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Attributed to Jean-Baptiste Defernex
French, 1728 - 1783

Portrait of Antoine-René de Voyer de Paulmy d’Argenson, ca. 1765
Terracotta on wooden base decorated with gilded bronze

Purchase with European Art Acquisition Fund, purchase with funds from Irene and Howard Stein, through prior acquisitions from the Friends of Art and Colonel Clifford C. Early, High Museum of Art Enhancement Fund, and funds from the Phoenix Society, 2007.126
This small terracotta bust was purchased by the High Museum of Art to enrich the collection's eighteenth-century French sculpture holdings, and particularly as an example of terracotta portraiture. This under-life size bust is unsigned and undated, making a definitive attribution difficult. To investigate this question of attribution my research took a three-pronged approach. First, I hoped through research into Paulmy's biography to reveal more secure connections to its current attribution, Jean Baptiste Defernex (c.1729-1783). Second, I sought to confirm the attribution by comparing this artistic style with other sculptors that worked in the medium of the terracotta portraits; however, a stylistic comparison problematized the attribution to Defernex. The device of the overflowing drapery is an uncharacteristic anomaly in Defernex's oeuvre, and this device has led me to suggest another possible attribution to Jean Baptiste Lemoyne, the Younger (1704-1778). Finally, a technical study with the help and guidance of Renee Stein, conservator at the Michael C. Carols Museum, yielded further information about the bust's history and one of its earlier appearances. Traces of copper-colored paint found over
the entire surface of the bust suggest it had at some point been painted. The bust entered the
collection mounted on an architectural wooden and gilded bronze base that bears Paulmy's coat
of arms. The base is an unusual mount, especially for a terracotta portrait, but it would be more
appropriate for a work in bronze. This odd paring suggests that the bust and the base were united
at the time the bust was painted to imitate a bronze sculpture.

**Portraits of Paulmy**

Before considering questions of authorship, I confirmed the sitter's identity by comparing
the bust to two paintings in the manner of Hyacinthe Rigaud, in which Paulmy wears the Order
of the Saint Esprit and the Order of the Saint Louis in Figures 1 and 2, respectively. An
etching/engraving by Augustin de Saint-Aubin also captures his profile and commemorates his
appointment as *ministre d'Etat de la Guerre* (Figure 3). These portraits clearly illustrate Paulmy's
distinctive physiognomy. A prominent dip marks the bridge of the nose, which is characterized
by a characteristic thin flat ridge and slightly bulbous tip. Further, Paulmy's features are marked
by a broad high forehead, delicately arched eye brows, a small mouth, and a dimpled chin. In
Saint Aubin's portrait, as in the terracotta bust, Paulmy wears a lace jabot around his neck, a sash
across his chest, and an a third unmarked medal hangs from the ribbon on his neck. In the High's
bust, the placard indicating his membership to the Order of the Saint Esprit is affixed to his
mantle. These attributes of his physiognomy and wardrobe confirm the bust as Paulmy and
provide clues to his biography.

**Biography**

The Marquis de Paulmy, an 18th century French aristocrat in the court of Louis XV,
belonged to a long line of courtiers in the de Voyer d'Argenson family. In fact, there were four
Monsieur d'Argenson at the court. In order to distinguish among them Antoine-René soon became known as the Marquis de Paulmy, or simply Paulmy.¹ Born on November 22, 1722, Paulmy held a number of political positions in the court. In 1751 at the age of twenty-nine, Paulmy succeeded his uncle in becoming the ministre d'Etat de la Guerre.² This honor was briefly held, as he was demissioned after approximately thirteen months in office. Like many other members of the d'Argenson family, Paulmy also served as ambassador to Venice, an honor recorded by the Lion of St. Mark that sits atop the family crest (Figure 4).³ Though he held a number of other positions, Paulmy's talents were not suited to the administrative demands of court life.⁴ He definitively retired from public life at the age of forty-four and dedicated himself to his true passion: books. He was a consummate bibliophile whose collection soon overflowed the old Arsenal where he lived as Grand Master of the Artillery (Figure 5).⁵ Today, his collection is part of Bibliothèque Nationale de France, and it is still housed in the Arsenal, from which it receives its name La Bibliothèque d'Arsenal. Paulmy's portrait by Saint Aubin hangs in the hallway as you enter the reading room, and reminds us of Paulmy's contribution to the

¹Yeves Combeau notes that he was also called the Marquis de Guerche for other lands he owned: Combeau 1999, 105. For the lands of Paulmy and Guerche see Combeau 1999, 411-14.
²Paulmy was secrétaire d'Etat de la Guerre "par survivance" and then later as ministre d'Etat: Combeau 1999, 106 n. 73.
³Paulmy served a number of political positions during his life at court. For a complete list see Combeau 1999, 106, n. 75 and Appendix 1.
⁴Battifol 1933, 125.
⁵Paulmy shared a particularly close relationship with his uncle, the Comte d'Argenson; one of their common passions was books. The first mention of Paulmy's library collection was in a 1754 letter, in which Paulmy requested advice from his uncle's secretary concerning some book purchases. Later, Paulmy inherited his choice of a thousand books from his uncle's estate to add to his own collection. Paulmy loved his books so much that he once wrote to his cousin that he would rather give up the lands he would inherit for his uncle's books (Lefèvre and Muzerelle 1988, 307). Paulmy proposed giving his collection to Louis XVI, on the condition that he would replace the royal librarian who had died on April 1, 1784. This proposition was refused, and he subsequently sold his collection to the Comte d'Artois, the king's brother, on June 20, 1785 under the condition that he could still enjoy his collection until his death (Lefèvre and Muzerelle 1988, 309). This collection became the Bibliothèque nationale during the Revolution (Battifol 1933, 124). For a more detailed history of Paulmy's library and its contents see Lefèvre and Muzerelle 1988 and Battifol 1933.
Bibliothèque Nationale. On August 12, 1787, aged sixty-five, Paulmy died, and his rooms and his library filled over twenty-six rooms in the Arsenal.\(^6\)

