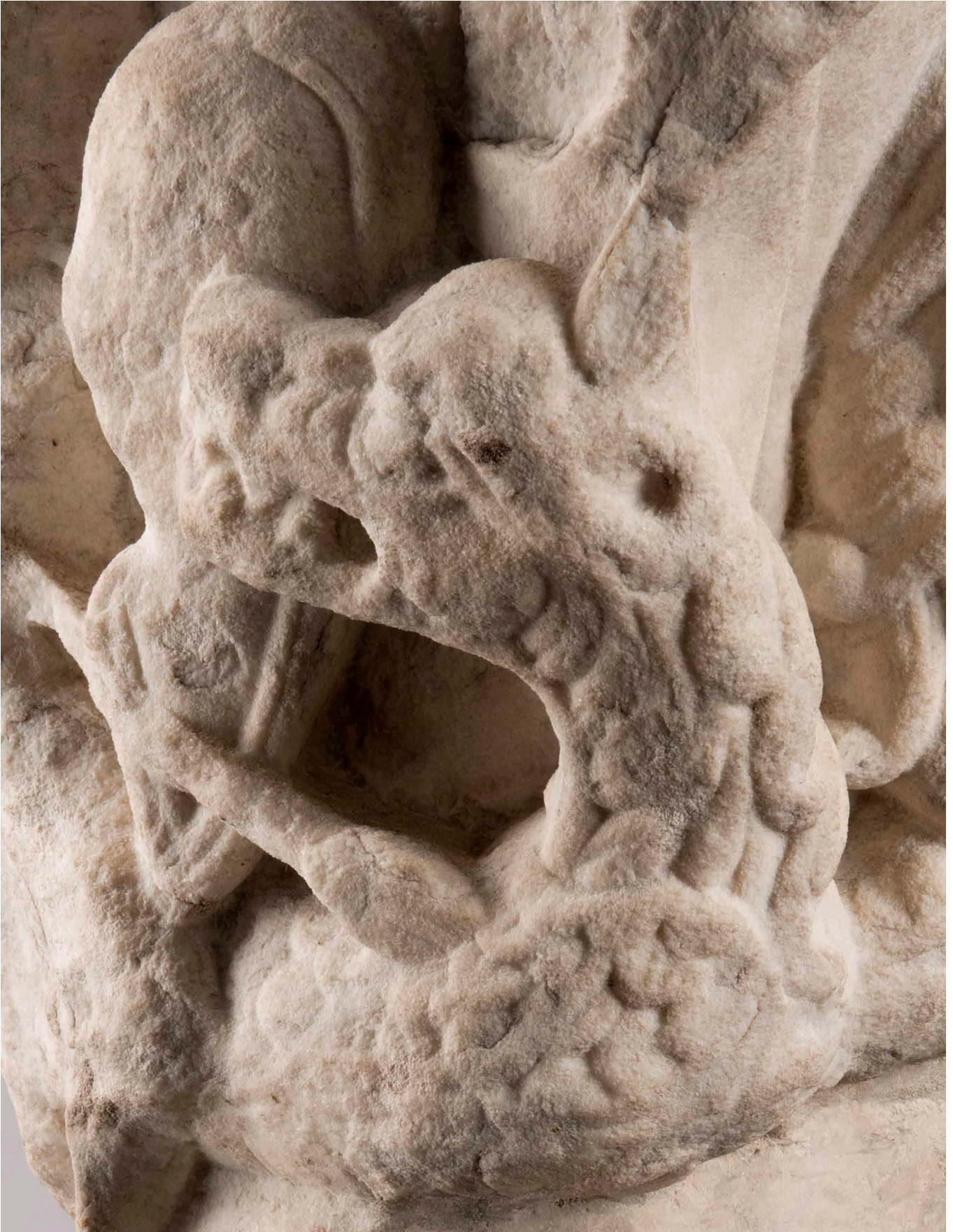


Fig. 2
Capital with Addorsed
Quadrupeds
Southwest France,
Languedoc, Toulouse
(?)
late 1100s-early 1200s
Cleveland Museum of
Art 1916.1981





Soldier-saints and a dragon on a free-standing column



Soldier-saints and a dragon on a free-standing column



France, Pyrenees, Roussillon
c. 1150 - 1200

Capital: 64.5 x 28.5 x 21.5cm, 159.5 x 25.5 x 21.5cm, capital: white marble, surface abraded as a result of weathering, causing loss of articulation on the face of the stone, the column is a modern replacement

Provenance:
Joseph Altounian, Mâcon (1905-1947)



This capital is carved on two sides with narrative scenes of soldiers fighting dragons and a large bearded head on the third. The fourth side has no decoration which suggests this was an engaged capital, from a series of double columns decorating a cloister. The surface of the capital is weathered but the beauty and vigour of the carving survives, depicting a soldier with lance and shield spearing a fearsome scaled dragon. The other side of the capital depicts another figure wrestling with the jaws of dragon.



Fig. 1
Capitals
Cloister of Elne
Cathedral
France, Roussillon
12th century

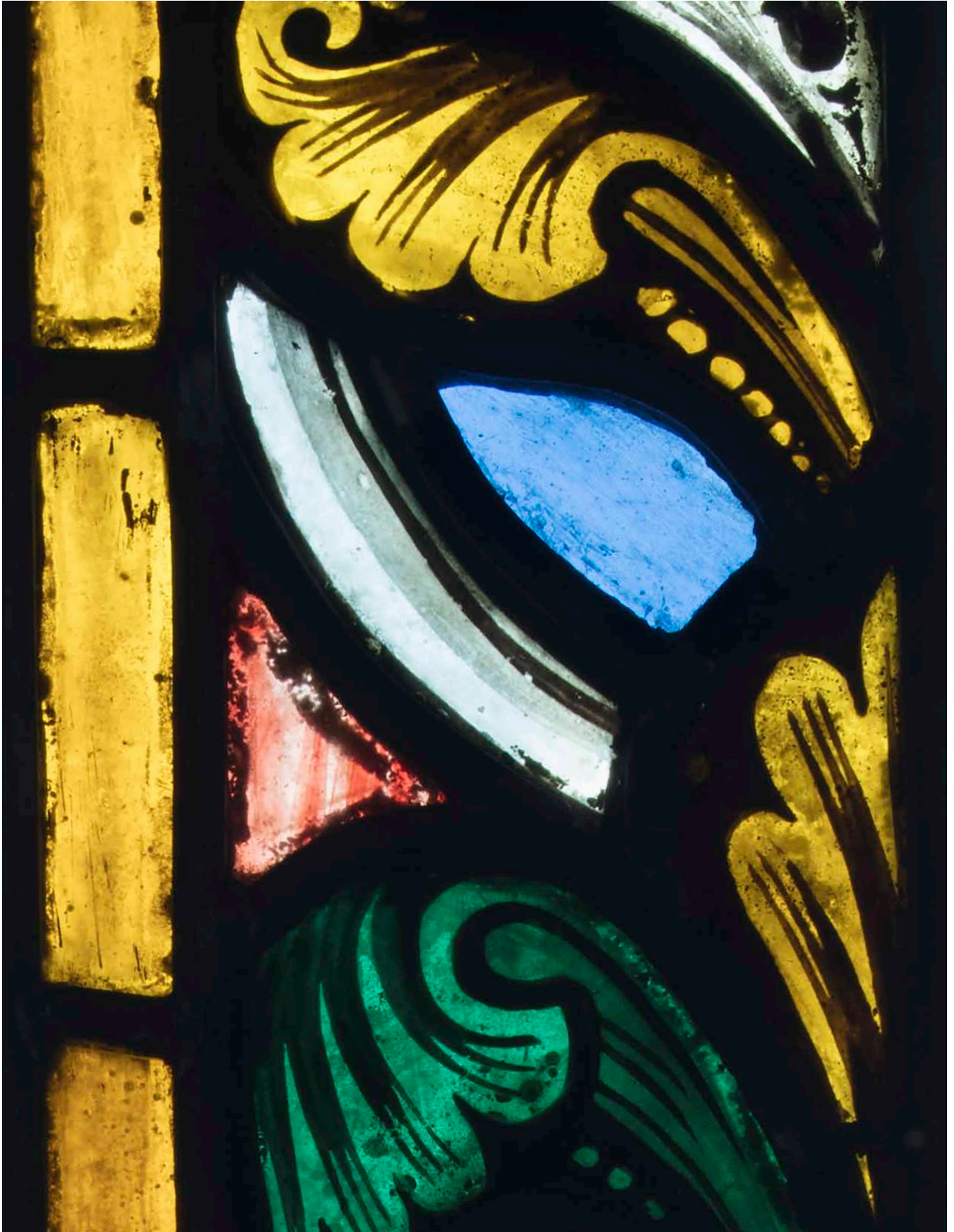


The capital is supported by a narrow column and a carved base with a scalloped core and a thick roll moulding at the necking. This base is a medieval work but was not originally designed with the capital and was almost certainly joined together by the collector and dealer, Joseph Altounian.

The material used and the vigorous style of the carving suggest that this capital was produced in the Pyrenees. It bears particular resemblance to the cloister capitals of Elne Cathedral in Roussillon, where similar rounded forms perform scenes around the core of the capital. The large heads of the figures and the worn condition of the stone also reflects links with our sculpture. This capital is also a testament to the incredible variety of capital types in Romanesque cloisters, which were able to tell different stories as the viewer moved around them.



A long running border with switchback leaf sprays



A long running border with switchback leaf sprays



This fabulous slender border panel is decorated with white arches separating red and blue compartments overlaid with unfurling leaf sprays in three colours, and with a pale yellow fillet running along the length of one of its longest edges. The design's leaf sprays do not only alternate in colour – between purple, green, and yellow – but also in direction, with one leaf-form curling under itself and those adjacent to it above and below curling upwards and switch-backing on themselves. It is a composition full of bravado, and astonishingly, it was designed with an otherwise apparently unrecorded ornamental scheme that we have not been able to find represented by any other surviving window fragments from this date, but its aesthetic language means that it is almost certainly attributable to the glazing program of either the royal abbey of Saint-Yved in Braine (mausoleum of the Counts of Dreux), the Cathedral of Soissons, or the abbey of Saint-Remi in Reims, both of the latter two sites having been reglazed in the nineteenth century using glass salvaged from Saint-Yved's demolished windows.



**France, Aisne, almost certainly from the royal abbey church of Saint-Yved, Braine
c. 1190-1200**

58.1 x 10 cm; pot-metal glass with vitreous paint. The central long purple leaf spray, and the green leaf spray abutting the short edge, are both modern replacements.

Provenance

Almost certainly made either for the abbey church of Saint-Yved, Braine (and perhaps reconstituted later to reglaze wither Saint-Remi, Reims or the Cathedral of Soissons); Removed no doubt as part of the restoration of the former in the 19th century; Private collection, UK, by repute salvaged from an old stained-glass restorer's workshop stock

Fig. 1a

Border section from a larger lancet window
France, Reims, Abbey of Saint-Remi, or Braine, abbey church of Saint-Yved
c. 1190-1200
71.7 x 13.9 cm; pot-metal glass with vitreous paint
Bryn Athyn, Glencairn Museum, Inv. 03.SG.216



Close parallels to its decorative formula can be found on several other border sections localized to Saint-Yved and now kept in the Glencairn Museum, Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania, for which see M. Caviness and J. Hayward, *Stained Glass before 1700 in American Collections: Mid-Atlantic and Southeastern Seaboard States*, Washington, National Gallery, 1987, p. 114. In particular is a design of bouncing arches centred with leaf sprays, which incorporates such closely modelled leaf motifs (even incorporating the same split rachis in the lobes of each leaf) believed by most modern scholars to have been made in around 1190 for Saint-Yved, before being reused at Saint-Remi (fig. 1a-b). Only two fragments of that design, which was clearly produced in the same workshop as ours around the same date, survive in situ at Saint-Remi (to the right of the choir crossing), but they help affirm the provenance of the present panel accordingly.

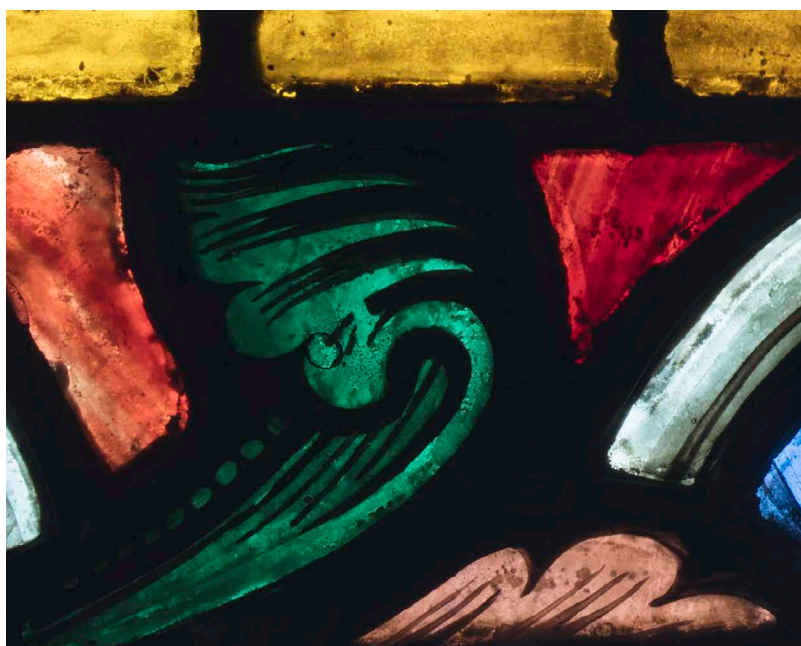
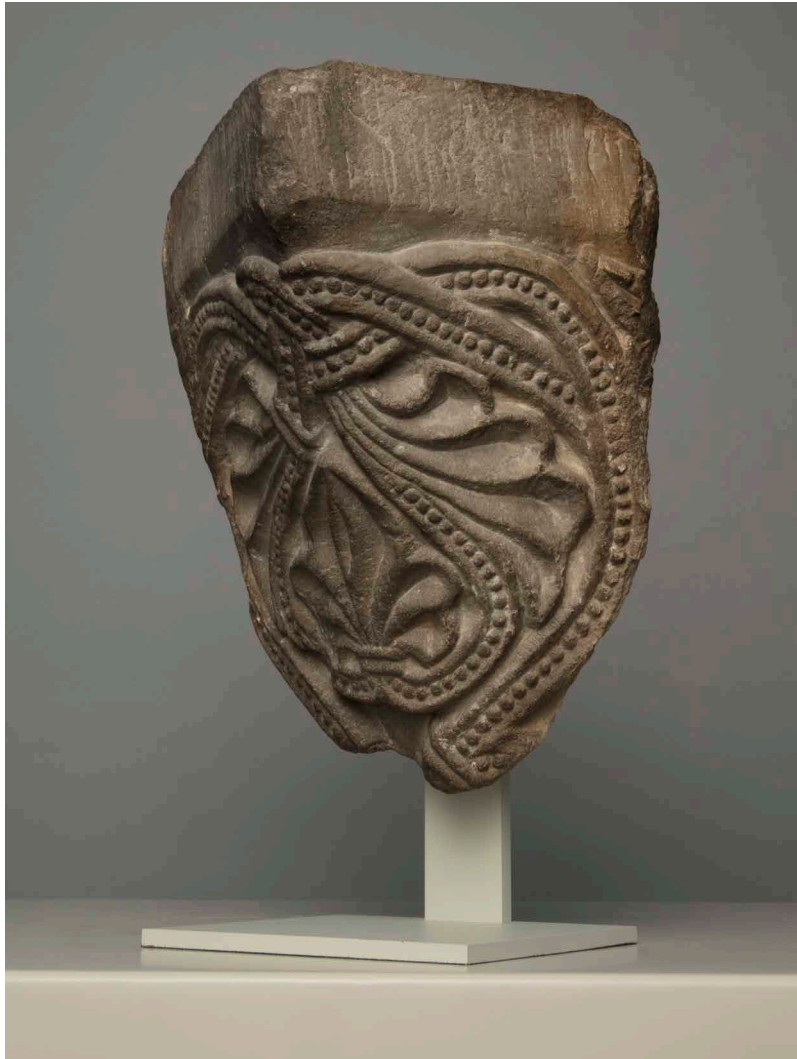


Fig. 1b
Comparison of the
Glencairn border
section (right) with
ours

Fragment of a foliated Romanesque capital



Fragment of a foliated Romanesque capital



Germany, Bavaria, Schwarzach (?)
c. 1200

20 x 19 x 13 cm; dark brown sandstone

Provenance

Private collection, France

A fragment of a large late-Romanesque column capital with beautifully elaborate carving of intertwined vines terminating in palmettes encircling a fleur-de-lis motif below a plain faceted entablature.

The closest stylistic referents for this fragment can be found in the area of Schwarzach in northern Bavaria. Like the present piece, surviving Romanesque sculptures from this region are carved from a red-tinged sandstone and incorporate studded vine tendrils with curling palm fronds and multi-leaved fleur-de-lis motifs (see Figs. 1-3). Many of these fragments, which now reside in the Badisches Landesmuseum, Karlsruhe, are known to have been salvaged from the Benedictine Abbey of Schwarzach, a Carolingian site established in the town as a nunnery at some date before 788. The building was almost



Fig. 1

Fragment of a
Romanesque capital
Germany, Schwarzach,
Benedictine Abbey
c. 1200 - 1220
Badisches
Landesmuseum,
Karlsruhe, Inv. No. C
7461

entirely demolished between 1821 and 1827, following the dissolution of the abbey and its severe damage during a storm, and subsequent fire, in 1810. Of the surviving fragments, some take the same unusual form of the present piece, describing the corner of an otherwise lost capital (Fig. 1 especially), while smaller examples, including intact capitals, incorporate motifs of a notably similar size. Nevertheless, the use of circular rather than square studs within the vines indicates that our fragment may well predate these examples, and that it is from another related building program.