**Possible Attribution to Jean-Baptiste Defernex**

Biographical evidence supports the attribution of Paulmy's bust to Jean-Baptiste Defernex, namely their shared association with the l'Académie de Saint-Luc. The sculptor was a member of the French artistic Académie de Saint-Luc distinct from, and some consider lesser than, the Royal Academy.\(^7\) While Paulmy lived at the Arsenal, he served as the Protector of the Académie de Saint-Luc.\(^8\) The Academy's salons had been held at the Arsenal while Paulmy's uncle, the Comte d'Argenson, had been its co-protector. During the Comte d'Argenson's time as a sponsor for the Académie de Saint-Luc, he received several small artworks, though he never became a serious collector.\(^9\) It is likely that Paulmy similarly received minor works, which could include this small terracotta bust. Thus Paulmy had been associated with the academy, indirectly during his uncle's tenure, and later directly as its protector. It is almost certain that Paulmy and Defernex knew each other, making it possible that Paulmy either commissioned or was gifted his portrait bust at this time. During Paulmy's tenure Defernex exhibited approximately a dozen portraits in marble, terracotta, and plaster at the Academy salons from 1762 and 1774; however, no bust of Paulmy, by Defernex or other artists, was exhibited at the academy's salons during

\(^6\)To my knowledge no monograph on the Marquis de Paulmy has been written, though monographs for his uncle, the Comte d'Argenson, and his cousin, the Marquis de Voyer reveal many facts about his life. The following sources have yielded the most information concerning Paulmy's life: Battifol 1933, Lefèvre and Muzerelle 1988, Combeau 1999, and Blomac 2004.

\(^7\)It should also be noted that several very skilled artists chose not to become members of the Royal Academy. Defernex should not necessarily be considered a lesser artist for not joining the Royal Academy.

\(^8\)This Parisian l'Académie de Saint-Luc is branch of the Roman Accademia di San Luca. For a history of the Académie de Saint-Luc and its Salons see Guiffrey 1970.

\(^9\)For the Comte d'Argenson's involvement in the academy see Combeau 1999, 438.
these years.\(^\text{10}\) The state of research at this time cannot affirm the attribution to Defernex, as the evidence remains too circumstantial.

A stylistic comparison of the bust with Defernex’s oeuvre counters the attribution to Defernex. Like many French sculptors at this time Defernex was a talented portraitist; however, he has not received much scholarly attention, and his works remain little known.\(^\text{11}\) As noted by the art historian Louis Réau, *The Mercure de France* praised Defernex's ability to finely express physiognomy, character, and details in his portraits.\(^\text{12}\) *The Almanach des Artistes* also observes that one might mistakenly address one of Defernex's portraits at first glance since their likeness is so striking. A similar fine and striking physiognomy is certainly captured in the High’s bust, which is notable for the detailed sculpting. Paulmy’s upward glance and slightly turned head creates an air of animation as though he were about to address the viewer. Delicately modeled facial features, a twisted torso, and a carefully textured shirt all capture the vivacity of the sitter and exhibit the sculptor's skill.\(^\text{13}\)

While Defernex was not a member of the Royal Academy, he made many portraits for notable members of society and court such as Mme de Fondville, the actress Mme de Favart, and a Russian prince, Prince Pytor Ivanovich Repnine (1734-1801); however, Defernex never

\(^\text{10}\) Guiffrey notes one etching/engraving of the Marquis de Paulmy by M. Lefebvre after M. Michel Vanloo in 1774 (Guiffrey1970, 143).
\(^\text{11}\) For the two main sources on Defernex see Réau 1931 and Karpova 2006, and Woehrle, Brigitte. 1993. The later is a dissertation at the Université Paris IV, Sorbonne that I have been unable to request.
\(^\text{13}\) This shirt is a very unusual clothing choice and material. In most portraits men wear a jacket and vest, plate mail, or a more classical or artistic look, such as an open shirt. The Marquis' costume is therefore very unusual. The hypothesis that it represented chain mail was put forward, but this is incorrect. Chain mail was no longer worn at this time, plate mail was preferred. Though I have not been able to confirm the material, I would propose that the minute and repeating ridges are meant to represent a crimped material similar to crape. Crape was very popular in the last quarter of the eighteenth century in the English courts (Hill 1893, 149-150). It was commonly imported from Italy as seen by the heavy import taxes England imposed on crapes and tiffanies (singular tiffany - a thin silk) (Nicholson 1821, cf: silk). The material of Paulmy’s shirt may be meant to recall his and the family’s position in Venice. Further research into the history and manufacture of silk crape may reveal information helpful for dating the bust, and consequently, may illuminate the question of attribution. For a brief history of chain mail see Grancsay 1928. For the popularity of silk in the English court see Hill 1898, 149-150.
portrayed the royal family (Figure 6). Having held several prominent positions at court and possessing a distinguished family that had long served at the court, the Marquis' social status, especially as the Academy's protector, would have made him an appropriate subject for Defernex to portray.

The physiognomic traits of the Prince Repnine and the Marquis de Paulmy have been sculpted in similar ways (Figures 7 and 8). Both men possess a prominent bump at the bridge of the nose, a notable nasal ridge line, and a rounded tip with flaring nostrils. They also possess a wide flat forehead, and delicately arched eyebrows. However, the Marquis' features have been more delicately modeled and detailed than the Prince Repnine. The sculptor has rendered the face with greater depth and refinement. These differences can, however, be accounted for by the varying materials: terracotta versus marble. Terracotta is more malleable and easier to model than the harder marble.