For a full study of the Schwarzach fragments, see E. Zimmerman, *Badisches Landesmuseum Karlsruhe; Die Mittelalterlichen Bildwerke*, 1985, pp. 51 – 55.



Fig. 2
Large Romanesque capital
Germany, Schwarzach,
Benedictine Abbey
c. 1200 - 1220
Badisches
Landesmuseum,
Karlsruhe, Inv. No. C
7459



Fig. 3
Small Romanesque
double capital
Germany, Schwarzach,
Benedictine Abbey
c. 1220
Badisches
Landesmuseum,
Karlsruhe, Inv. No. V
19 594

A border panel



A border panel



France, Champagne?

c. 1190-1200

9 x 35.5 cm; clear, red, green and blue pot-metal glass with silver stained and vitreous paint. The central blue field and the upper righthand-most red fillet are modern stop-gaps.

Provenance

Private collection, UK, acquired from the stock of an old stained-glass restorer's studio

This short border section, showing a single white glass arch framing flower sprays of blue, green and yellow, was made as part of a longer running border that would originally have framed and enclosed a vast narrative window in a Gothic church or cathedral in north-central France. The comb-like outlines delineating the central rachis of each of our panel's coloured leaf sprays was a feature common to glass produced right at the end of the twelfth century. Close parallels to its decorative formulae include a series of late twelfth-century border sections localized to Braine (and reused at Soissons when Braine was demolished in the nineteenth century), and now kept in the Glencairn Museum, Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania, for which see M. Caviness and J. Hayward, *Stained Glass before 1700 in American Collections: Mid-Atlantic and South-eastern Seaboard States*, Washington, National Gallery, 1987, p. 114.

Two capitals with abstract ornament



Two capitals with abstract ornament



France, Saône-et-Loire
c. 1130

31.5 x 28 x 48cm and 30.5 x 32 x 40.5cm,
limestone, both in excellent condition.

Provenance:

Abbey of Grelonges (destroyed 13th century) (by
repute);

Joseph Altounian, Mâcon (1890-1954)



Fig. 1

Impost from a Sacristy
France, Vezelay
12th century
Lapidarium of Vezelay



These two boldly carved capitals originate from the Saône-et-Loire, home to the Cluny Abbey, one of the most emulated buildings of the Middle Ages. Both capitals exhibit a distinctive use of small drilled holes as ornament on the abacus as well as on other elements. The first capital is

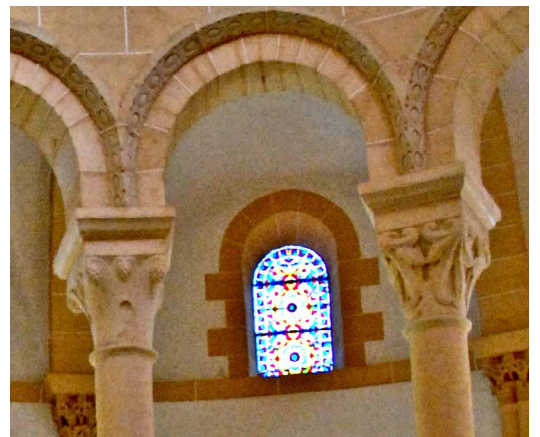


Fig. 2

Capitals in the choir of
Paray-le-Monial
France, Saône-et-Loire
c. 1130

decorated by large fleur-de-lis, which are positioned upside down, cradling the core. Smaller fleur-de-lis with small drilled holes grow out of the base. The second capital is ornamented by flatly carved buds that are filled with berries that take the abstracted form of small squares. Both capitals are carved on three sides, still connected to the large blocks stone that would have originally projected far into the wall, a reminder of their important structural function.



Fig. 3
Capitals in the choir of
Paray-le-Monial
France, Saône-et-Loire
c. 1130



These two capitals reputedly originate from the Abbey of Grelonges, built in the 12th century. Although the complex was destroyed when the island of Grelonges on the Saône was flooded in the 13th century, an example from the Abbey that bears close similarities to these two is preserved in the Musée de Chalon-sur-Saône. What is more, the churches of Saône-et-Loire still contain carvings which bear close relation to the present capitals and to the Abbey of Cluny, and are made of the same yellow limestone commonly found in the region.

Particularly close similarities can be seen in a carved impost now in the Vezelay Lapidarium, which features similarly carved abstract buds and drilled ornamentation (fig. 1). Examples which still survive in situ can be found in the choir of Paray-le-Monial, which features several capitals that exhibit the same type of abstract yet bold carving (figs. 2 – 4).

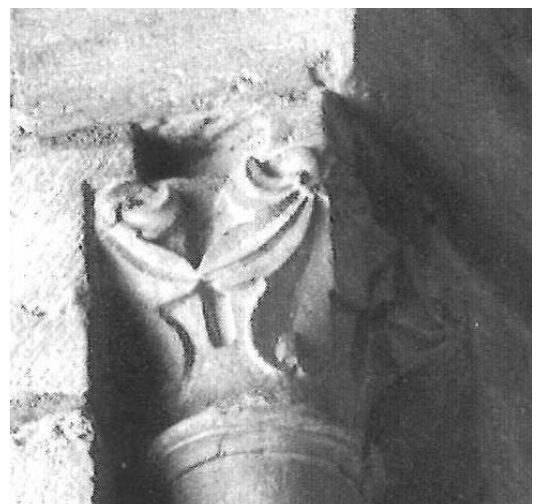


Fig. 4
Capitals in the choir of
Paray-le-Monial
France, Saône-et-Loire
c. 1130

A carved ambo section with ornate rosettes



A carved ambo section with ornate rosettes



Italy, Abruzzo
c. 1200

83.5 x 46 x 18 cm; white marble, excellent condition, with original lead-sealed iron fixings to the reverse.

Provenance:

Collection of the Ritter de Zahony family, Villa di Quarto, Florence



Fig. 1

Pulpit with acanthus reliefs

Late 12th century

Abruzzo, abbey of San Clemente, Castiglione a Casauria

A deeply carved section of marble relief compartmented into two sections by chamfered borders decorated with spraying acanthus mouldings, a single opening flower motif carved at the centre of each section. While the smaller circular flowerhead is indebted to the ornamental language of the migration-era in north and north-central Italy, the larger of the two flowers is strongly gothic in character, meaning that we can date the relief close to the year 1200, a transitional moment on the cusp of the high gothic movement. The relief's fully finished reverse face indicates that it was displayed as part of a larger screen or structure that could be accessed from both



sides, but which was primarily viewed from a single direction. This, along with the relief's format, size, and metal fixing points, means that it was most likely carved as part of a pulpit or ambo. A markedly similar compositional formula, format, and stylistic treatment can be found on the well-preserved pulpit at the abbey of San Clemente, Castiglione a Casauria, in Italy's Abruzzo region, which was carved in the late 12th century (fig. 1). That our relief was informed by the San Clemente pulpit, or even made by the same group of carvers, is a high possibility.



Fig. 2
Detail of the pulpit
screen at the abbey
of San Clemente,
Castiglione a Casauria,
Abruzzo

Workshop of the Sessa Aurunca pulpit
A frieze section with sprouting foliage



Workshop of the Sessa Aurunca pulpit

A frieze section with sprouting foliage



A sinuously carved white marble fragment of an ovolo-moulded frieze, the curving front section finely decorated with flowering vines organised in alternating directions. Deep undercutting and the use of a wide-gauged drill combine with the repeat-pattern of the motif to create an elegant visual rhythm.

The shape of this sculpture suggests that it formed part of a running frieze or a complex of static liturgical furniture, of a type common in Campanian churches throughout the 12th and 13th centuries. The form of the sprouting vine leaves and the heavy reliance on the drill is identical to the frieze mouldings of the pulpit at the cathedral of Sessa Aurunca, partially reconstructed in the 20th century from a number of extant fragments and sections (fig. 1-2). The pulpit was started during the bishopric of Pandulf (1224-1248), and finished early in that of his successor John (1248-1283), and most scholars now believe that the majority of the carving took place around the middle years of the century. Much of the liturgical furnishings at Sessa Aurunca were dispersed, reconstituted, or moved around over a long period, and it is highly likely that this frieze section was originally carved to form part of the larger complex of furnishings that once

Italy, Campania, likely Sessa Aurunca
Mid-13th century

16 x 33 x 11cm; white marble

Provenance

Sotheby's New York, 29th January 1999, lot 2;
Private collection, London

Literature:

Seidel, Linda. "Romanesque Sculpture in American Collections: X: The Fogg Art Museum: III: Spain, Italy, the Low Countries, and Addenda", *GESTA* (1973), vol. XII, no. 1/2, no. 16, repr.

Walter Cahn and Linda Seidel, *Romanesque Sculpture in American Collections*, volume 1: New England Museums, Burt Franklin & Co., Inc. (New York, NY, 1979), no. 49, fig. 208

D. Glass, *Romanesque Sculpture in Campania*, Philadelphia, 1991).



Fig. 1-2
Pulpit, Cathedral of
Sessa Aurunca
Italy, Campania
c. 1225-1275

graced the cathedral's rich interior. Another section from the same frieze, of identical material, format, size, and style, is preserved in the Fogg Art Museum, Harvard Massachusetts (fig. 3). Formerly in the collection of Joseph Brummer, the Harvard frieze may well share a similar history to the present relief sections, and was undoubtedly taken from the same structure.

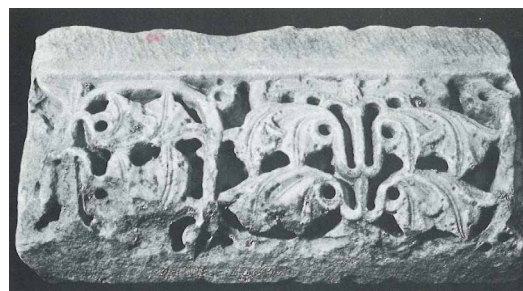


Fig. 3
Architectural fragment
with foliate design
Italy, Campania, likely
Sessa Aurunca
Dated to c. 1200, likely
c. 1250
16.5 x 33.8 x 10.4 cm;
marble
Fogg Art Museum
No.1949.47.34

Capital with delicate acanthus



Capital with delicate acanthus



**France, Paris Basin
c. 1140**

19 x 29 x 29 cm; limestone, general surface wear, minor breaks to the abacus, loss of the base

Provenance:

*Collection of Joseph Altounian (1890 – 1954),
Macon (1908 – 1947)*

This elegant, engaged capital with scrolling vines of acanthus belongs to a style which evolved in the second quarter of the 12th century, marking the transition between Romanesque and Gothic architectural ornament (fig. 1). The tendrils, which are decorated by a delicate string of beads, spring from the base of this shallow capital as they scroll around the corners, unfurling to reveal decorative leaves. They are joined in the centre and on the corners by a band. The relatively squat composition of this capital, the missing base and the incomplete ornamentation indicate that this sculpture has lost its lower part. Its overall size suggests that the capital may have decorated a small chapel or a dado arcade.

The lively yet abstract character of the foliage decorating this capital can be compared to architectural ornament on a series of 12th century buildings in and around Paris, which are key for understanding the birth of Gothic. One monument where similar capitals survive in situ is Saint-Martin des Champs, which is often discussed in comparison to Saint-Denis due to its early date and its experimentation with a new architectural language (fig. 1). Comparisons can also be drawn with the capitals from Saint-Remi in Reims which come from the now destroyed cloister of the Romanesque abbey (fig. 2 – 3). Although these larger examples are more elaborate, they use



Fig. 1
Detail of a pier in the ambulatory
France, Paris, Saint-Martin des Champs
c. 1135



Fig. 2
Capital with scrolling acanthus
France, Reims, St Remi
c. 1140



Fig. 3
Capital
France, Reims, Saint-Remi
c. 1140
Philadelphia Museum of Art 1945-25-40

the same vocabulary as the present capital – tendrils bound by bands, which scroll around the corners to reveal the leaves. Another set of capitals with a similar character, now in the Philadelphia Museum of Art, come from the Abbey of Saint Laurent near Cosne-Cours-sur-Loire (fig. 4). These capitals are also much larger than the present example, but they exhibit the experimentation with this particular motif in the area surrounding Paris at a time when major architectural innovation was also happening here.



Fig. 4
Engaged capital
France, Cosne-Cours-sur-Loire, Abbey of Saint-Laurent
1125 – 1150
Philadelphia Museum of Art 1945.25.24

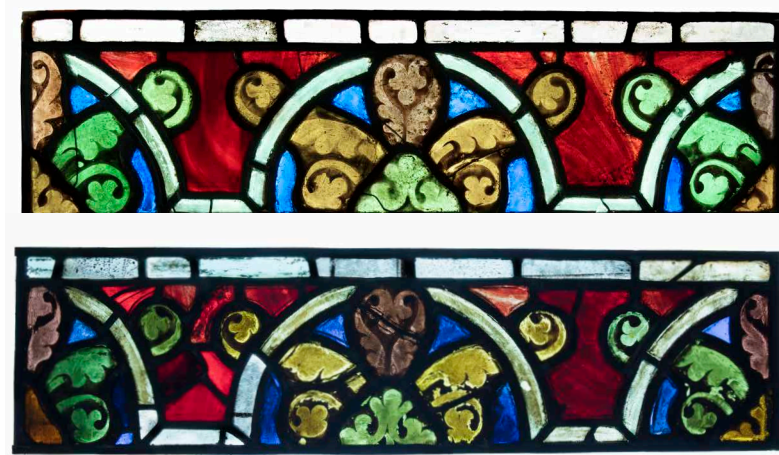




A pair of running borders decorated with arches and foliate sprays



A pair of running borders decorated with arches and foliate sprays



France, Picardy, Amiens Cathedral?
c. 1230-40

15 x 64 cm each; clear, yellow, green, blue and red pot-metal glass with reddish brown vitreous enamel, in modern lead matrices. Some evidence of partial refiring or fire damage, isolated modern stopgaps, and a generalised level of abrasion to both surfaces of the glass.

These long border sections are marked by their pronounced, bouncing arches of white glass, which are fed through with leaf-on-leaf foliate sprays that unfurl against blue backgrounds. The central leaf of each spray overlays the uppermost section of its framing arch and thus obscures its crown or keystone, while the leaves immediately bordering it on either side pass behind the haunches of the arch and re-emerge in the interstitial spandrels against dazzling red backdrops.

Both the lexicon of robust forms on these border panels, and the use of a reddish-brown enamel for their trace designs, recall surviving panels of glass made for the nave windows at Amiens Cathedral in the 1230s, and removed during a series of restoration programs over the course of the nineteenth- and twentieth-centuries. The distinctive manner in which the lateral leaves underlaying each arch curl back on themselves is also found in a border fragment now at the Dépôt des Monuments Historiques in Champs-sur-Marne, but which was believed by the French restorer Jean-Jacques Gruber (1904-88) to have come from the nave at Amiens.¹ Both the central cores of each foliate spray, and the smallest curling leaves which sprout on either side in a tight nautilus formation, are features also found on a border panel almost certainly originating in the nave windows at Amiens, and now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (fig.1). Finally, the evidence of what appears to be fire damage on the surfaces of both panels may offer further evidence for an Amiens attribution, since a number of border and window panels removed from the cathedral for restoration by the Parisian glass painter Edmond Socard (active 1904-20) were



Fig. 1
Running border section with 'block' foliate pattern
France, Picardy, Amiens
c. 1230-40
35 x 14 cm; pot-metal glass and vitreous paint
New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, inv. 1982.356

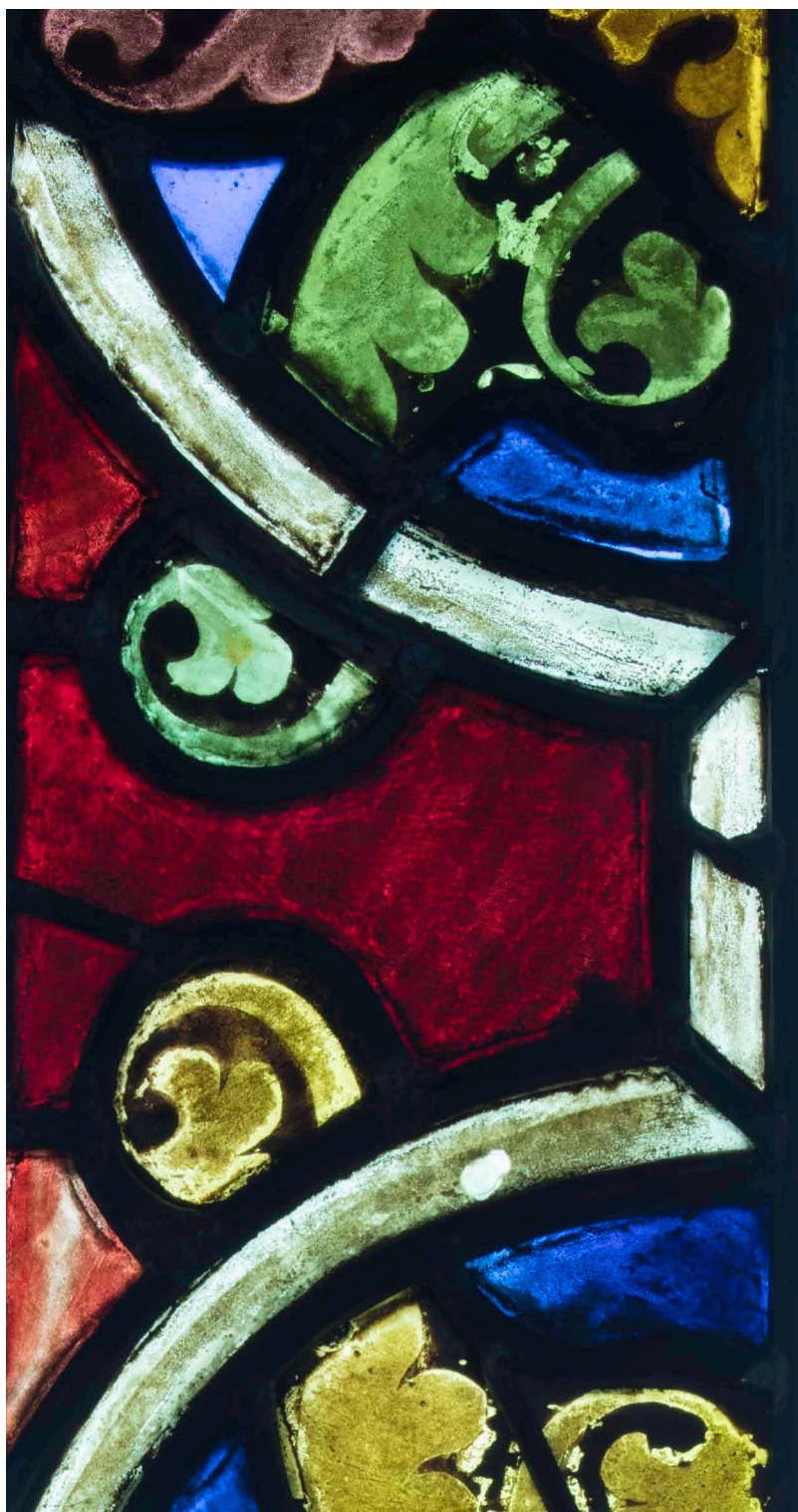
1, Jane Hayward, *English and French Medieval Stained Glass in The Collection of The Metropolitan Museum of Art: Volume 1*, edited by Mary B. Shepard, and Cynthia Clark. *Corpus Vitrearum USA*, Vol. 1. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2003. no. 18, p. 122.

2, *Ibid.*



2AM FOGG

badly damaged as a result of a fire in his workshop in 1921.² While the lack of any exact parallels to our borders in any of the cathedral's surviving windows means that we cannot be certain of its attribution to that building's glazing program, it seems beyond reasonable doubt that they were produced by the same artists, likely in that city, and at a similar moment in time.



A monumental triangular stylobate



A monumental triangular stylobate



A monumental supporting base, known as a stylobate, triangular in form and carved on all three sides in low relief with friezes depicting animals. The reliefs follow a symmetrical compositional formula and show two birds flanking a coat of arms, two wolves drinking from a chalice and two serpents eating from a tree. The corners of the stylobate are decorated by two nude figures and an anthropomorphic image of a standing eagle. The top of the stylobate is further decorated by two birds in the two corners above the bird relief, suggesting that this was the most important side of the object. A circular imprint on the top is evidence that this stylobate once supported a column.

The shape of this stone is unusual for stylobates of this date as the majority take the form of sculpted beasts such as lions rather than reliefs. The compositions and iconography, however, are motifs which derive from Byzantine prototypes (fig. 1). The style of the reliefs demonstrates the persistence of early medieval style of carving in Italy well into the 13th century. Carving with these motifs is commonly found on the facades of houses in the Veneto, where a Byzantine style persisted well into the later Middle Ages. Comparable examples include the 12th century bird capital from the MET (fig. 2).

Northern Italy
c. 1200-50

21 x 64 x 56 cm; limestone, general surface wear

Provenance:
Collection of Mr Pierre Nicolas Roller and thence
by descent



Fig. 1
Relief panel with
griffins drinking from a
chalice
Southern Italy
Early 10th century



The shield between the two birds allows us to date this piece later than its carving seems to suggest as the use of heraldry on masonry buildings gained momentum only in the 13th century. One example of this is the Sarcophagus from the MET, dated to the late 13th century, which also exhibits a shallow style of carving with Byzantine influences (fig. 3). It was in the 13th century that such a Byzantine style of carving became fashionable again, with Byzantine artists working in Italy alongside local stonemasons.



Fig. 2
Capital
Northeast Italy
12th century
The Cloisters MET
23.280.13



Fig. 3
Sarcophagus
Northern Italy, Veneto
c. 1300
MET 18.109

GOTHIC



A composite stained-glass window panel with birds in flight amongst scrolling foliage



A composite stained-glass window panel with birds in flight amongst scrolling foliage



France, Champagne or Essonne
c. 1220-40

50 x 34.5 cm; clear, red, purple, yellow, green and blue pot-metal glass with silver stain and vitreous enamel. Stopgaps and modern quarries in the blue background. The lowermost right-hand bird modern.

Provenance
Private collection, England

A vivid composite stained-glass window panel showing birds darting in flight against an intense, lapis-blue background punctuated by rhythmical, sprouting vine tendrils, also known as *rincaux*. Greens, pink-reds, blues, yellows, and clear quarries all jostle for position and pulsate before the eye. A number of the vine's foliate sprays are beautifully patterned with a red pigment obtained from copper oxide, applied to the surface of the glass while still molten and heated to fuse it in place. The resultant streaked effect gives ripples of texture to the glass but also had a very important function, since red glass could appear almost black if made, like other colours, by impregnating the entire thickness of the material with the same pigment. Instead, medieval glaziers invented a method in which they applied only thin layers of the oxide to one side of the glass, thereby ensuring the colour was kept bright and light.

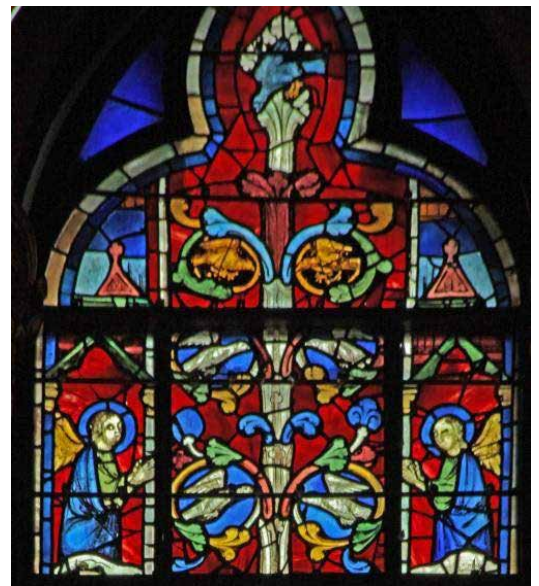
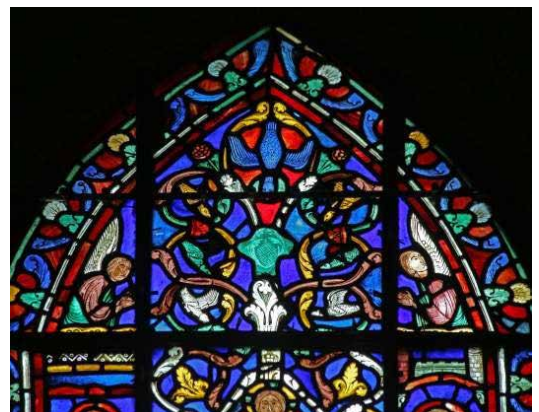


Fig. 1
Detail of a Tree of Jesse
Window

Fig. 2
Detail of a Tree of Jesse
Window
c. 1220s
Champagne, Chateau
de Baye, Chapelle
Saint-Alpin

c. 1245
Paris, Sainte-Chapelle,
Window 'J'



The number of birds (seven excluding the modern example at the lowermost right-hand corner) and their survival alongside so much scrolling foliage, are important indicators that we are almost certainly looking at part of a monumental Tree of Jesse window, which routinely incorporate seven doves symbolising the gifts of the Holy Spirit, surrounding the figure of Christ at the top of a sprouting vine.¹ Compelling parallels survive in some of northern and north-central France's most important gothic cathedrals and churches; close comparisons to its treatment, style, and format can be found in the famous Tree of Jesse window at the Sainte-Chapelle in Paris (fig. 1), as well as others of the same subject in the Chapelle Saint-Alpin at the Chateau de Baye, Champagne (fig. 2), and the abbey of Gercy in Varennes-Jarcy south-east of Paris (now Paris, musée de Cluny; see fig. 3a-b). All are firmly dateable between c.1220 and the 1240s, the latter two having been made by glaziers most likely travelling from Paris out to the adjacent Champagne and Essonne regions. Other isolated fragments, such as a light blue bird in flight in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (inv. 30.73.141), and two birds amongst foliage in the San Diego Museum of Art (inv. 41:39A, B) are also closely related, and accordingly help to date the present panel to a moment during the third or fourth decade of the thirteenth century.²

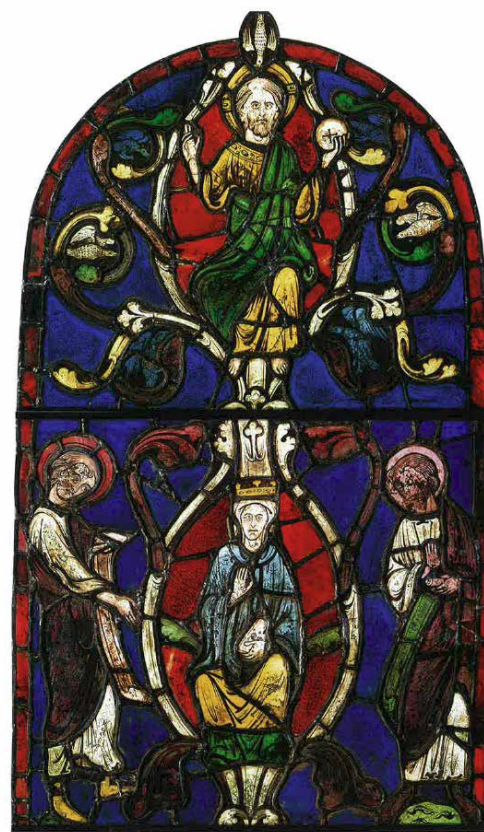
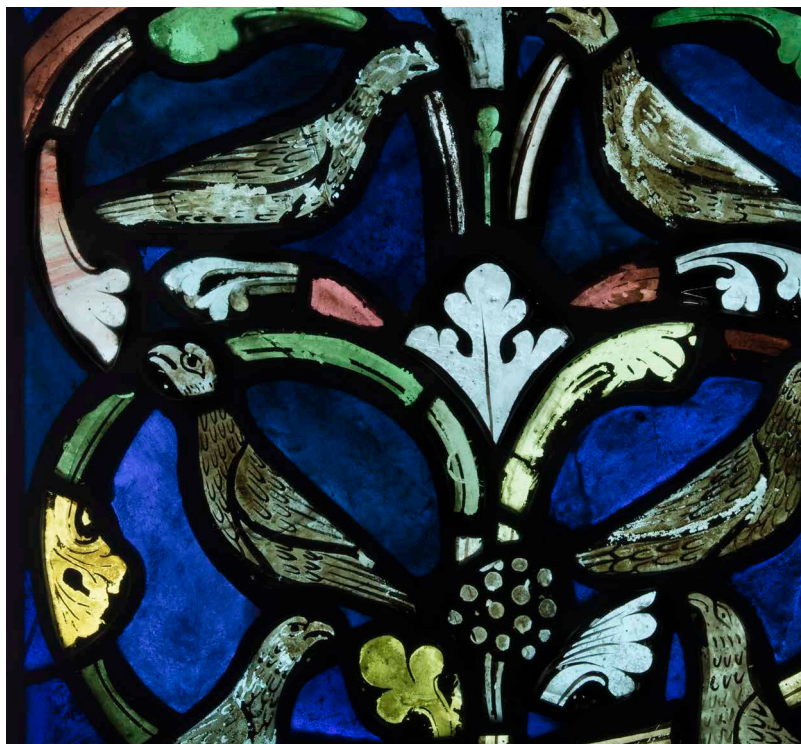


Fig. 3a

Part of a Tree of Jesse window, showing Christ in Majesty, and the Virgin between prophets Varennes-Jarcy (Essonne), Abbaye de Gercy (?) c.1230-40 Paris, musée de Cluny, inv. Cl. D. 23674, D. 23675

1, J. Hayward and Walter Cahn, *Radiance and Reflection: Medieval Art from the Raymond Pitcairn Collection*, New York, 1982, p. 148.

2, M. Caviness and J. Hayward, *Stained Glass before 1700 in American Collections: Midwestern and Western States*, *Studies in the History of Art Vol. 28*, *Corpus Vitrearum Checklist III*, p. 82.

Tree of Jesse imagery is first believed to have appeared during the second half of the eleventh century in illuminated manuscripts. It was an attempt to give visual form to an iconographic theme concerning Christ's lineage and ancestry that was drawn from a metaphorical passage found in the Book of Isaiah, melding it with the lists of Old testament names that appear in the Gospels of Luke and Matthew. By the time our darting doves were made in the early thirteenth century, the fashion for Tree of Jesse windows had spread across much of France and into Germany, and it was to continue well into the Renaissance period in monumental sculptural and window commissions. Few early windows survive intact, with those mentioned above being some of the most important exceptions, but they are consistently found near the east end of the church or cathedral in which they were mounted, most commonly in apsidal chapels. This demonstrates just how important the iconography of the Tree of Jesse became for medieval church imagery, and affords us a key glimpse into an incredible seam of theological thought that sought ratification via didactic, legible imagery placed in the most sacred space of the church building.

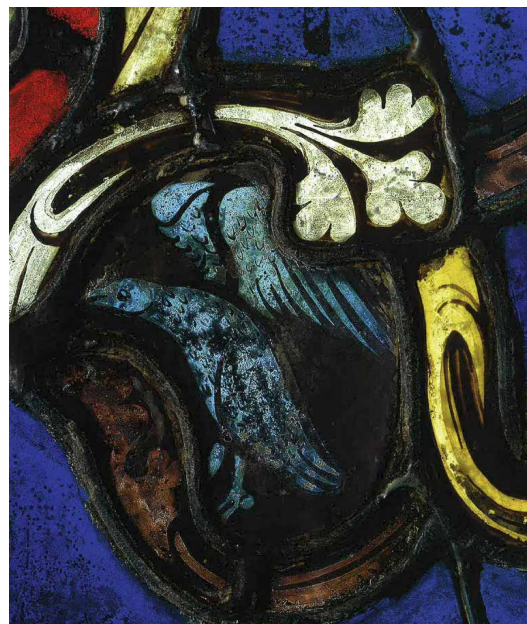


Fig. 3b
Detail of the Gercy
Tree of Jesse

A Monumental Early Gothic Capital



A Monumental Early Gothic Capital



France, Ile-de-France
c. 1200 - 1220

47 x 49 x 49 cm; coarse-grained limestone, one crocket bud missing, and one upper crocket bud reattached, breakage to base, surface slightly abraded as a result of weathering.

Provenance

With Galerie Ratton-Ladriere, Paris, 2003

This large scale, elongated capital was carved during a period which saw the beginning of High Gothic architecture in France, when Romanesque stylisation began to give way to a new, more naturalistic style. The capital is decorated with two levels of crockets in the form of buds filled with berries that project beyond the edge of the abacus. The fruit is intricately carved and held in the bud by vine leaves with delicate veins. Two small vine leaves are carved on a diagonal at the top of every crocket, while one leaf decorates the bottom. The capital is carved in the round, suggesting that it was atop a freestanding column. The sophisticated carving and the size of this capital indicates a provenance from a large and important church, possibly located in a gallery or a chapel.

The stylistic origins for this type of crocket capital can be seen in sculpture from the Paris-Soissons region from the very beginning of the 13th century. Early examples occur in the south transept of Soissons Cathedral, where crocket capitals with decorative leaves support the gallery arcade and the transept gallery chapel (fig. 1). The capitals here are similar to ours in their height, overhanging crockets and small leaves that decorate the base of the crockets. These



Fig. 1

Soissons Capital
France, Soissons, South
transept gallery chapel
c. 1190s

examples, however, are much too stylised and suggest to be a predecessor to our capital. A closer connection can be found with the capitals in the choir chapel of the abbey at Lagny-sur-Marne, dated to c. 1200 (fig. 2). The general shape of the crockets here, including their buds and the carving of the leaves are all analogous to our capital. Two other comparisons can be made with capitals in Saint-Julien-le-Pauvre in Paris and on the façade of the Hôtel-Dieu at Brie-Comte-Robert, which are dated to 1210 - 1220 (fig. 3 - 4). Here, the crockets and their buds are identically formed, especially in the way that the berries are tightly held by the leaves to form a sphere. This particular motif is usually found in capitals dated to before 1220. After this decade, the buds move away from a spherical shape and start to take on a more horizontal shape with the leaves that unwind and flowers that bloom. Moreover, after the 1220s, leaves decorate capitals in a less systematic manner - they are commonly larger, more individualised and more unruly.