What differs significantly between Defernex’s works and the High's bust, irrespective of the material, is the treatment of the drapery. As seen in the marble bust of the Prince Repnine Defernex arranges the drapery to create a contained and controlled composition. The edges of his lion skin drape carefully twist under to create a continuous curving edge for the bust. The lion’s head rests on Repnine’s proper left shoulder; the paws neatly and carefully wrap up the undefined drapery, creating a pleasing truncation of the bust. This shows a much more restrained and classical approach to the composition.

This classical approach is characteristic of Defernex. The sculptor treats the drapery in a similar manner in his larger plaster bust of Monsieur de Buffon at the Musée de Buffon (Figure 9). Again the drapery is wrapped around the edge of the bust, masking the truncated torso. The
ends of the drapery are carefully arranged to fall over the edge of the shoulder like the lion's paws. This extra vertical element gives nuance to the geometric circularity while maintaining a balanced composition. In fact, Defernex preferred to complete his busts with this wrapped drapery device. He uses this technique in several of his male portrait busts made in a variety of media including marble, bronze, and plaster (Plate 1).

The artist’s treatment of the drapery in High's bust is markedly different than Defernex's sculptures. Paulmy’s cloak envelops his body and animates the composition in a way that recalls the billowing drapery of Gian Lorenzo Bernini – a more baroque and Italianate style. The marquis' cloak swirls around the front of his torso. It continues to wrap around the side of the bust extending to the back of the bust and over the socle before finally spilling out onto the architectural base and pooling around the bottom of the socle (Figure 10).

The treatment of the drapery and the interest in extending the illusion of the torso are significant stylistic factors that contradict the attribution to Defernex. The sculptor of the High's bust is inspired by the baroque draperies of the Italian school, while Defernex followed the French classical model. He chose to mask the truncation of the torso by wrapping it, and thus he created harmonious and controlled compositions. By contrast, the Marquis' drapery suggests the continuation of the body beneath. It enlivens the portrait and invites the viewer to take in the entire composition. Therefore, if the attribution to Defernex stands, this stylistic anomaly needs to be addressed.14

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14In the sculpture archives at the Louvre I found only one other portrait attributed to Defernex that shows the same drapery technique. This is the bust of Mme Duthé that belonged to M. Eug. Kramer. The bust is recorded in the Exposition rétrospective de portraits de femmes sous les trois è républiques organized by the Société Nationale des beaux arts in the Palais de Bagatelle Paris, 1909. (Figure 33). Unfortunately, I have not been able to locate this bust or its publication, consequently I do not know the reason behind its attribution.
Possible Attribution to Baptiste Lemoyne the younger

Given the significant stylistic difference evidenced in the treatment of the drapery I began searching for stylistic similarities among other eighteenth-century French sculptors. I was quickly struck by an almost identical treatment of cloth in the works of Jean-Baptiste Lemoyne the younger, artist to King Louis XV of France and member of the Royal Academy of Arts. Lemoyne’s life size terracotta bust of de Dyé Gendrier (1700-1791), at the Blois, Château, Musée des Beaux-Arts, shows a similar incorporation of the drapery into the socle (Figure 11). Similar to the artist of the High's bust, Lemoyne animates his drapery by crossing it in front and allowing it to billow out from and around the sitter. Like the folds on Paulmy's proper right, Lemoyne stiffens the drapery giving it its own integrity.

Lemoyne deploys this same technique in this his marble portraits, and once again animates the busts. In this 1768 over-life size bust of Geneviève-Françoise Randon de Malboissière (1740-1766), at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, he again crosses the drapery and wraps it around the bust (Figure 12). The drapery is integrated with the socle, which actually creates support for the bust. This is easily seen in the side view from the proper right where both draperies envelop the socle and pool onto the flat surface (Figures 13 and 14). The drapery functions as part of the socle.

Nicholas Penny notes that extending the drapery to fall over the socle was a favored device of eighteenth-century French and German sculptors. Penny cites Lemoyne as an example, but also notes this device was popular with Joseph Chinard, Simon-Louis Boizot, Jean-Jacques Caffieri, Jean-Anotine Houdon, and Carlo Maria Giudici. For Penny's work on early-modern bases see Penny 2008, 463-465. A preliminary investigation into these artists’ styles suggests that Boizot (1743-1809) is the most likely alternative attribution. Having worked at the Sèvres porcelain factory, Boizot produced miniature porcelain pendant portraits of Louis XVI and Marie-Antoinette, now at the Victoria and Albert Museum (C.367&A-1983) (Plate 3). These busts exhibit his skill in creating small scale portraits. Boizot spent a significant part of his early career in Italy, and he was most active in Paris during the 1770s and 1780s at the very end of Paulmy’s life. This attribution is possible, but would then date the bust to the later part of Paulmy’s life.
This treatment of the drapery appears to be a stylistic signature for Lemoyne (Plate 2). Louis Réau described the terracotta bust of the lawyer as lively and spirited, which belongs to a period when the Berninesque baroque style was fashionable (Figure 15). As these comparisons of Lemoyne's terracotta portraits show, this animated drapery enlivens these portraits.

In addition to stylistic similarities, biographical evidence about his personal relationships also supports an attribution to Lemoyne. As the king's favored artist, Lemoyne portrayed the royal family; however, he also depicted courtiers, writers, lawyers, and artists. One of Lemoyne's subjects and close friends was the popular pastelleist George Quentin de la Tour (1704-1788), who was connected to Paulmy's cousin the Marquis de Voyer. Lemoyne and La Tour were close friends and made portraits of each other in their respective mediums (Figures 16 and 17). La Tour painted the portrait of Paulmy's cousin, the Marquis de Voyer, a notable collector and prominent member of the court (Figure 18). Displayed in the 1753 Salon, critics often praised this portrait as an example of La Tour's creativity. La Tour's friendship with Lemoyne could have introduced the king's favored sculptor to Paulmy's family, who were successful courtiers. Thus, it is possible that Lemoyne was commissioned to execute Paulmy's bust.