The rapid changes that occurred in architectural sculpture in these two decades reflect the technological advancements made by the builders of the great cathedrals at this time. The



Fig. 2
Capital
France, Lagny-sur-
Marne, Abbaye Notre-
Dame-des-Ardents-
et-Saint-Pierre, Choir
Chapel, piscina capitals
c. 1200



Fig. 3
Crocket capital
France, Brie-Comte-
Robert, Hotel-Dieu
façade
c. 1210s

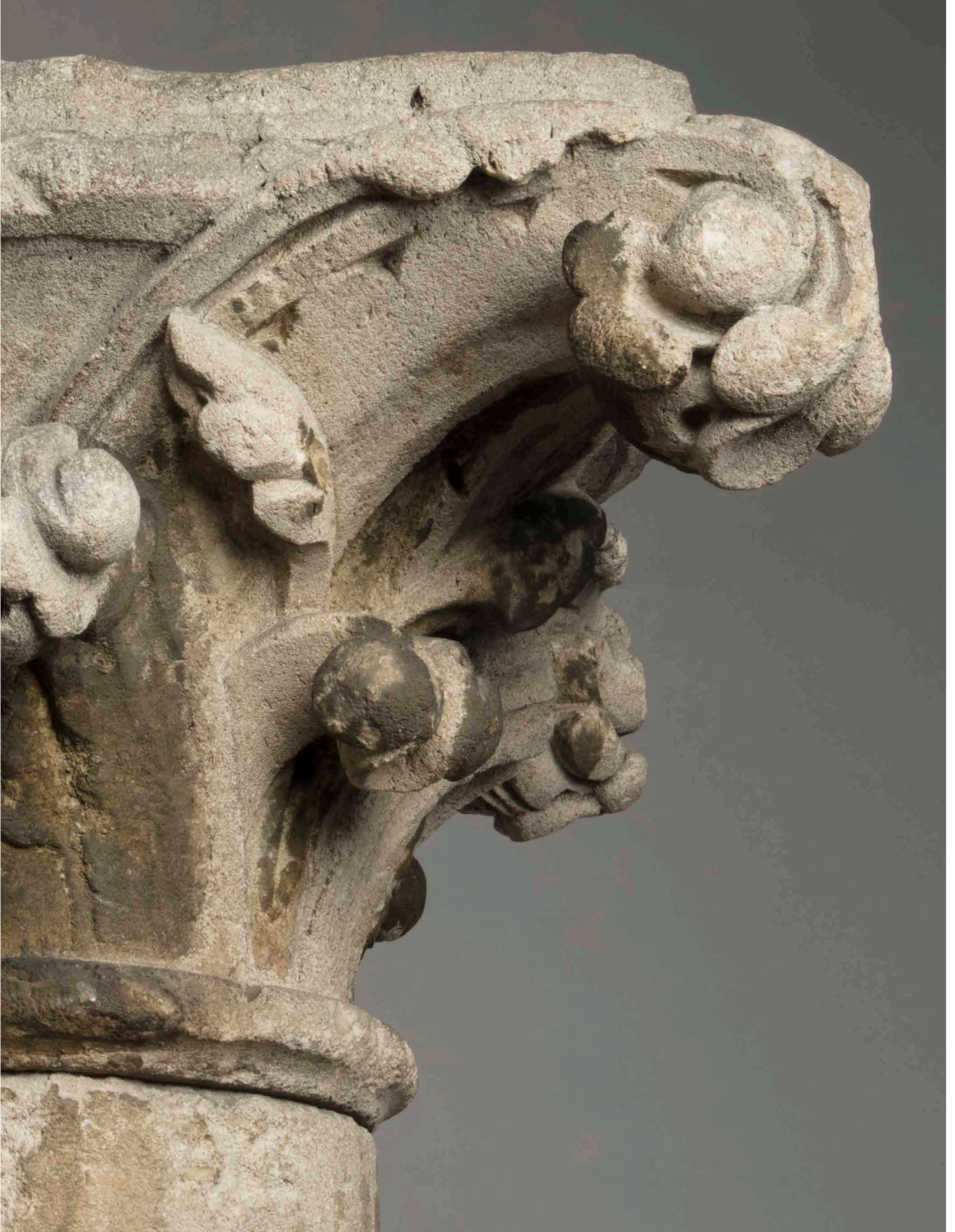
masons at these sites often worked together but often also competed with one another – pushing each other and the style of architecture to its limits. This style of capital therefore became widespread within a very short time and so examples can be found further afield. However, the skillful carving as well as the size of the capital suggest that this example was at the centre stage of the architectural transformations happening in the Paris region in the beginning of the 13th century.



Fig. 4
Crocket capital
Paris, Saint-Julien-le-
Pauvre
c. 1210 - 20



An early Gothic capital and base



An early Gothic capital and base



**French, probably Bourges
early 13th century**

123 x 41 x 41 cm; limestone, free-standing column probably added at a later date, the three pieces of stone skilfully joined together, crocket on one corner restored, otherwise remarkable state of preservation

*Provenance:
Blumka Gallery, New York*

*Literature:
Branner, Robert. *La Cathédrale de Bourges et sa place dans l'architecture gothique*. (Paris, 1962) figs. 15, 51 and 87.*



Fig. 1
Crypt
France, Bourges
Cathedral
Early 13th century

The capital is vigorously carved with veined leaves and crockets, which project outwards and beyond the abacus. The crockets take the shape of buds, which are carved to be curling outwards to create a rough sphere. The squat shape of the capital, its state of preservation and size suggest that this would have been a part of a smaller space, such as a crypt or a crypt chapel. The base is simple in composition with a roll moulding necking and single leaves at each corner which curl



back on themselves. The base and capital were very likely put together at a later date.

The style of this foliated crocket capital is typical of those found in early 13th century French ecclesiastical architecture. Particularly close comparison can be made with the capitals in the crypt at Bourges Cathedral (fig. 1), which also share the same curling leaves of our column base. The style of foliage here continued to develop in the first half of the 13th century. Another example can be found in the cluster of columns from the Ile-de-France, at the Victoria and Albert Museum, inv. no.A.3-1911.



Five fragments of stiff-leaf ornament



Five fragments of stiff-leaf ornament



Five stone fragments with delicate foliage, assembled together by the historian, Professor Charles Dodwell. The foliage on these pieces rises upwards from a central stem, before curling under, in a style known as stiff-leaf ornament. Although uniform and systematic in their carving, the foliage has a naturalistic appearance with much liveliness. The size of the ornament and the flat, uncarved reverses of these fragments suggest that they were originally located on a church furnishing, such as a screen or a tomb.

Stiff-leaf ornament of this nature and vivacity is particularly analogous to Early English architecture in the West Country, a style particularly associated with Wells Cathedral and Salisbury Cathedral. When Salisbury Cathedral was begun in 1220, on its new, virgin site, Wells Cathedral was already well underway and the influence that these buildings had on each other cannot be doubted. The west front of both structures is still covered by a similar pattern of ornament on the portals and capitals as displayed by our fragments (fig. 1 - 2). The two early 13th century facades demonstrated that Gothic in England was no longer holding on to Norman precedents and it was also not copying French Gothic buildings. Rather, with the building of structures such as Wells Cathedral, Gothic in England took on its own identity (known as Early English). Stiff-leaf ornament, such as that on these five fragments, falls in line with this pattern of development as it is thought to be the 'first triumph' of English Gothic when Ile-de-France foliate crockets and naturalistic leafage is rejected and replaced by a 'new' type of English ornament. 'This was a highly distinctive mannerism which froze the evolving experimental luxuriance

England, West Country
c. 1230 – 40

left to right: 12 x 14 x 4 cm, 20 x 12.5 x 4 cm, 19 x 24 x 4 cm, 15.5 x 14.5 x 4 cm, 14.5 x 17.5 x 4 cm; limestone, general surface wear

Provenance:

Professor Charles Reginald Dodwell, Pilkington Professor of History of Art and Director of Whitworth Gallery, Manchester University 1966-89; thence by descent.



Fig. 1
Detail of West Front of
Wells Cathedral
England, Wells
c. 1230 - 40

of three-dimensional leaf forms into rhythmical patterns that are reminiscent of the pre-Conquest sculptors' interpretation of 'Winchester style' acanthus.¹ The style of these fragments thus represents the phase of Gothic architectural ornament when English Gothic achieved true maturity and took on its own character.

1, Lawrence Stone, *Sculpture in Britain: The Middle Ages* (Edinburgh, 1955), pp. 102.

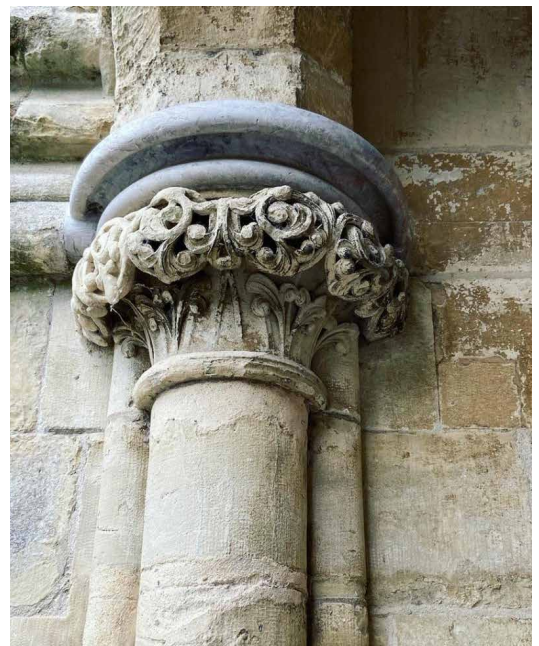


Fig. 2
Capital details on the
west portal of Salisbury
Cathedral
England, Salisbury
c. 1240



Engaged capital with foliate decoration



Engaged capital with foliate decoration



Northern France

c. 1250 - 70

30.5 x 30 x 21cm, coarse grained limestone, the circular base is a modern replacement, otherwise excellent condition.

Provenance:

Ward and Co. Works of Art, New York

This capital with vine-leaf ornament is topped by a distinctively heavy abacus which appears to push down the leaves below it. The leaves are organically arranged around the core of the capital, growing up towards the abacus. Some of them are grouped, growing out of branches, others float alone. The bottom of the capital is composed of a simple rounded base. The capital is flat and uncarved on the back, suggesting that it was an engaged capital. Its state of preservation suggests that it would have been located on the interior of a building.

In the early 13th century, there was a development away from figurative ornament on capitals towards carving naturalistic foliate form. The style was exemplified in stonework on great monuments such as the Sainte-Chapelle, where a variety of plant species can be identified. Among the great monuments of this style is the Cathedral of Reims, which stands as the richest expression of carved foliage and an inspiration to many monuments built thereafter (fig. 1). The style disseminated to regional schools responsible for the decoration of more churches and cathedrals throughout Northern France and

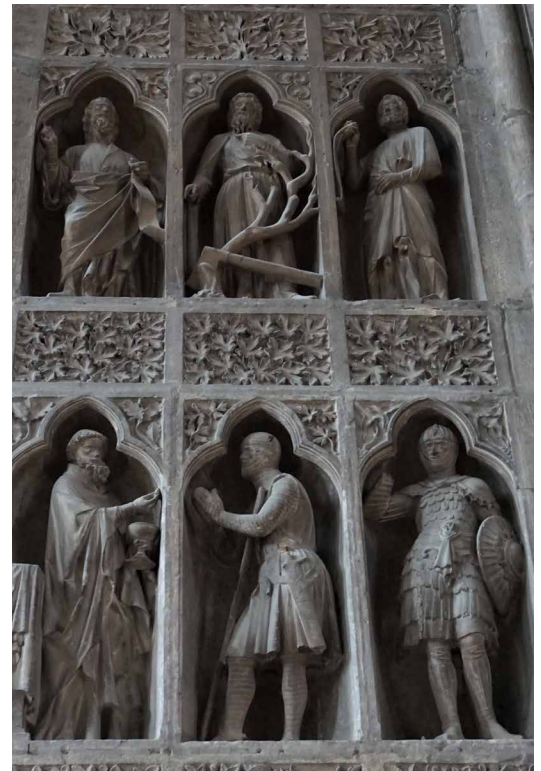


Fig. 1

Interior West Wall of
Reims Cathedral
France, Reims
c. 1260 - 70



Germany. We know that stone masons active in Bamberg Cathedral, for example, were trained in Reims. These stonemasons were no doubt responsible for influencing sculpture throughout the area, such as that at Naumburg Cathedral where similar forms can also be found (fig. 2).

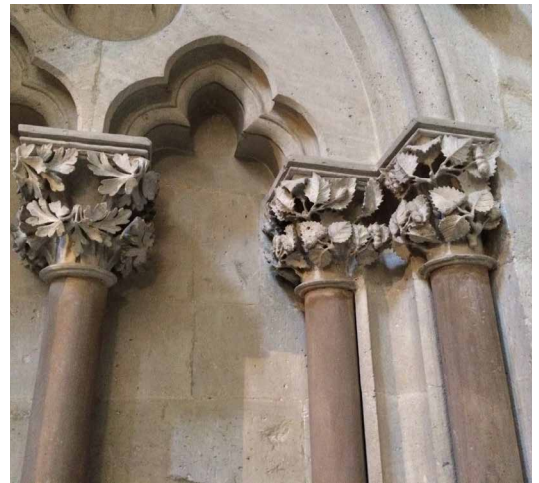
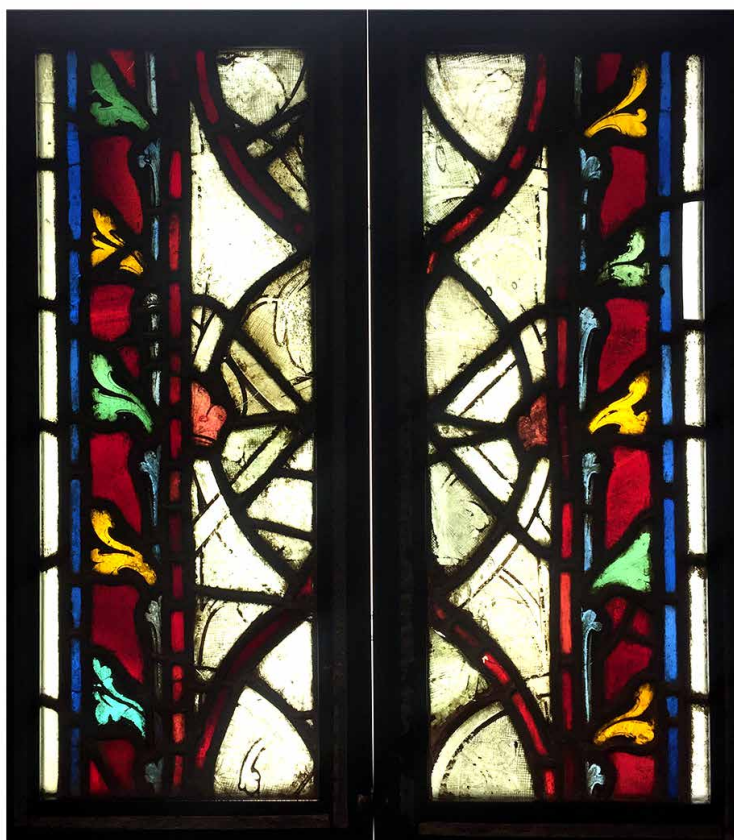


Fig. 2
Naumburg Cathedral
Capitals (Choir Screen)
Germany, Naumburg
c. 1250

Two border sections in grisaille and coloured glass from Saint-Urbain at Troyes



Two large border sections in grisaille and coloured glass from the Collegiate Church of Saint-Urbain at Troyes



France, Champagne, Troyes

c. 1264–70

c. 56.5 x 20.5 cm each; clear, yellow, green, blue and red pot-metal glass with vitreous paint, housed in modern timber protective frames. Some historic breaks to quarries in both panels, repaired with lead cames.

Provenance

From the choir of the Collegiate Church of Saint-Urbain, Troyes, until c. 1900;
 Augustin Lambert, Paris (sold 1923)];
 Brummer Gallery, Paris and New York;
 Joseph Brummer Collection, his sale, Parke-Bernet Galleries (May 13, 1949, lot 603);
 Sotheby's New York (December 3–4, 1982, lot 4);
 Argentinian Private Collection, until their sale, Christie's New York (January 11, 1994, lot 1);
 John L. Feldman Collection, Lakewood, CO, until 2017

Published

Jane Hayward, English and French Medieval Stained Glass in The Collection of The Metropolitan Museum of Art: Volume 1, edited by Mary B. Shepard, and Cynthia Clark. Corpus Vitrearum USA, Vol. 1. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2003, p. 218.

These two stained-glass borders come from the Collegiate Church of Saint-Urbain at Troyes, a vital example of Gothic architecture in late thirteenth-century France, and a building renowned for pushing the limits of Gothic ornament. The panels are both composed of three dominant bands of ornament. The middle band is decorated by yellow and green foliage scattered on a red background. It is framed by round-headed arches on clear glass on one side and a narrow blue band on the other side. This type of border decoration was common in thirteenth-century France, mimicking the architectural sculpture on the portals, and the polychromy of the walls. Together these ornamental stencils would have created a fully integrated decorative scheme in one of the most important Gothic buildings of medieval France.

The attribution of the panels to the Collegiate Church of Saint-Urbain at Troyes is firm, and follows the publication of



Fig. 1

Exterior view of a lower choir window with border sections of the same design as ours highlighted in red

France, Troyes, Collegiate Church of Saint-Urbain
 Photographed prior to 1877

photographs of the windows in 1877, before a large program of restoration undertaken by Louis-Germain Vincent-Larcher (1816-94) and Édouard-Amédée Didron (1836-1902) removed a lot of the original glass (fig. 1). Two further panels of identical design are today preserved in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (fig. 2).



Fig. 2

Two border sections in grisaille and coloured glass from the Collegiate Church of Saint-Urbain at Troyes

France, Champagne, Troyes

c. 1264–70

57.2 x 22.2 cm each; clear, yellow, green, blue and red pot-metal glass with vitreous paint

New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Inv.

1994.108.1 and 1994.108.2

The Chartres Cathedral Workshop

Crocket capital with sprouting aconite leaves



The Chartres Cathedral Workshop

Crocket capital with sprouting aconite leaves



France, Chartres
c. 1230 - 40

29.5 x 38.5 x 38 cm; limestone, general surface wear, damage to some of the crockets

Provenance:
Private Collection, France

This heptagonal capital is elaborately carved with an organic arrangement of leaves. Its unusual seven sided form is carved over two levels with crocket stems of delicate aconite leaves which appear to peel away from the body of the capital as if curling and turning in the manner of real foliage, terminating beyond the edge of the abacus. The capital is carved in the round, suggesting that it originally topped a column forming the central support for a vaulted ceiling in a chapel or a church furnishing.

During the first half of the thirteenth century, the fashion for architectural ornament turned increasingly towards the naturalistic representation of foliage that could be clearly identified as belonging to particular plant families. Aconites were amongst the favourite plants employed by architectural sculptors in this period, perhaps because their various spiky leaf forms offered such a distinct contrast to the more sinuous, curving foliage of earlier Romanesque buildings.

The style of this capital shares many extremely close characteristics with a group of heptagonal capitals that are thought to have come from the choir screen of Chartres



Fig. 1
Capitals from the Jube
of Chartres Cathedral
France, Chartres
c. 1230 - 40
Louvre, Paris



Fig. 2
 Chartres Cathedral
 Jube Capital
 France, Chartres
 Cathedral
 c. 1230 – 40
 Cluny Cl. 11658 a
 44cm (height)

Cathedral, also known as the Chartres Jubé, which was destroyed in 1763 (figs. 1-2). The small, delicately carved leaves that grow organically around the capitals are extremely similar to our example as is the unusual seven-sided nature of the group. The foliage on these capitals is also closely comparable to the capitals above the jamb figures on the cathedral's transepts, dated to the same period. These, however, would not have been carved in the round.

Although the size of our capital does not match the capitals that survive from the Jubé or those on the transepts, it was almost certainly made by the same workshop and it may have been a part of another early 13th century furnishing in the cathedral. The virtuoso carving of this capital is a testament to the effort and complexity of French Cathedrals of this date.



A pinnacle terminus



A pinnacle terminus



This architectural fragment probably originates from the 13th century collegiate church of St Martin in Colmar, which was one of the earliest Gothic churches to be built in Alsace. The minimally ornamented pinnacle terminus is composed of an octagonal bulb at the top. Below the bulb, the sculpted fragment narrows to form a neck, which is decorated by a ring. From there the octagon widens to form a square, thus suggesting that the buttress pinnacle which this fragment

France, Colmar, St Martin?
c. 1250 - 1300

55 x 28 x 28; limestone, minor surface wear

Provenance:

Private collection, France



Fig. 1
Nave and South
Transept of St Martin's
France, Colmar
c. 1250 – 1300

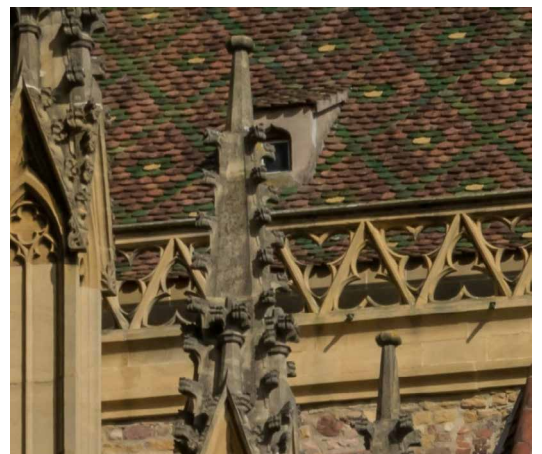


Fig. 2
Detail of Pinnacles on
St Martin's
France, Colmar
c. 1250 – 1300

topped would have been four sided.

The style of the pinnacle terminus is distinctive from most early Gothic architecture in that it is more geometric than the typically vegetal crockets and finials of early French Gothic or early German Gothic churches. However, the shape and form of our fragment finds parallels with the pinnacles that survive at St Martin's church in Colmar – especially those on the exterior of the nave and the south transept (fig. 1 – 2). The warm colour of the limestone also suggests an origin from Alsace.

St Martin's is known to be one of the earliest buildings in the Holy Roman Empire to be built in the Gothic style. Although a Romanesque church preceded the current structure, at the beginning of the 13th century Colmar was granted the status of a free imperial city by Emperor Frederick II and this led to a redesign of the building. Work began on the new structure in 1234, when the parish church was also elevated to a collegiate monastery. The new structure included large stained-glass windows, a vaulted stone roof and flying buttresses topped by pinnacles. These pinnacles were decorative architectural elements, adding a sculpted vertical element to buildings that were trying to achieve immense height. However, they were also structural because their weight on top of flying buttresses counteracted the stresses that the flyers received from the vaults. Our pinnacle could have originated from the nave and transepts, which are survivals from the 13th century church. (figs 1 -2).

Alternatively, it may have crowned one of the buttresses of the 13th century choir, which was torn down and rebuilt in the 14th century. Similar pinnacles can also be found on the Franciscan church of Colmar, which was begun after St. Martin's in 1292 (fig. 3). Here, however, the bulbs of the pinnacles are much wider and flatter. Other survivals from these structures can still be found in the city of Colmar today as can be attested by a house which has an identical pinnacle on top of its well (fig. 4). The appropriation of these structural elements probably occurred when materials from

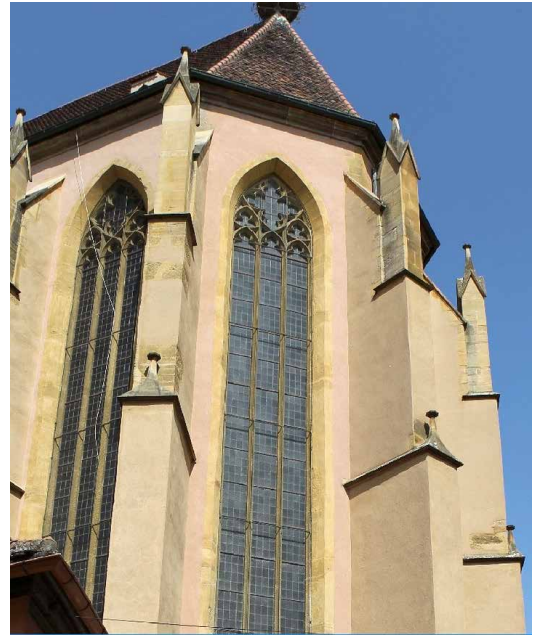


Fig. 3
St Matthew (former
Franciscan church)
France, Colmar
Early 14th century



Fig. 4
A pinnacle from
the same structure
incorporated into a
house in Colmar
France, Colmar
c. 1900

A Gable from a Buttress of York Minster



A Gable from a Buttress of York Minster



This sculpted gable originates from the flying buttress pinnacle of the York Minster chapter house, which was begun in the last quarter of the 13th century (fig. 1). The stone is carved in low relief with blind tracery composed of an elongated trilobe on top of two pointed arches, also carved with trefoil cusps. The buttresses of the chapter house were built primarily to support its very large wooden roof and their innovative design has been much discussed in scholarship for this and for their role in the building's drainage system.

York Minster is one of England's most interesting and significant buildings. Founded in the 7th century, the 'new' minster was begun in the first half of the 13th century, when Archbishop Walter de Gray persuaded the dean and chapter of York that the transepts of the minster should be rebuilt in the Gothic style. Since York was one of England's two largest cities, the minster needed to be brought up to its institutional aspirations.¹

The chapter house was begun in about 1280 as a centrally planned, octagonal structure (fig. 2). The building was constructed as a venue for the meeting of the members of the

England, York Minster Chapter House
c. 1280 - 1300

83 x 71 x 22 cm; limestone, two reunited sections,
the surface of both sections is damaged by erosion

Provenance:

Sold by York Minster 20 February 2010 as lot 63;
Private collection, UK

Literature:

Brown, Sarah. *Our Magnificent Fabrick': York Minster, an architectural history 1220 – 15000*. English Heritage, 2003.



Fig. 1
York Minster Chapter
House
England, York
c. 1280 - 1300

1, J. A. K. Miller, 'The Building program of Archbishop Walter de Gray: Architectural Production and Reform in the Archdiocese of York, 1215 – 1255.' PhD diss. Columbia University (2012).



Fig. 2
York Minster Chapter
House
England, York
c. 1280 - 1300

chapter; however, the city government, Parliament and the Northern Convocation also used the space. As Sarah Brown has pointed out, 'the members of the York Chapter were well able to afford [such a lavish] structure, for while the York Chapter was not the largest in England, it was certainly one of the richest.'² The chapter house showcased its wealth with new design solutions and technologies, and one such element was the use of bar tracery. While bar tracery was no longer a novelty in France, it was a new approach to window ornament in England which allowed more light and colour into the building. Overall, the style and shape of the chapter house emulated the chapter houses at Westminster Abbey and at Salisbury Cathedral. Unlike these two institutions, however, the large vault over the York chapter house was innovative in that it was not interrupted by a central pier. Instead, a richly painted wooden vault was suspended from the steeply pitched timber roof (see image on page 7).

The eight buttresses surrounding the chapter house are important vehicles for this innovation in that they not only support the walls, which are pieced by larger windows, but also the roof construction, which has been called one of the great masterpieces of English medieval carpentry. The buttresses are composed of two stages: the bottom, which is structurally bonded with the lower part of the building, and the top, which is much more delicate and bonded to

2, Sarah Brown, *Our Magnificent Fabrick: York Minster, an architectural history 1220 – 1500* (English Heritage, 2003), pp. 56.

the chapter house with a small flyer and a solid 'bridge' (trabeation).³ The upper part of each buttress is topped by a pinnacle, decorated with blind tracery. This was the original location of our sculpture. A decorative but also structural addition to the fabric of the building, these pinnacles were added to support the buttresses after a decision was taken to create the uninterrupted wooden roof of the chapter house.⁴ The blind tracery on the buttresses mirrors the tracery in the windows. The buttresses are also interesting for their role in the building's elaborate drainage system, which carried the water from the roof, through a channel in the flyers and out of the gargoyles that are positioned in the middle of each buttress.

With its grand size, its technological advancements and its innovative decorative character, the York Minster chapter house was built to impress and to represent all those individuals who contributed to the patronage of the building as a whole.

4, Ibid. 68.

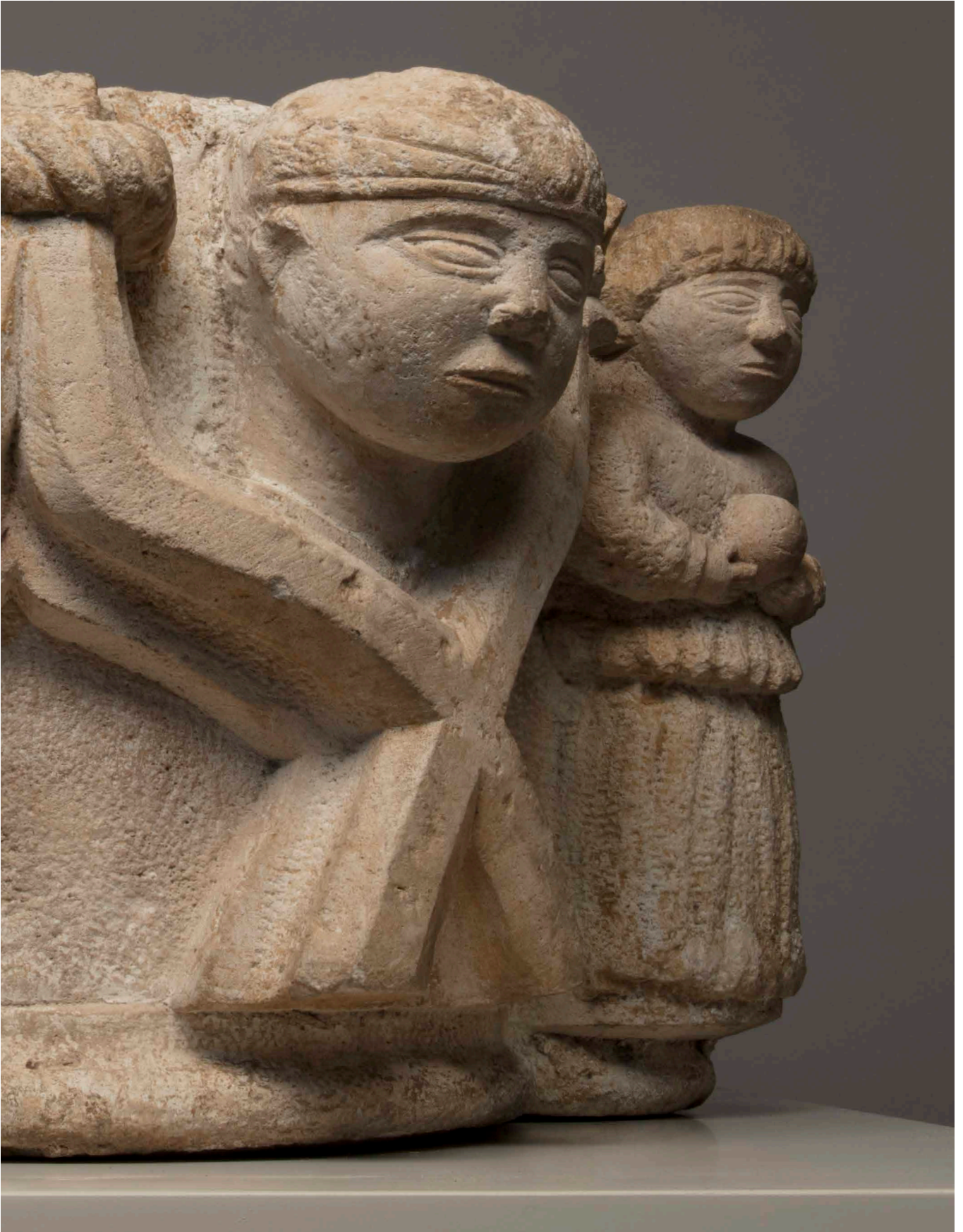
3, Sarah Brown, *Our Magnificent Fabrick: York Minster, an architectural history 1220 – 1500* (English Heritage, 2003), pp. 47-48.



LATE GOTHIC



A pier capital with figures and ogee arches



A pier capital with figures and ogee arches



Southern Italy
Late 14th century

30.5 x 58 x 34.5 cm; limestone

Provenance:

Collection of Pietro Accorsi (1891-1982) Turin;
Giorgio Cosarini, Pordenone, sold to;
Gallery Bader, Lucerne, in 1995

A large figurative capital formed of three sections, with a large round central section and two smaller flanking projections, carved to fit above a pier cluster. The central section is composed of two projecting heads interspersed by intersecting ogee arches, which conjoin at the top and terminate in foliate knops. The two flanking projections show single standing figures, holding an orb and a book respectively, and dressed in plain, full-length garments. What appear to be original traces of red and ochre yellow pigments survive on the surface of the stone, suggestive of a simple but boldly rendered polychromy that would, in its intended setting, have clarified and emphasised the forms of the capital when seen from far below.

The two large heads on this piece are carved with a turban in one case and round clusters of hair in the other, possibly suggesting a non-western identification of the figures. A comparison can be drawn with heads from a capital in the MET, which shares a similarly Southern Italian localisation (fig. 1).

Although the abstract carving of the heads and figures of this sculpture appears Romanesque at first sight, the use

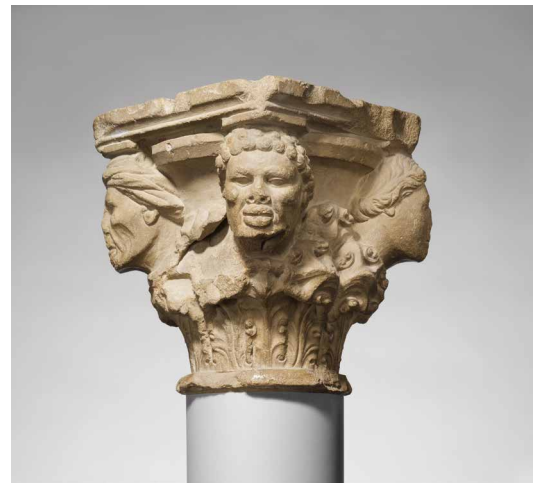


Fig. 1
Capital with heads
Southern Italy
c. 1250
MET 55.66

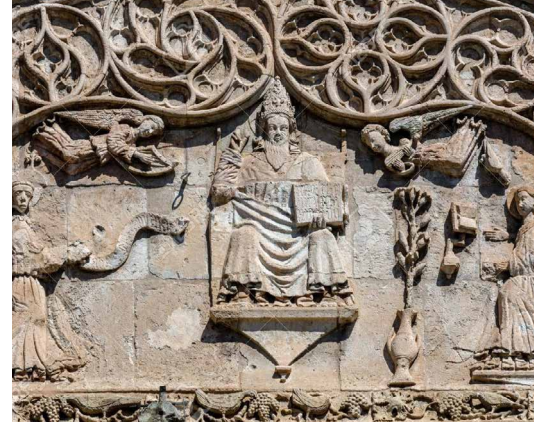


Fig. 2
Portico of Palermo
Cathedral
Sicily, Palermo
Early 15th century

of moulded ogee arches which intersect with one another provides evidence that this architectural element belongs to the later Middle Ages. Ogee arches first appear in masonry architecture in the late 13th century; however, they gain momentum only in the 14th century. The ogee arches in our sculpture, which intersect with one another, show a maturity that would not have been present much earlier. The technical properties of the carving, the highly distinctive treatment of the faces and the architectural ornament are perhaps most closely comparable with the portico of Palermo Cathedral (fig. 2). The abstract figures on the pediment, with their almond-shaped eyes, linear drapery and broken movements, are surrounded by curvilinear forms which also clearly reveal the late date of this portico.