While no date or occasion is known for Paulmy's bust, the greater expense of a sculpture suggests it was commissioned at the peak of Paulmy's career, in which case a portrait by the court artist would be appropriate. If this is the case, it is likely that the bust was executed, like Saint Aubin's portrait, to commemorate Paulmy's prestigious appointment as ministre d'Etat de la

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16 Réau 1927, 96.
17 Blomac 2004, 86.
Guerre. That same year (1757) Paulmy was also named Chancelier Garde des Sceaux. The bust could have been commissioned by Paulmy himself, or given as a gift by the Marquise de Pompadour, who acted as his protectress. The many orders that Paulmy wears in the High bust - the Saint Esprit, the sash, and a third unidentified medal on his chest - suggests that 1757 is the terminus post quem for this bust. It is likely that the High's bust served as a preliminary study for a later marble or bronze bust. This later sculpture may never have been executed due to Paulmy's short thirteen month duration in office.

Despite this evidence, my research has been unable to reveal a secure attribution. While the biographical evidence strongly suggests that Defernex and Paulmy knew each other well, the Italianate and baroque treatment of the drapery is virtually non-existent in Defernex's oeuvre. The stylistic similarities between the High's bust and the work of Jean-Baptiste Lemoyne the Younger strongly suggest a re-attribution. As members of Paulmy's family were highly regarded courtiers it is certainly possible that Lemoyne could have been commissioned to create a bust of the Marquis de Paulmy. Unfortunately, the evidence presented in the current state of research remains circumstantial.

**Technical Study**

-Copper-Colored Paint

A technical study revealed significant traces of a dark coating with metallic flecks indicating that at one point the bust was meant to mimic a bronze sculpture. Though gilding and bronzing terracottas was a common practice, the residue might indicate that this sculpture was a study for a later bronze. The metallic flakes show the bust was once bathed in a copper-colored paint. Traces of the coating are also seen on the mantle enveloping the torso and on the bottom of
the socle. The largest deposits of this paint were on the hair, especially in the creases between the curls as the deep crevices are difficult to clean. Renee Stein took a sample of the coating from the proper left curls on the head, and we examined the sample under the microscope at the Michael C. Carlos museum (Figure 19).

Under the microscope, we were better able to examine both the copper-colored flakes and the darker pigment in which they were imbedded. The copper-colored metallic flakes are clearly visible among the darker paste. These flakes are visible to the naked eye but glow more vibrantly under the microscope’s light and when seen at 40 times magnification (Figure 20). A large deposit of the metallic coating is easily seen on the bottom of the socle. These copper-colored flakes are embedded in a darker material that is likely charcoal, due to its flakey appearance combined with an ochre or umber pigment. Mixed together, the copper, charcoal, and earth pigments provided the appearance of a dark metallic sculpture (the color of an old penny). This was likely done with the intention of masking the terracotta and imitating costlier bronze sculptures. Terracotta and plaster sculptures were often gilded or covered in bronze paint to imitate the costlier material.

Covered in this thick darker metallic coating, the bust of the Marquis de Paulmy would have looked similar to Lemoyne's petite bronze sculpture of Louis XV (Figure 21). In fact, Lemoyne created several terracotta sculptures that were either later coated in a bronze paint or copied into bronze and marble sculptures. The portrait of the physician Reaumur by Lemoyne is another example of a terracotta that was coated in bronze-colored paint (Figure 22). When

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18No tests were conducted to confirm the metal or the pigments, as my research indicated it would not reveal further significant information. We performed an XRF test with the sample to determine the metal alloy, but the test was inconclusive.
19The sculptor's contemporary Etienne Falconet mentions that Lemoyne sculptures were also sometimes gilded Réau 1927, 99.
coated in this paint, Paulmy’s portrait would have had a similar appearance to the terracotta medallion in the High Museum of Art's collection that depicts the artist Joseph Chinard’s, self-portrait and retains its bronze paint (Figure 23).

-The Base

The bust was likely mounted on the architectural base at the time it was coated with the paint. Though it is unusual for a portrait to be mounted on base like this, small bronze statuettes and decorative arts pieces are often mounted on ebony coated and gilded bases. An example of a mantle clock from the same period is mounted on an oak base covered in ebony and gilded bronze (Figure 24). Both bases contrast the darker wood with gilded ornamentation and act as quasi-architectural supports for the object. Paulmy's gilded coat of arms decorates the front of the base, which complements the Marquis' portrait. Coated in this bronze paint, this bust of the Marquis de Paulmy could have been exhibited in the library above book shelves on a cornice where "heads or vases of bronzed plaster" were displayed; the heads most likely refer to portrait busts. The Marquis' cabinet was also decorated with portraits of his uncle, the Regeant, a young Louis XVI, and St. Anthony. It is also possible that Paulmy's portrait was displayed with these other portraits.

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20 These arms very closely match the arms illustrated in Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal 1980, no. 52. The lion of St. Mark sits on top, and the medals of the three orders to which he belonged (St. Esprit, St. Louis, and Notre-Dame de Mont Carmel and St. Lazare de Jérusalem) hang from the bottom. In the middle are two identical crowned lions "léopardés" or in walking pose facing left. His cousin's arms are on an azure or blue field, and as the family arms are very similar, Paulmy's were likely on azure as well. The lions in the Marquis de Voyer's arms are described as "lampassés de gueules," which means their tongues are visible and colored red (Blomac 2004, 85-85). What is different is the elongated horizontal cross placed on top of the lions in the High's bust. None of my research has included this cross in the family's arms, nor does it belong to his daughter. Further research in the Arsenal archives or family arms may yield more secure dating for the base.

21 "Au-dessus, un cornice, également peinte en jaune, est surmontée de divers ornements - têtes ou vases de 'plâtre broncé.'" Unfortunately, not much of the Arsenal under Paulmy's time has been reconstructed, though an inventory of the items at the beginning of the Revolution exists. Lefèvre and Muzerelle 1988, 313.