What appears to be a combination of styles in this sculpture is not unusual in southern and eastern Europe, although such examples are often left out of catalogues and exhibitions because they complicate the narrative of art history. Studying them reminds us, however, that the categories that we create for objects and buildings are not the whole story, only a generalised simplification.

A heraldic keystone with the armorial shield of the Family of Amaury de Craon



A heraldic keystone with the armorial shield of the Family of Amaury de Craon



France, Anjou
Last quarter 14th century

46 x 47 x 33.5 cm; sandstone, general surface wear

Provenance:
Private Collection, France

A boldly carved keystone with the armorial shield of the Family of Amaury de Craon, a French noble family from Anjou. Their arms, described as Lonzengy Gules and Or, are recorded in Jean Favier, *Dictionnaire de la France Médiévale*. On all four sides of the keystone, also known as a boss, are ribs with a pear-shaped moulding profile. The four ribs that met at this keystone would have sprung from piers, forming a quadripartite roof vault. It is likely that this element once decorated the private chapel or great hall within the Chateau of the Craon Family.

The dating and style of this piece might correspond with the life of Amaury de Craon IV, who died 30 May 1373 (fig. 1). He was the son of Maurice VII de Craon and Marguerite de Mello. Coats of Arms were very popular decorative motifs in architectural settings at this time (fig. 2). Although heraldry was at predominantly associated with military activities in the 12th century, these devices quickly left their original military context and began appearing on seals, robes, in manuscripts, on tombs, and on buildings. During the 14th century, heraldry reached new levels of sophistication and was used in a wider range of contexts. This evolution allowed families to use heraldry as their signature, demonstrating their status and wealth.



Fig. 1
Drawing of the Tomb
Monument for Amaury
de Craon IV
France, Anjou
d. 1373



Fig. 2
Vaulted ceiling
England, Canterbury
Cloister
15th century

Monumental tracery with angels



Monumental tracery with angels



Two tracery elements with cusps and flying angels. The thickness of the stone is disguised by their elegantly moulded profiles and by the addition of delicate cusps on either side. Both of the sculptures are gently curved at the top, suggesting that they decorated a large arch, acting as cusps, or freestanding tracery elements in a cloister. The figures that form the terminus of these elements are sculpted as if flying, with a large flower decorating the bottom of their robes. Although losses to the sculpture do not enable us to decipher what the winged figure held, the other (which does not have wings) holds a wheel and a palm branch – symbols of St Catherine of Alexandria.

The style of these architectural fragments can be localised to Catalonia, where a similar use of tracery is found in the cloister of the Old Cathedral of Lleida. Here, the cusps of the tracery elements also terminate in figurative sculpture, and an entire crucifixion scene takes place between these delicate architectural elements (fig. 1 – 2). The bases that the two female figures stand on is also decorated by large flowers, just as in our example. The thick carving of our tracery elements can also be compared to the tracery at the cloister at Poblet

Spain, Catalonia
c. 1400 – 1430

56 x 73 x 15 cm (winged angel section), 61 x 71 x 15 cm, deep red limestone, general surface wear, losses to the heads of the angels

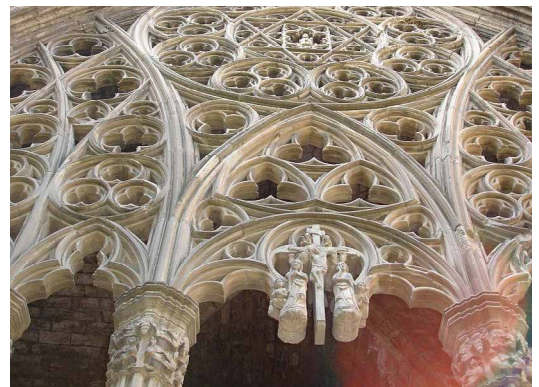


Fig. 1
Cloister of the Old
Cathedral of Lleida
Spain, Catalonia, Lleida
c. 1400 - 1450



Fig. 2
Cloister of the Old
Cathedral of Lleida
Spain, Catalonia, Lleida
c. 1400 - 1450



Fig. 3
Poblet Cloister
Spain, Catalonia
Late 14th century

Chimera in the form of a winged goat



Chimera in the form of a winged goat



France, possibly Île-de-France
14th - early 15th century

24 x 10 x 55 cm; coarse-grained limestone

Provenance:

Richard Wiseman Collection, England

Literature:

M. Camille, *Image on the Edge: the Margins of Medieval Art*, 1992, J. R. Benton, *The Medieval Menagerie: Animals in Art in the Middle Ages*, 1992; *Holy Terrors: Gargoyles on Medieval Buildings*, 1997 and *Medieval Mischief: Wit and Humour in the Art of the Middle Ages*, 2004; R. Sheridan and A. Ross, *Grotesques and Gargoyles: Paganism in the Medieval Church*, 1975, Lester Burbank Bridaham, *Gargoyles, Chimères, and the Grotesque in French Gothic Sculpture*, New York, 1969.

This sculpture takes the form of a winged goat, poised with its head up, neck straight, and hind legs bent at the knee as if about to take flight. The animal's muscular, curving jawline, tufted beard and long, gently curling horns are immediately recognisable and highly characterful. The eyes are defined under thick, lowered brows with clipped ears behind, while the sternum and arched shoulder give the whole a planted, anatomical solidity. The wings are delineated with strong contours, which nevertheless imbue the piece with a serpentine lightness and looseness. The integral square-form block at the base of the goat is carved on one side with an ogee moulding with a mitred right-angle and a resulting horizontal return, which suggests that it was originally located under a short overhang or soffit, perhaps as one of a series of animals decorating the length of a façade. In this respect, it is hard to determine whether it originates from a domestic or a religious setting, though if the former, precedents such as the gargoyles of the Chateau de Vincennes provide a similar arrangement of features and offer a clue to the scale of the building in question.

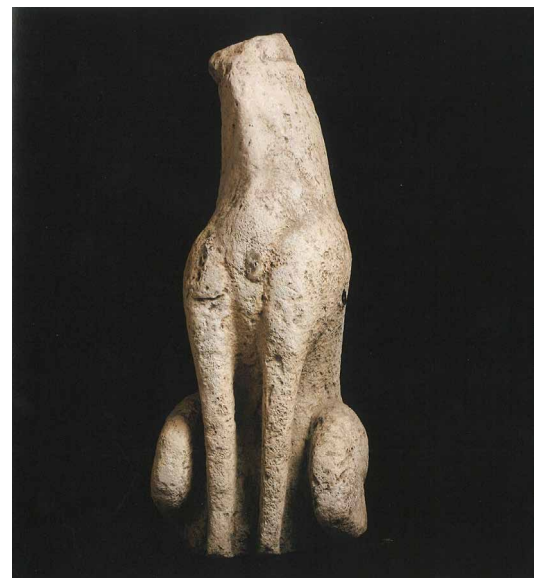


Fig. 1
Headless gargoyle
France, Ile de France
14th century
Richard Wiseman
Collection



The use of large grained limestone rich in calcite deposits is a fairly common practice for gargoyles and masonry across France, but was especially concentrated around Paris and the Île-de-France. This sculpture has no channel running down its length or hole through its mouth, hence it was never intended as a downspout and thus the sculpture is not a true gargoyle. Instead, it draws from the same apotropaic influences and meanings as the myriad decorative beasts and chimera that pepper the facades of the great French cathedrals, most notably at Reims, or Notre-Dame, Paris. The restorative efforts of Viollet-le-Duc in the nineteenth century, particularly on the cathedral of Notre-Dame from 1845 onwards, caused many original gargoyles and other decorative stonework sections to be removed and replaced. It is entirely plausible that the present example came into circulation at a similar time and as a result of one such program of restoration, as its condition is entirely commensurate with an active process of removal; probably by masons repairing and restoring a façade rather than through bomb damage or other calamity. While divorcing it from its original setting, this has nevertheless served to keep the supporting block

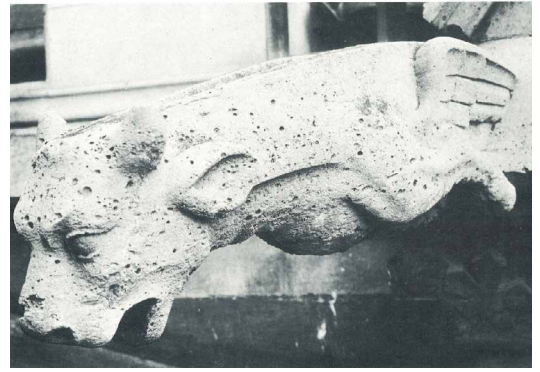


Fig. 2
Gargoyle
Paris, Notre Dame
(restored)



Fig. 3
Gargoyles
Paris, Notre Dame

and moulding intact, as are the fully undercut horns of the animal. In fact, other than a fairly even surface attrition caused by weathering, its condition is extremely good, and all of its features remain legible, making it, along with its unusual and quirky design, a fairly rare survival among those still in circulation. See for example a figure of comparable poise and stature but missing its head, from the collection of Richard Wiseman, and attributable to the Île-de-France region (fig. 1).

Further examples from the immediate Paris area, including beasts and gargoyles replaced at Notre-Dame by Viollet-le-Duc (fig. 2 - 3). Many exhibit a similar treatment of the wings, with square-ended feathers and high, sinuous edges, as well as a comparably open-grained limestone. However, the sculptor's interest in the naturalistic treatment of the face, especially in the well-formed eye sockets and its highly plastic faceted snout, have stylistic links with gargoyles as late as the early-fifteenth century, including a humorous stone pig carved in the 1430s for the chateau at Amboise. Our example shares little of the early-Renaissance elements of the Amboise gargoyles, but the comparability of the chosen figure-type serves to nudge our dating towards this late period in French Gothic sculpture, and would plausibly suggest a late-fourteenth or very early-fifteenth century date of creation.



Principal Transom Head from Canterbury Cathedral



Principal Transom Head from Canterbury Cathedral



England, Kent, Canterbury
1428-33

54 x 106 x 32; Caen limestone with some 18th-century Portland stone repairs

Provenance:
Canterbury Auction Galleries, 2016

Literature:
Austen, Rupert. *Canterbury Cathedral: The South-West Transept, An Architectural Appraisal*. February 2011.

Blockley Kevin, Sparks M. and Tatton-Brown Tim. *Canterbury Cathedral Nave: Archaeology, History and Architecture*. Canterbury, 1997.

Woodman Francis. *The Architectural History of Canterbury Cathedral*, London, 1981.

For the last 580 years these massive architectural sections formed the principal stonework of the vast south transept window of Canterbury Cathedral, remaining in situ until the restoration of the window between 2009 and 2013 necessitated their permanent removal. Separated from the building and brought down from their positions seventy feet above ground level, they can now be appreciated as statuesque forms of immense beauty, their springing, energetic mouldings transforming inanimate stone into dynamic constellations of light and shadow. Their complexity and sophistication attest to the extraordinary skill of the medieval mason.

This delicately carved transom head intersects with a principal mullion, forming two spandrels that meet back to back. Both sides of the piece are decorated with elaborate mouldings and delicately carved cusps. The interior side of the piece is decorated by a roll moulding, while the exterior side is decorated by a roll and fillet moulding. The right angles and delicate cusping spotlighted by this piece illustrate the most distinctive aim of the Perpendicular style – its fascination to bring more logic and clarity to Gothic architecture, while also flaunting their precision and skill.

Canterbury Cathedral is among England's most renowned ecclesiastical buildings, and one of the most important

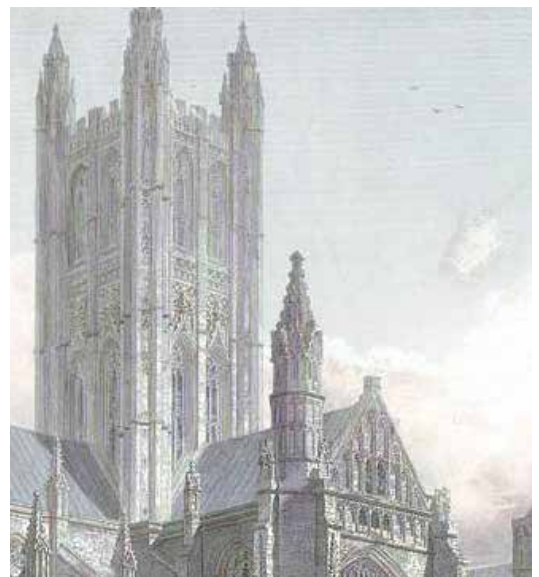


Fig. 1
South Transept of
Canterbury Cathedral

pilgrimage sites in Europe after the martyrdom of St Thomas Becket in 1170. The building pioneered Gothic architecture in England as it was the first to incorporate early Gothic vocabulary into its fabric and one of the first to experiment with the Perpendicular style in the late Middle Ages. The decision to rebuild the nave and transepts entirely in the Perpendicular style was made in 1376-7, after the funeral of the Black Prince. It was noted at this time that the nave was 'in a notorious and evident state of ruin.' The architect hired for this job was Henry Yevele (1320 – 1400), who was one of the most creative medieval architects in England, working at the court of Richard II. Yevele rebuilt the nave in an early Perpendicular style (see fig. 3).

The design of the south west transept was begun after the work on the nave had been finished and the south transept window was built by Thomas Mapilton (d. 1438). Mapilton was a master mason who built the cloisters in Durham Cathedral and who also worked on Westminster Abbey and the Tower of London prior to his appointment at Canterbury. In addition to the south transept window, Mapilton is also credited with building the south west tower at Canterbury. The Cathedral and its late Gothic architects were pioneers of the Perpendicular style, which was characterised by perpendicular lines, continuous mullions and delicate tracery patterns. The architects of this style often inserted so much glass into the walls of their buildings that the structures truly became glass houses. The south window of Canterbury cathedral illustrates this very well as it occupies almost the entire height and width of the transept (see fig. 1 – 2). Measuring 16.8 x 7.56 metres, it is the largest window in the cathedral.

Although the window was restored in 1792 with new Portland stone, much medieval Caen stone was saved and reset into the window. The resetting of the window tracery would have been very easily done because the tracery does not bond with the arch opening. From account rolls in 1426-7, we learn that 'sawyers were hired at various times for fashioning 'syntorys', or centerings, that may have been used to keep the window openings from collapsing before the tracery was inserted. Both Tim Tatton Brown, who studied the documentary evidence from the 15th century, and Rupert Austin, who carried out the recent interpretation of the fabric, agree that the transept was finished by 1433. Tatton-Brown notes that Stone's Chronicle mentions an angel being moved to the top of the gable above the south transept on 4th of August, 1433, suggesting that the transept must have been finished by this date.

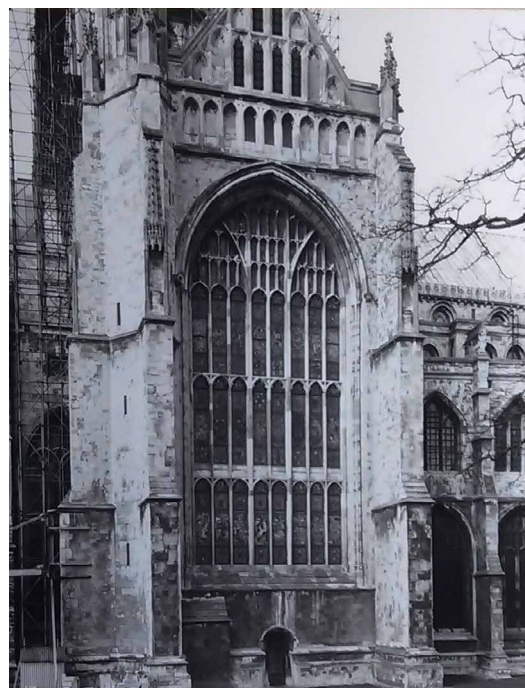


Fig. 2
South Transept of
Canterbury Cathedral

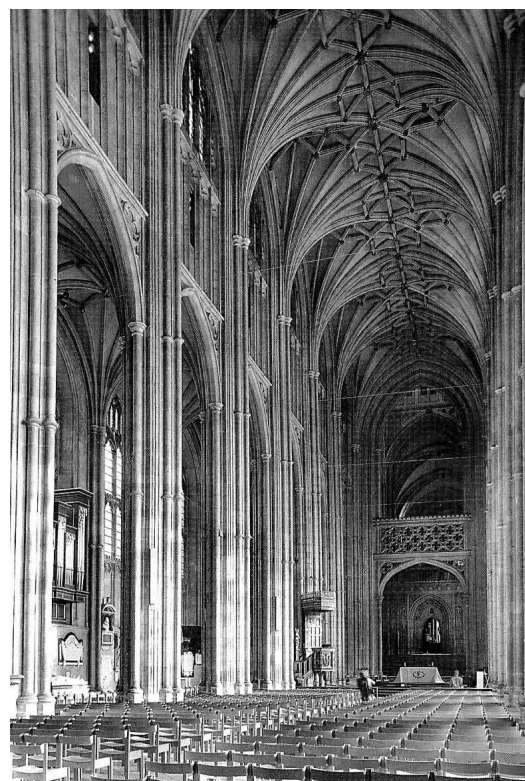


Fig. 3
Canterbury Cathedral
Nave, Henry Yevele

Canterbury Cathedral and its south window underwent much repair, rebuilding and restoration over the centuries. Thus, when recent structural analysis of the window showed signs of major failure, a decision was made to supplement some of its tracery with new stone in order to save the window from further damage. The pieces that were removed were sold directly by Canterbury Cathedral. The present transom head (see fig. 4) is among the principal sections of the original 15th century tracery to have survived from the window. It also illustrates very clearly some of the most important characteristics of Perpendicular architecture.

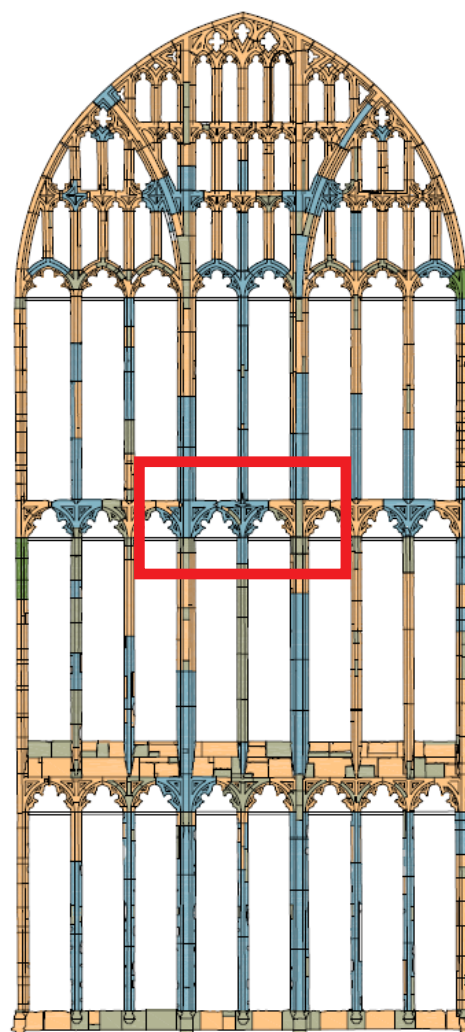
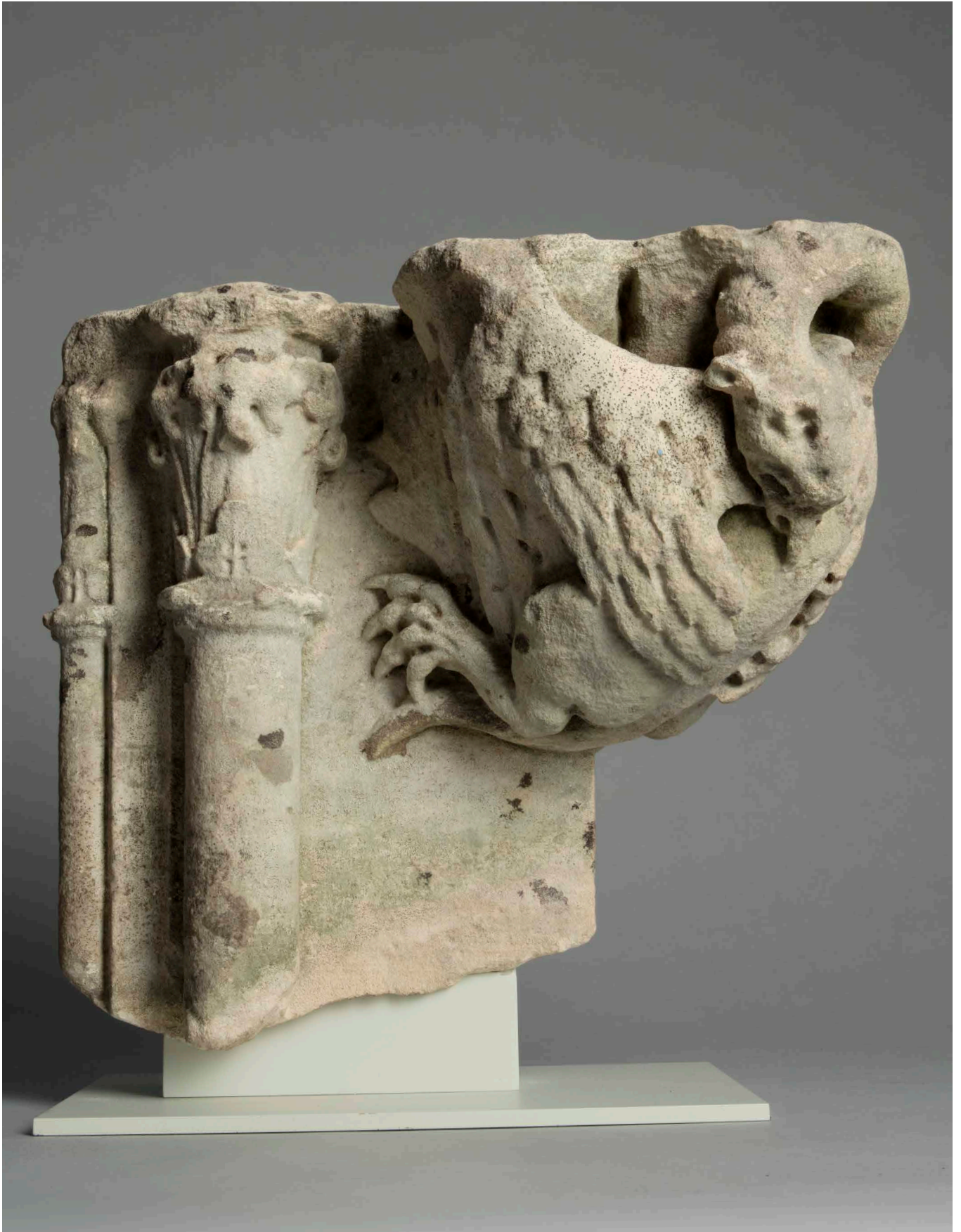


Fig. 4
South Window of
Canterbury Cathedral
showing the replaced
tracery and the arcade

A Dragon Capital



A Dragon Capital



Northern France
c.1230 - 60

33 x 35 x 20 cm, limestone, surface wear and some minor losses

Provenance:
Private Collection, Italy



Fig. 1
Capital
France, St. Maurice-
des-Fosses
c. 1230s

A writhing dragon with wings unfurled next to a duo of delicate shafts with foliate capitals. The dragon grips onto the building with its sharp claws, its head looking backwards. The dragon's facial features and wings are deeply carved, emphasising great energy and vitality, while its skeletal body is visible under his skin. The delicate shafts next to the dragon suggest that this capital once carried an arch, perhaps a tracery arch on the exterior of a window. Throughout the Middle Ages, fantastical beasts such as dragons were used to decorate both ecclesiastical and secular architectural contexts. A symbol of the devil, the dragon was a creature that lived on the boundary between the natural world and the supernatural world. It was thus often incorporated into marginal spaces where fantastic figures tempted the congregation into otherworldly exploration.

The capitals next to the dragon, with lines denoting delicate crockets and leaves decorating the lower part of each capital,

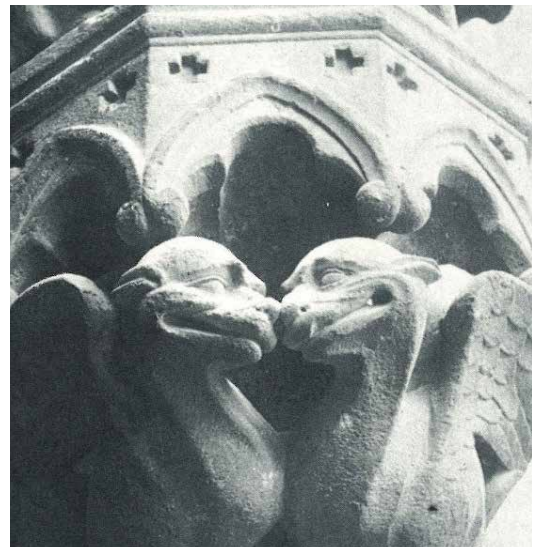


Fig. 2
Dragon capital
France, Amiens
13th century



suggest a rather early date as they can be compared to early 13th century examples, such as the capitals at St. Maur-des-Fosses (fig. 1). The dragon in this example is also related to a number of carvings of dragons surviving both in situ and in public collections, such as a capital with dragons from Amiens (fig. 2). The Amiens example may be earlier than the present capital due to the typically almond shaped eyes and large heads; however, it demonstrates a tradition of dragon imagery from the High Middle Ages through to the Late Middle Ages. The present example can also be compared with the dragons from the south transept of Chartres Cathedral and that in Beuvais (figs. 3 – 4).



Fig. 3
Dragon corbel
Chartres Cathedral,
South Transept
early 13th century



Fig. 4
Dragon corbel
France, Beauvais
c. 1500



The top of a window lancet decorated with an architectural pinnacle



The top of a window lancet decorated with an architectural pinnacle



This shapely lancet header, the uppermost section of a much taller, decorated church window, shows a slender-pinnacled architectural roofline picked out in yellow stain and delicate painted outlines against a deep garnet-red sky. Such motifs and forms developed in England during the first half of the fifteenth century, and were deployed for their ability to unite tall windows (which had to be visually divided into separate scenes or compartments in order to convey a variety of religious imagery) with a single style of slender architectural framework, in most cases one that frames the entire height of the lancet. As on our example, their upper outline is cusped to follow the stone tracery directly under which they were originally positioned. It is unusual however to find one that has not been squared up or made into a more regular shape by a later restorer, instead retaining its original shapely outline. Similar cusped 'headers' are preserved across southern and central England (fig. 1), as well as at York (fig. 2), where the same type of architectural decoration appears not only at the top of each window, but also in their various compositions, offering a sophisticated double pun and brilliant architectural illusionism.

England
First half fifteenth century

34.2 x 62.4 cm including leads: red and clear glass with silver stain and vitreous paint.

Provenance:
Collection of Alfred Fisher, Chapel Studios, until 2005

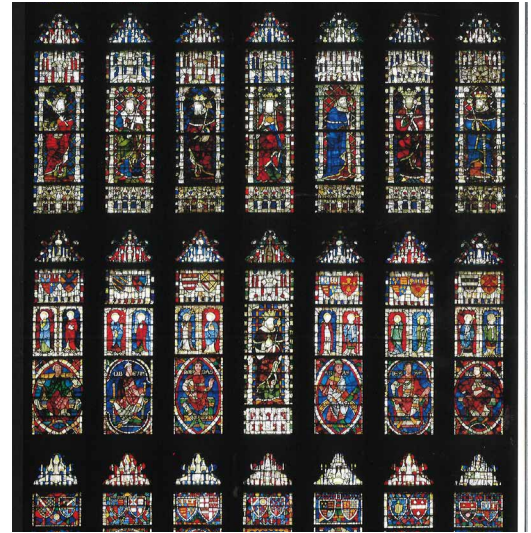


Fig. 1
Great west window at
Canterbury cathedral,
showing 12th- and
15th-century glass, all
united by architectural
headers made by John
Prudde (d. after 1447)



Fig. 2
John Thornton
Detail of the Seven
Churches of Asia, from
the Great East Window
at York Minster
1408



A Monumental Buttress Finial Fragment



A Monumental Buttress Finial Fragment



Northern France
1450 - 1500

150 x 45 x 45 cm; limestone, some general surface wear

Provenance:
Private Collection, France

A monumental limestone sculpture with four arms formed of curling leaves which are decorated by foliage on either side. The foliage is composed of large leaves that grow horizontally out of the central stem, sharply curving backwards and opening up to reveal dramatic shapes. The leaves are characterised by undulating edges, which meet in the centre to form quatrefoils

This flamboyant piece of sculpture would have once decorated the very top of a building, giving a flower-like appearance to the top of a pinnacle or a gable. Although this piece was only meant to be seen from a great distance, the detailed carving of the foliage and the liveliness of the composition testifies to the attention given to every element of a Gothic building. Buttress pinnacles were primarily decorative architectural elements, adding another vertical element to buildings that were already achieving immense height. However, these elements were also structural because their weight on top of flying buttresses counteracted the stresses that the flyers received from the vaults. The weight of the pinnacles and finials also helped hold other decorative elements, such as corbels or gargoyles, in place.

The curvaceous character of the foliage places this sculpture firmly in the flamboyant period (c. 1350 – 1500s), which is defined by ogee arches and an abundance of organic forms. Analogous examples can be found in Quimper Cathedral in Northern France (fig. 1). Here, the foliage that crawls along the gable as well as that decorates the finial shares the



Fig. 1
Gable of the West
Façade
France, Quimper
Cathedral
c. 1424 - 1450

same decorative characteristics as our sculpture. A close comparison can also be made with the finials atop the buttress pinnacles of the chapel of St Barbara in Faoeut, Brittany (fig. 2). The foliage decorating the pinnacles here bears a striking resemblance to our sculpture.



Fig. 2
Buttress Pinnacle
France, Brittany, Le
Faouet, Chapelle Sainte
Barbe
Late 15th century

A fragment of Tournai stone tomb monument



A fragment of Tournai stone tomb monument



A beautiful carved fragment from a Medieval tomb monument surviving with its delicate incised details in excellent condition. The two square sections of the relief depict a tower with pointed gables and a tiled roof with turrets on either side, a profusion of slender gothic pinnacles with crockets, and an inscribed band running along the upper edge.

The relief is carved from Tournai stone, a dense and richly hued black carboniferous limestone. The stone was admired for its deep black sheen, accomplishable through polishing,

Northern France, Tournai or Arras
Late 14th Century

57.5 x 29 x 8cm; black Tournai limestone with white pigment, the irregular size of the slabs and their horizontal edges cut at a later period, indicate that the tomb was later carved up and re-used in a different context, likely as paving stones

Inscription:
dieu same prie(z) – 'pray for his soul' (same = son âme)

Provenance:
Private Collection, France

Literature:
Fragments d'une splendeur: Arras à la fin du Moyen Age, Exh. Cat., Arras, 2000

Ludovic Nys, *La pierre de Tournai: Son exploitation et son usage aux XIIIème, XIVème et XVème siècles, Tournai, 1993*

A. de Valkeneer, "Inventaire des tombeaux et dalles à gisants en relief, Belgique," in *Bulletin de la Commission royale des monuments et des sites, Brussels, Vol. 14, 1963, pp. 91-256*



Fig. 1

Fragment of a funerary monument showing an architectural tower with vestiges of an inscription
Northern France, or Paris
Late 14th century
25.7 x 36.5 x 4.5 cm;
Limestone
Paris, musée du Louvre, Inv. No. RF4504

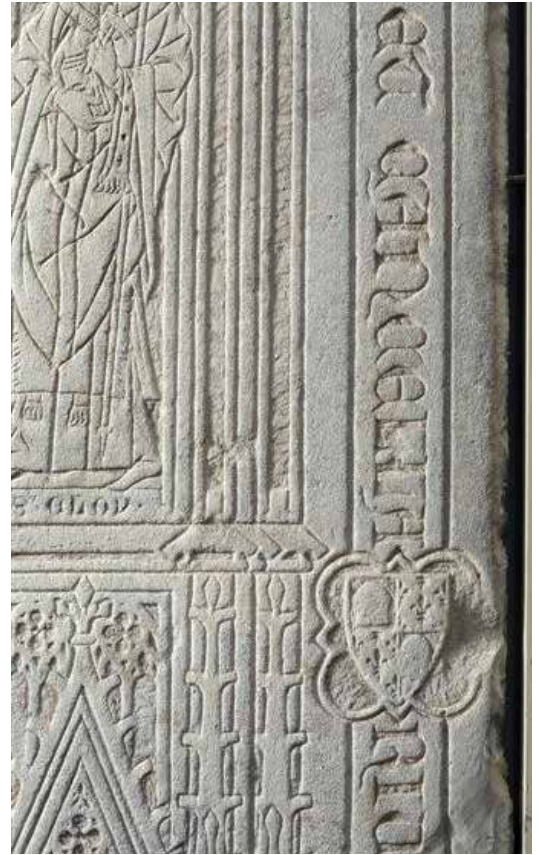


Fig. 2

Fragment of a funerary monument showing an architectural tower with vestiges of an inscription

Northern France, or Paris

Late 14th century
25.7 x 36.5 x 4.5 cm;
Limestone

Paris, musée du Louvre, Inv. No. RF4504

and it was often equated with ‘marbre’ in contemporary documents.¹ The broken edges reveal the grey colour of the unpolished stone, while the front and back display the lustrous quality of its polished state. It can be distinguished from the similar stone of the Dinant, Namur, and Liege regions of the Meuse valley by the absence of any white veins.² White pigment has been added to the carving here to provide a bold, legible contrast with the dense black hue of the polished stone.

This particular type of limestone was quarried on the banks of the River Scheldt near Tournai in modern-day Belgium. It was carved in the local workshops and exported throughout the Lowlands and northern France in the form of fonts, tombstones, columns and related statuary, often because of its colour for use within solemn, memorialising contexts. It was first popularised as early as the 1270s by the monarchy, who chose to have their tombs fashioned from a combination of finely polished black stone shipped increasingly from the

2, See M. Duser, R. Dreesen, and A. De Naeyer, “Natural Stones in Flanders - an illustrated catalogue of historical building and ornamental stones in N-Belgium, including microscopic characteristics. The Belgian black marbles as a case study,” in *Twelfth Euroseminar on Microscopy Applied to Building Stones*, ed. B. Middendorf, A. Just, D. Klein, A. Glaubitt, and J. Simon, (Dortmund, 2009), pp. 213-226.

1, Ludovic Nys, *La pierre de Tournai*, 1993, p. 162.

northern territories, and pure white marble sourced from the Carrara quarries of Italy.³ Fragments surviving with similar script and architectural details help to draw the dating of the tomb to the late 14th century. See in this respect two fragments in the musée du Louvre, Paris, Figs. 1-2. See also a closely related slab in the Musée d'Histoire et des Arts décoratifs, Tournai (Fig. 3), as well as another in the church of Saint-Marie-Madeleine in the same city, which is currently inaccessible to the public. There are also related examples in the Municipal Museum, Arras.