22 The authors do not specify if these portraits are two or three dimensional; however, the previous sentence states that paintings and engravings hung the walls: Lefèvre and Muzerelle 1988, 314.
The architectural base and the clock share the repeating wave motif, a popular *neo-grec* (Greek Revival) decoration from 1740-1760. This neo-grec motif allows us to suggest an approximate date for the base, though not the bust. The base incorporates the wave motif in an unusual way; the wave only repeats one and a half times, though the motif was typically used as a repeating border. An exciting discovery during our visual examination was the green cloth that originally backed the wave motif. The gilded bronze wave motif floats in an opening on the side. This cloth has fallen into the interior of the base and is no longer readily visible; it is more easily seen as the dust particles florece under the black light (Figure 25). It would be worthwhile considering restoring the cloth to its former position as a background for the wave motif.

A visual examination shows that the bust and the base are misaligned, which suggests that the bust and the base were not originally intended to be displayed together. This is most noticeable in the asymmetrical position the bust occupies on the base (Figure 26). While the socle appears to be centered on the base, the proper right side is flush with the edge due to the sculpted drapery and thus a gap appears on the proper left. Furthermore, the sculpted drapery overlaps the edge and back of the base, as is clearly seen in the view from the proper left.

During our examination we removed the base and placed the bust on the table. In sculpting this drapery the artist brought it down to the level of the bottom of the socle, and allowed it to spill and pool on the flat surface (Figure 27). This illusory effect is lost by mounting the bust on the architectural base, clearly indicating that the bust should be displayed on a large flat surface.

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23 The popularity of neo-grec patterns in France from 1740-1760 is described in Pérouse de Montclos 2007, 43-46.
Unfortunately, my research has not been able to answer the origins of this atypical base, nor the reason for the unusual use of the wave motif. I have only been able to confirm, along with Guilhem Scherf of the Louvre, that these are very uncommon.

- The Bust

Looking closely under a strong light reveals that the bust appears to be stable and in relatively good condition. There are no significant losses. Examination under a black light revealed two small repairs on his proper right nostril and the back of the proper left drapery (Figures 28 and 29). There are several small cracks that appear throughout the bust. The most notable of these cracks is on the proper left temple (Figure 30). A small crack extends from the eye and splits to form two branches. These cracks likely occurred during the firing process.

Examination under the black light also revealed spotty deposits covering the exterior and interior surface of the sculpture (Figure 31). The pattern of these spots suggests that these deposits were the result of a spray. The spots are not visible to the naked eye and do not appear to be harming the sculpture, so no further effort was made to identify them.

The bust is covered with a light layer of grime, creating a slightly dirty appearance. The black light also revealed dust particles covering the sculpture. Stein cleaned a small section of the sculpture with a white acrylic eraser. The spot cleaning was very effective and revealed the brighter color of the terracotta (Figure 32). While the dirt has not yet detracted from appreciation of the sculpture, the bust does, however, appear darker and slightly dirty. It is worth considering having the bust cleaned.
Conclusions

I cannot confirm either attribution to Defernex or Lemoyne; however, the stylistic anomalies indicate that an attribution to Defernex is quite unlikely despite the biographical overlap. Rather the artistic treatment of the drapery, rather, suggests an attribution to Lemoyne or a sculptor practicing in a similar Italian style. As Nicolas Penny has noted, several French and German artists used this device in the eighteenth century, yet each artist had a personal style. Of these artists, Louis-Simon Boizot deploys a very similar device with his drapery. Further, Boizot worked at the Sèvres porcelain factor and like Defernex was skilled in sculpting small scale portraiture, such as the porcelain busts of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette at the Victoria and Albert Museum. Boizot, however, is much younger than the Marquis de Paulmy. While the approximate twenty year difference does not definitively exclude him, it would most likely push the date of this bust closer to the end of Paulmy’s career.

As the bust and the base were not originally intended to be displayed together, this brings up an interesting question about how to display the bust: with or without the addition of the later base. The bust and base were almost certainly joined in the Marquis’ lifetime due to the neo-grec wave motif. The base was specifically fashioned to display Paulmy’s bust as his arms are displayed on the front. The base is now part of the object’s history and its manner of exhibition. As an unusual mount for a terracotta portrait that features a rare architectural decorative motif, base merits exhibition, yet the base detracts from the beauty and illusory qualities exhibited by the pooling drapery when displayed on a flat surface. To enhance the beautiful carving of the pooled drapery that exhibits the artist’s skill, I think the High Museum of Art should consider removing the base, at least for a time. A photo displaying the bust mounted on the base might be included on a display label indicating the sculpture’s history.
The object is in good condition. The bust could be cleaned to improve its appearance; however, the grime has not yet significantly compromised its appearance. The green cloth that lines the wave motif in the base should also be pushed forward and perhaps cleaned.

Further research into questions of dating and attribution could be directed into Paulmy's biography, the unusual material of his shirt, and the artists Lemoyne and Boizot. The Arsenal contains inventories and documents from Paulmy's time that may mention the bust. Unfortunately, according to Lefèvre not much of Paulmy's correspondence remains, nor do the remnants illuminate much more than his official career. Lefèvre speculates that some of his personal papers may have been with the d'Argesnon family papers, which were seized and burned during the Revolution. Researching this bust had proved to be a fun and interesting puzzle. While I cannot confirm the attribution my research into biography, style, and our technical study have yielded several important clues that are slowly revealing the history of this exquisitely carved bust. It has been a very fun and exciting puzzle to try to complete.

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Lefèvre and Muzerelle 1988, 303-304.
Appendix 1

Antoine-René de Voyer d’Argenson, known as the Marquis de Paulmy (November 22, 1722-August 13, 1787)

- 1722 (November 22) Born at Valenciennes
- 1742 (August 9) Made Avocat du roi au Châtelet at age 20
- 1744 (November 6) Became Conseiller au Parlement at age 22
- 1745 (19 April) Marries his first wife at age 22: Anne-Louise Jacquette Dangé (1723-1747) – daughter of the fermier general, Mailly d'Harcourt.
- 1747 (March 30) Appointed Maître des requêtes; death of his first wife
- 1748- Becomes member of the Académie Française
  - 1748-1751 Served as Ambassador to Switzerland for three years at age 26.
  - 1748 Marries second wife Suzanne Marguerite Fyot de la Marche (1731-1784) – daughter of the Duc de Montmorency-Luxembourg
  - 1749 Appointed Chancellor of the Order of the Saint Louis
- 1751 (October 8) follows his uncle Marc-Pierre de Voyer Comte d’Argenson as secrétaire d’État de la Guerre “par survivance” at age 29
- 1752 Birth of his daughter Madeleine Suzanne Adélaïde le Voyer d’Argenson de Paulmy. She later marries Anne-Charles Sigismond de Montmorency-Luxembourg (1737-1803)
- 1754 Writes to his uncle Le Comte d’Argenson, requesting his uncle's secretary, Rotisse, organize his library as Rotisse had organized his uncle's collection.
- 1756 Inducted into l’Académie Inscriptions et Belles-lettres
  - Received an initial lodging of six rooms on the façade facing the Seine on the Piano Nobile of the Hotel des Grands maîtres. At the time of his death in 1787, his rooms and library occupied twenty-six rooms.
  - These apartments belonged to the “Grand maître de l’artillerie” but the office had been suppressed by Louis XV in 1755.
- 1757 Made Chancellor of the Order of the Saint Lazare
- 1759-1764- Served as ambassador to Poland
- 1757 (August 21) Named the Commander Chancelier garde des Sceaux et des ces Ordres of (the order of Notre-Dame du Monte-Carmel and of Sainte-Lazare de Jerusalem). The Grand Maître was the Duc de Berry
  - 1757-58- succeeds uncle as Ministre d'Etat – the post only lasts for 13 months demissioned on March 2, 1758
- 1758 Appointed Balli de Touraine
- 1764 Made an honorary member of the l’Académie Sciences
  - Listed as a sponsor for the Académie de Saint-Luc for the first time
- 1767-8 Served as the ambassador to Venice.
- 1768 Retires to Paris and concentrates on library
- 1769 Establishes himself at Arsenal.
- 1770 Denied the ambassadorship to Rome and definitively retires from public life at the age 44.
- 1771 Appointed Gouverneur de l’Arsenal
- 1774 Appointed Chancieller de la Reine Marie Anotinette
  - Acts as sole sponsor of the Académie de Saint-Luc at the Hotel de Jarbach
  - Engraving done by Par M. Lefebvre, Professeur (Guiffrey1970, 143)
    19. Le Portrait de M. le Marquis de Paulmy, Protecteur de l’Academie de Saint Luc & sous les auspices de qui se fait ce Salon (sic). (etching done c. 1774) Ce portrait est fait d’après seu M. Michel Vanloo
- 1780 Becomes a member of the Academy of Inscriptions
- 1784 Death of Paulmy’s second wife Suzanne Marguerite Fyot de la Marche
- 1787 (August 13) Dies at the Arsenal at age 65.
Bibliography

Jean-Baptiste Defernex (1729-1783)


Jean Baptiste Lemoyne the Younger


Augustin Pajou, French, 1730-1809


Antoine-René de Voyer d’Argenson, dit the Marquis de Paulmy (1722-1787)


Paulmy's Library and the Bibliothèque d’Arsenal


Terracotta Sculptures


Clothing Sources


Miscellaneous


Antoine-René de Voyer d’Argenson, known as the Marquis de Paulmy (1722 -1787)  
High Museum of Art, Atlanta

Accession Number: 2007.126  
Dimensions: (H) 16 15/16  (L) 9 1/16  (D) 6 5/16 inches  
Photo Source: High Museum of Art Website
Figure 1. After Hyacinthe Rigaud, Antoine-René de Voyer d'Argenson Marquis de Paulmy (1722-1787).
Oil on Canvas, (H) 64 (L) 52 cm.
Versailles, Musée National des Châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon,
MV 2991 ; INV 9004 ; LP 4038 N° 7
Photo Credit: Réunion des musées nationaux
Figure 2. Anonymous- French School, Antoine-René de Voyer, marquis de Paulmy d'Argenson (1722-1787). Oil on canvas, (H) 88 (L) 73 cm. Versailles, Châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon. Photo Credit: (C) RMN (Château de Versailles)
Profile view of the *Bust of the Marquis de Paulmy*. Terracotta, (H) 16 15/16 (L) 9 1/16 (D) 6 5/16 in. High Museum of Art, Atlanta, 2007.126
Photo Source: Cecily Boles

Figure 3. Augustin de Saint-Aubin, after C. Le Carpentier, *Portrait of the Marquis de Paulmy*. Photo Source: Cecily Boles
Detail of Paulmy’s coat of arms on the base of the *Bust of the Marquis de Paulmy*. Wooden base decorated with gilt bronze, (H) 16 15/16 (L) 9 1/16 (D) 6 5/16 in. High Museum of Art, Atlanta, 2007.126 Photo Source: Cecily Boles

Figure 5. La Bibliothèque d'Arsenal
1, rue Sully
75004 Paris
Photo Source: Cecily Boles
**Bust of the Marquis de Paulmy.**
Terracotta, (H) 16 15/16 (L) 9 1/16 (D) 6 5/16 in.
High Museum of Art, Atlanta, 2007.126
Photo Source: High Museum of Art Website