Fragments such as the present example are the rare survivals of the widespread destruction of tomb monuments that occurred during the French Revolution, since those memorialised on their surfaces represented the Ancien Régime and the despotic role of the monarchy and church over the poor of the country. The regular shape of the two cut sections indicate that they were reused after this date, most likely as floor tiles – the fashion for monochrome pavements in black and white marble superseding the ornate decoration of the churches before the Revolution. A similarly vivid expression of the regular adaptation of epitaphic reliefs for the purpose of reuse as building materials can be seen in the example of the dismembered tomb brass of Gilles of Namain, which was incorporated into liturgical furniture and door panels (illustrated in J. W. Steyaert, *Late Gothic Sculpture; The Burgundian Netherlands*, Exh. Cat., Ghent, 1994, Cat. 37, p. 185).

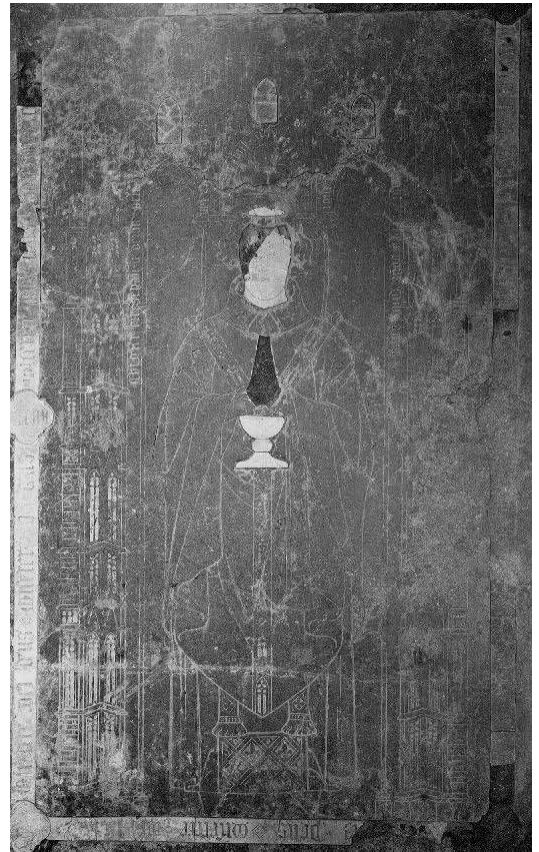


Fig. 3
Funerary monument of an abbot
France, Tournai
Second half 14th century
240 x 149 cm; Black Tournai limestone
Tournai, Musée d'Histoire et des Arts décoratifs
(Musée de la Porcelaine)

3, See P. Williamson, *Gothic Sculpture 1140 – 1300*, New Haven and London, 1995, pp. 171-2

Renaissance-Gothic canopy



Renaissance-Gothic canopy



This masterful, three-sided canopy is carved in the Flamboyant style, which first developed in France in the 14th century. In the early 20th century, the canopy was owned by George Grey Barnard, whose collection became the foundation of The Cloisters MET in New York. The canopy was a gift to the MET from John D. Rockefeller, who purchased the majority of Barnard's collection in 1925. The tracery covering the three faces of this canopy is composed of a flattened ogee arch, which is decorated with cusped curvilinear tracery on either side. The arches are further decorated by crockets, while microarchitectural buttresses topped by pinnacles are positioned at the corners. The underside of the canopy is decorated by a groin vault and an armorial boss. The canopy is topped by a heavy cornice. The canopy would have originally surmounted a figurative sculpture, creating a micro-architectural space for the statue to inhabit. The survival of traces of polychrome on this canopy suggests that it was probably protected by a roof or

**Northern France
1450 - 1500**

42 x 60 x 40 cm; limestone; general surface wear and minor losses at the corners, some traces of polychromy

Provenance:

George Grey Barnard Collection, New York;
Gift of John D. Rockefeller, Jr., 1937 to The
Cloisters Collection (MET), no. 37.70;
Deaccessioned March 8, 2004

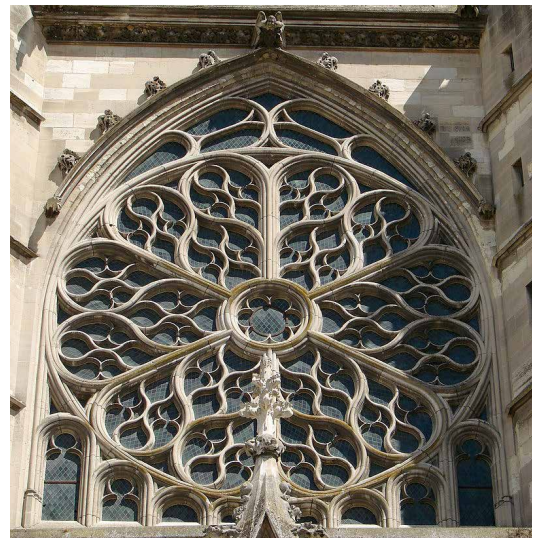


Fig. 1
Rose Window
France, Meaux
Cathedral
Second half of the 15th
century



Fig. 2
Entombment of Christ
France, Solesmes
Abbey
c. 1496

by a deep porch. Such canopies were commonly located on portals but they were also often inside of churches, over tombs or in private chapels, which was probably the case with this example.

Stylistically, the canopy fits within the Flamboyant subcategory of Gothic architecture, which is characterised by curvilinear tracery and flame-like shapes (fig. 1). In France, Flamboyant started to gain popularity in the late 14th century, relying on texture to ‘infuse a building inside and outside with a Late Gothic character.’ There is a real focus on surface decoration in these buildings and our canopy fits well within that repertoire. Dated to the second half of the 15th century, this canopy exhibits a mature side of the Flamboyant style, where Gothic vocabulary started to be integrated into Renaissance compositions (fig. 2 - 3). In our canopy, the heavy cornice and cube-like shape illustrates this influence. Although an ogee arch is present on each face, the rest of the tracery is foliate in character, which is reminiscent of the organic forms on late medieval Gothic buildings.



Fig. 3
Maison des Tetes
France, Valence
1528 - 1532

A Pierced Flamboyant canopy



A Pierced Flamboyant canopy



Northern France
c. 1450

46 x 47 x 42 cm; limestone; general surface wear and minor losses at the corners and on the tracery

Provenance:

George Grey Barnard Collection, New York; The Cloisters Collection (MET), acquired in 1925, no. 25.120.536e accessioned March 8, 2004

In the early 20th century, this canopy was owned by George Grey Barnard, whose collection became the foundation of The Cloisters MET in New York. According to The Cloisters Building Accounts, the canopy was purchased in 1925 and it remained in the collection until 2004.

The distinctive character of this canopy is gained through the deep drill-work, which creates deep shadows and a lace-like effect on the surface of this micro-architectural sculpture. The canopy consists of three carved faces. Each face is dominated by a cusped ogee arch with a finial. The tracery windows behind the ogee arches are completely undercut, giving the illusion of depth. The moulding above the tracery is further decorated by rosettes and similar foliate motifs are carved on the underside of the buttresses which are positioned on the corners of the canopy. The underside of the canopy is ornamented by a ribbed vault and a lavish, almost conical foliate boss. The canopy would have originally surmounted a figurative sculpture, creating a micro-architectural space for

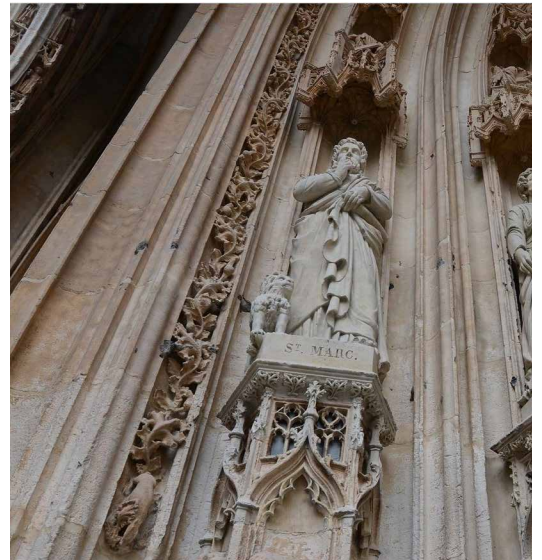


Fig. 1
West Portal
France, Saint-Maclou
de Rouen
Late 15th century



Fig. 2
West Portal and detail
France, Notre-Dame de
l'Épine
Late 15th century

the statue to inhabit. Such canopies were commonly located on portals but they were also often inside of churches, over tombs or in private chapels. Analogous examples are found in Northern France, such as at Saint-Maclou de Rouen or Notre-Dame de l'Épine (fig. 1 – 2). The canopies on the facades of these churches often surmount statues, stacked in order to also function as bases. The unfinished top of our canopy suggests that it, too, may have functioned this way.

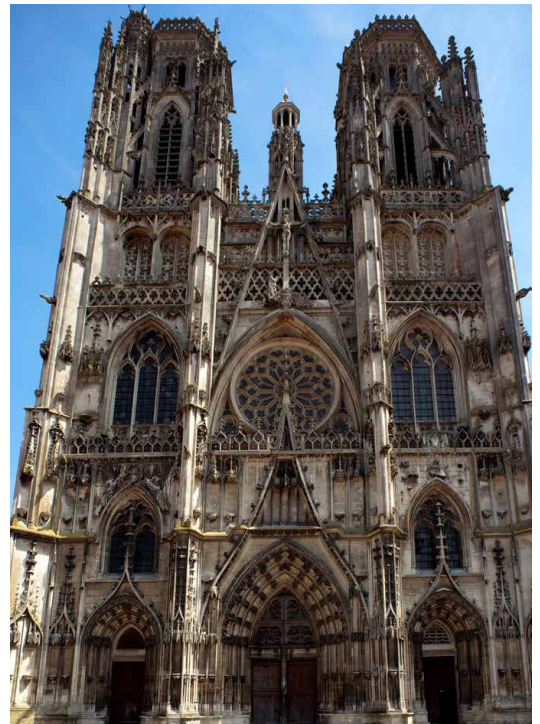


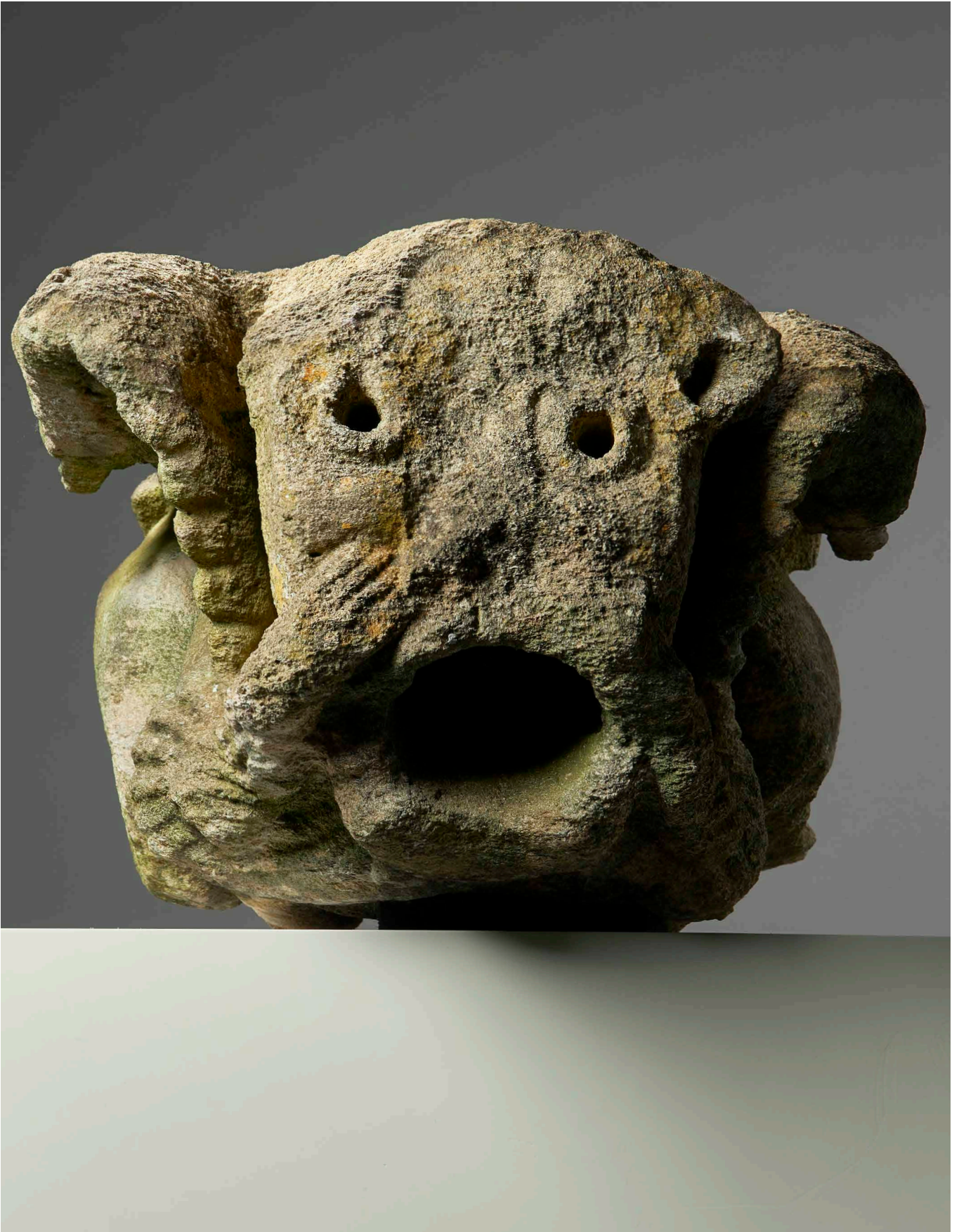
Fig. 3
West façade
France, Cathédrale
Saint-Étienne de Toul
15th century



Stylistically, the canopy fits within the Flamboyant subcategory of Gothic architecture, which is characterised by curvilinear tracery and flame-like shapes (fig. 1 - 3). In France, Flamboyant started to gain popularity in the late 14th century, relying on texture to 'infuse a building inside and outside with a Late Gothic character.' There is a real focus on surface decoration in these buildings and our canopy fits well within that repertoire.



A Howling Gargoyle with Wings



A Howling Gargoyle with Wings



**Southern England
Late 15th century**

37 x 52 x 71 cm; limestone

Provenance:

Acquired from an unknown Church, Mr. E.

Clayson, Harrold, 1959

Collection of Peter Inskip M.B.E., London, until 2017

Related Literature:

J. R. Benton, *Medieval Mischief: Wit and Humour in the Art of the Middle Ages*, 2004. R. Sheridan and A. Ross, *Grotesques and Gargoyles: Paganism in the Medieval Church*, 1975.

John Goodall, 'A Study of the Grotesque 14th-Century Sculpture at Adderbury, Bloxhaill and Hanwell in its Architectural Context,' in *Oxoniensia*, IX, (1995), p. 271 – 332.

This winged gargoyle once almost certainly decorated the exterior of an English parish church. The gargoyle would have crouched at the edge of a roofline, its hind legs bent close to its body and its wings folded in halfway, almost as if it was ready for flight. The hybrid nature of the creature is visualised by its human-like face, which is dominated by two circular eyes and a large open mouth. The creature brings one of its small hands forward, grabbing onto its mouth, almost as if to pull on in the usual manner of mouth pulling gargoyles. Its large mouth was once not only representative of its terrified expression but also of its function as a waterspout.

The style of the gargoyle clearly places it within a repertoire of late medieval English gargoyles and corbel heads, especially those in Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire. Analogous examples can be found in Adderbury, Oxfordshire or in Winchcombe, Gloucestershire (figs. 1). In both counties fantastical gargoyles decorate the rooflines of the church. They have grinning, fearful expressions and are often in the form of hybrid creatures.

Such figures represent the kind of playful marginalia present on the edges of manuscripts or on the edges of buildings – lurking in the shadows and peering out of corners. These sculptures would have presented the viewer with a stark contrast to the serious and iconographically clear biblical scenes that were at the centre of the church. Michael Camille called these types of images a 'side-show' and pointed out how

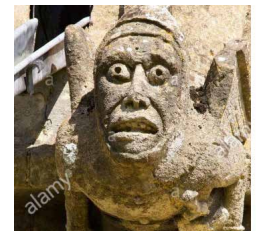


Fig. 1

Two gargoyles from St Peter's church
England,
Gloucestershire,
Winchcombe
Late 15th century



these 'disordered fragments of human personalities stuck onto the edges of the Heavenly Jerusalem, disrupted our notion of the cathedral as a "Bible in stone", since they refer to no biblical personage or text.' The meaning of figures like ours and their inclusion in great numbers on medieval churches is likely to have been at least in part intended to ward off evil, yet their appearance would have also been highly charged with playfulness and humour. Studies of medieval gargoyles discuss the iconography of sneering and mouth-pulling at length, noting that their meaning could be anything from apotropaic to sexual innuendo. Examples of mouth-pullers can be found on corbels, on bosses, and even decorating columns throughout England and France.



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Reims Cathedral, France	Cover
Prefatory miniature from a moralized Bible of "God as architect of the world", folio I verso, Paris ca. 1220–1230. Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna 2554	3
Amiens Cathedral, France	5
Chapter House Vault, York Minster, UK (Flickr: Andy Clark)	7
Abbaye de Jumièges, France	26
Saint-Remi, Reims, France (Flickr: Tranter Dewy)	36
Sainte-Chapelle, Paris, France	89
Soissons Cathedral, France (Flickr: .urbanman.)	98
Wells Cathedral, UK (Philadelphia Museum of Art: Purchased with funds contributed by Dorothy Norman, 1973, 1973-197-17)	105
Notre-Dame, Paris	115
Wladislaw Hall, Prague Castle, Czech Republic	125
Ulm Minster Spire, Germany (Luis Pina Photography)	149

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