**Figure 6. Jean-Baptiste Defernex, Prince Repnine** *(Pytor Ivanovich Repnin)*, 1764.
Marble, (H) 68 cm.
Institut de France-Paris Musée Jacquemart-André, Paris, Inv. 566.
Photo Source: Cecily Boles – Use for Study Purposes Only
Figure 7. Profile view of the *Bust of the Marquis de Paulmy*. Terracotta, (H) 16 $\frac{15}{16}$ (L) 9 $\frac{1}{16}$ (D) 6 $\frac{5}{16}$ in. High Museum of Art, Atlanta, 2007.126
Photo Source: Cecily Boles

Figure 8. Jean-Baptiste Defernex, Detail of *Prince Repnin* (Pytor Ivanovich Repnin), 1764,
Institut de France-Paris Musée Jacquemart-André, Paris, Inv. 566
Photo Source: Cecily Boles – Use for Study Purposes Only
Bust of the Marquis de Paulmy.
Terracotta, (H) 16 15/16 (L) 9 1/16 x (D) 6 5/16 in.
High Museum of Art, Atlanta, 2007.126
Photo Source: High Museum of Art Website

Figure 9. Defernex Jean-Baptiste (1729-1783), Buste de Buffon, 1772.
Plaster, (H) 82 cm.
Montbard, Musée Buffon, Inv.996-43-1
Photo Credit: (C) RMN / Michèle Bellot
Bust of the Marquis de Paulmy.
Terracotta, (H) 16 $\frac{15}{16}$ (L) 9 $\frac{1}{16}$ (D) 6 $\frac{5}{16}$ in.
High Museum of Art, Atlanta, 2007.126
Photo Source: High Museum of Art Website
Marble, (H) 68 cm.
Institut de France-Paris Musée Jacquemart-André, Paris, Inv. 566
Photo Source: Cecily Boles – Use for Study Purposes Only

2. Figure 9. Jean-Baptiste Defernex, *Buste de Buffon*, 1772.
Plaster, (H) 82 cm.
Montbard, Musée Buffon, Inv.996-43-1
Photo Credit: (C) RMN / Michèle Bellot

Bronze.
Photo Source: From Réau, Louis. 1931. ‘Jean-Baptiste Defernex, sculpteur du duc d’Orléans.’

Bronze.
Photo Source: From Réau, Louis. 1931. ‘Jean-Baptiste Defernex, sculpteur du duc d’Orléans.’
Figure 10. *Bust the Marquis de Paulmy.*
Terracotta, (H) 16 15/16 (L) 9 1/16 (D) 6 5/16 in.
High Museum of Art, 2007.126
Photo Source: Cecily Boles
Bust of the Marquis de Paulmy.
Terracotta, (H) $16 \frac{15}{16}$ (L) $9 \frac{1}{16}$ x(D) $6 \frac{5}{16}$ in.
High Museum of Art, Atlanta, 2007.126
Photo Source: High Museum of Art Website

Figure 11. Jean-Baptiste Lemoyne, the Younger (1704-1778), Buste de Dyé Gendrier (1700-1791).
Terracotta, (H) 58.5 (L) 42 (D) 28 cm.
Blois, Château, Musée des Beaux-Arts Inv.861-181-1
Photo Credit: (C) RMN-Grand Palais / René-Gabriel Ojéda
Bust of the Marquis de Paulmy.
Terracotta, (H) 16 15/16 x (L) 9 1/16 x (D) 6 5/16 in.
High Museum of Art, Atlanta, 2007.126
Photo Source: High Museum of Art Website

Figure 12. Jean-Baptiste Lemoyne the Younger,
Geneviève-Françoise Randon de Malboissière (1740-1766), 1768.
Marble, (H) 31 1/2 in.
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 49.7.73
Photo Source: The Metropolitan Museum of Art Website.
Figure 13. *Bust the Marquis de Paulmy.*
Terracotta, (H) 16 15/16 (L) 9 1/16 (D) 6 5/16 in.
High Museum of Art, 2007.126
Photo Source: Cecily Boles

Figure 14. Side view of *Geneviève-Françoise Randon de Malboissière,* 1768.
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 49.7.73
Photo Source: Cecily Boles
Bust of the Marquis de Paulmy.
Terracotta, (H) 16 15/16 (L) 9 1/16 (D) 6 5/16 in.
High Museum of Art, Atlanta, 2007.126
Photo Source: High Museum of Art Website
1. Jean-Baptiste Lemoyne, the Younger (1704-1778), *Buste de Dyé Gendrier* (1700-1791). Terracotta, (H) 58.5 (L) 42 (D) 28 cm. Blois, Château, Musée des Beaux-Arts Inv.861-181-1 Photo Credit: (C) RMN-Grand Palais / René-Gabriel Ojéda

2. Jean-Baptiste Lemoyne II, *Noël Nicolas Coypel*, 1730. Terracotta, (H) 65 (L) 36 (D) 43 cm. Musée du Louvre, RF 1501 Photo Credit: (C) RMN-Grand Palais / René-Gabriel Ojéda

3. Jean-Baptiste Lemoyne II, *Bust of Maurice Quentin de la Tour*, Salon 1763. Terracotta, (H) 65 cm. Saint-Quentin, Musée Antoine Lécuyer Photo Credit: (C) RMN-Grand Palais / Agence Bulloz

4. Jean-Baptiste Lemoyne II, Bust of Jean Florent de Vallière (1667-1759), 1753. Terracotta, (H) 71.5 cm. Tours, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Inv. 1825-1-20 Photo Credit: © MBA Tours, cliché Marc Jeanneteau


Figure 17. Jean-Baptiste Lemoyne II, *Bust of Maurice Quentin de la Tour*, Salon 1763. Terracotta, (H) 65 cm. Saint-Quentin, Musée Antoine Lécuyer
Photo Credit: (C) RMN-Grand Palais / Agence Bulloz
Figure 18. Maurice Quentin de La Tour (1704-1788), Marc René, marquis de Voyer d’Argenson (1721-1782), 1753.
Pastel, (H) 64 x (L) 52 cm.
Saint-Quentin, Musée Antoine Lécuyer
Photo Credit: (C) RMN / Gérard Blot
Figure 19. Detail showing Renee Stein sampling the paint from *Bust the Marquis de Paulmy.*
Terracotta, (H) 16 15/16 (L) 9 1/16 (D) 6 5/16 in.
High Museum of Art, 2007.126
Photo Source: Cecily Boles
Figures 20. Sample of coating seen under the stereobinocular microscope at 40 x magnification, which shows the copper-colored metallic flakes. Sample taken from *Bust the Marquis de Paulmy*. Terracotta, (H) 16 15/16 (L) 9 1/16 (D) 6 5/16 in.
High Museum of Art, 2007.126
Photo Source: Michael C. Carlos Museum/Renee Stein
**Bust of the Marquis de Paulmy.**
Terracotta, (H) $16\frac{15}{16}$, (L) $9\frac{1}{16}$, (D) $6\frac{5}{16}$ in.
High Museum of Art, Atlanta, 2007.126
Photo Source: High Museum of Art

**Figure 21. Lemoyne Jean-Baptiste II, Louis XV le Bien-Aimé (1710-1774), 1751.**
Bronze, (H) 44 cm.
Paris, Musée du Louvre, Versement du Mobilier National, 1901 OA5435; MR3371
Photo Credit: (C) RMN-Grand Palais (musée du Louvre) / Daniel Arnaudet
Figure 22. Jean-Baptiste Lemoyne the Younger, Réné-Antoine Ferchault de Réaumur (1683-1757), physicien, naturaliste, 1751.
Terracotta, (H) 58.7 (L) 32.8 (D) 28.2 cm
Paris, Musée du Louvre, RF1841
(C) RMN-Grand Palais (musée du Louvre) / René-Gabriel Ojeda
Figure 23. Joseph Chinard, *Self-Portrait*, ca. 1808.
Partially molded and re-worked terracotta relief, (H) 7 1/2 (W) 7 1/2 in.
High Museum of Art, Atlanta
Purchase with Collections Council Acquisition Fund, 1998.54
Photo Source: High Museum of Art, Atlanta
Side view of the base. Dust particles on the green cloth behind the wave motif florece.

Detail of the base from *Bust of the Marquis de Paulmy.*

Wooden base decorated with gilt bronze, (H) 16 15/16 (L) 9 1/16 (D) 6 5/16 in.

High Museum of Art, Atlanta, 2007.126

Photo Source: Cecily Boles

Figure 24. Mantle Clock: Case of gilded and patinated bronze on a base of oak veneered with ebony by Joseph Baumhauer (act. 1749-72). The bronze from a model provided by the sculptor Laurent Guiard (1723-88).

Dial of white enamel signed: Julien le Roy

Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1991.8

Photo Source: Cecily Boles
Figure 25. Side view of the base. Dust particles on the green cloth behind the wave motif florece.
Detail of the base from *Bust of the Marquis de Paulmy*.
Wooden base decorated with gilt bronze, (H) 16 15/16 (L) 9 1/16 (D) 6 5/16 in.
High Museum of Art, Atlanta, 2007.126
Photo Source: Cecily Boles
Figure 26. Asymmetrical alignment of the bust on the base. *Bust of the Marquis de Paulmy.* Terracotta, (H) 16 15/16 (L) 9 1/16 (D) 6 5/16 in. High Museum of Art, Atlanta, 2007.126
Photo Source: Cecily Boles
Figure 27. Detail showing drapery pooling at the bottom of the socle. *Bust of the Marquis de Paulmy.*
Terracotta, (H) 16 $\frac{15}{16}$ (L) 9 $\frac{1}{16}$ (D) 6 $\frac{5}{16}$ in.
High Museum of Art, Atlanta, 2007.126
Photo Source: Cecily Boles
Figure 28. Repair to the proper left nostril seen under black light.
Detail of the *Bust of the Marquis de Paulmy*. Terracotta, (H) 16 15/16 (L) 9 1/16 (D) 6 5/16 in.
High Museum of Art, Atlanta, 2007.126
Photo Source: Cecily Boles
Figure 29. Repair to the proper left drapery seen under black light.
Detail of the *Bust of the Marquis de Paulmy*. Terracotta, (H) 16 15/16 (L) 9 1/16 (D) 6 5/16 in. High Museum of Art, Atlanta, 2007.126
Photo Source: Cecily Boles
Figure 30. Detail of the *Bust of the Marquis de Paulmy*.
Terracotta, (H) 16 15/16 (L) 9 1/16 (D) 6 5/16 in.
High Museum of Art, Atlanta, 2007.126
Photo Source: Cecily Boles
Figure 31. The larger circles are deposits fluorescing purple under black light. The lighter dots are dust particles fluorescing under the black light.

*Bust of the Marquis de Paulmy.*
Terracotta, (H) $16\frac{15}{16}$ (L) $9\frac{1}{16}$ (D) $6\frac{5}{16}$ in.
High Museum of Art, Atlanta, 2007.126
Photo Source: Cecily Boles
Figure 32. Test area cleaned with acrylic eraser.  
*Bust of the Marquis de Paulmy.*  
Terracotta, (H) 16 15/16 (L) 9 1/16 (D) 6 5/16 in.  
High Museum of Art, Atlanta, 2007.126  
Photo Source: Cecily Boles
Figure 33. Attributed to Jean Baptiste Defernex, *Mme Duthé*, Plaster
Last known collection of M. Eug. Kramer.
Photo Source: Louvre Sculpture Archives: *Exposition rétrospective de portraits de femmes sous les trois è républiques* organized by the Société Nationale des beaux arts in the Palais de Bagatelle Paris, 1909.
Plate 3


Photo Source. The Victoria and Albert Museum Website