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Francesco Righetti

**Peace, Justice**













**Francesco Righetti**  
(Rome, 1749 - 1819)

## *Peace, Justice*

Cast to models by Francesco Maria Ravaschio (Genoa, 1743 - 1820)

Two bronze figures resting on a black marble base

SIGNED AND DATED: F. RIGHETTI. F. ROME. 1791

Overall height 32.5 cm (*Peace*); 32 cm (*Justice*)

**P** *Peace* is portrayed as a woman crowned with a laurel wreath, her right hand gripping the *caduceus*, a symbol of peace and prosperity associated with the Greek god Hermes. Wearing a long tunic with rich drapery, *Peace* rests her left foot on a helmet.

*Justice* wears a long mantle over her tunic covering both her shoulders, her hair caught up in soft locks and parted in the middle. Her left hand rests on a lictor's *fasces*.

Both bronzes are signed by Francesco Righetti

and bear the date 1791. This genre of figure is somewhat unusual in the context of his vast output, in fact so much so that neither of the two figures is mentioned in the Catalogue containing a list of small bronzes offered for sale in 1794.

The statues are, in fact, part of a non-serial production by the great Roman bronzesmith which we hear about from the Genoese man of letters Federigo Alizeri. Alizeri tells us in the life of the sculptor Francesco Maria Ravaschio in his *Notizie dei professori del disegno in Liguria dalla fon-*







**Fig. 1** Francesco Maria Ravaschio, *Angel Holding a Candelabrum*



**Fig. 2** Francesco Maria Ravaschio, *Charity*, church of Santa Maria Assunta, Genoa

dazione dell'Accademia that Francesco Righetti cast a number of figures in bronze to models by Ravaschio for a *Triumph*.

To mark the coronation of Genoese Doge Michelangelo Cambiaso (1791–3), Francesco Maria Ravaschio modelled four allegorical figures – to a design by the architect Santino Tagliafichi and under the supervision of Angelica Kaufmann – for a centrepiece which the city's noble families were offering as a gift to the Doge. The figures in question were *Justice*, *Peace*, *Abundance* and *Charity* and Francesco Righetti, the greatest bronzesmith of his age, was commissioned to cast them. The two figures, albeit bearing attributes not customarily associated with them in traditional iconography, display a style typical of Ravaschio's sculpture, where Neoclassical composure still shows traces of the late Baroque tradition (Figs. 1, 2).

Francesco Maria Ravaschio was born in Genoa in 1743 and is likely to have trained in the workshop of Anton Maria Maragliano's pupil Pietro Galeano, although he also had a certain amount

of academic training, having enrolled at the city's Accademia Ligustica di Belle Arti in 1757. He was a highly prolific sculptor and worked with several of his contemporaries. In the course of his career he received both private commissions from the Genoese aristocracy for works to adorn their palazzi and public commissions for churches and other religious establishments.

Francesco Righetti was born in Rome to a family from Rimini on 11 June 1749. He was living in Via della Purificazione in 1780, the year in which his son and future partner Luigi (who, together with his father, was to become Canova's foundryman) was born. Righetti received his credentials as a silversmith in 1783, but he had already been working as a foundryman for several years by then. He was commissioned a number of copies of life-size Classical statues for the Dutch residence of banker Henry Hope in 1781, and two of these caught the eye of Pope Pius VI the following year. An important commission for Russia is recorded in 1786. Numerous models of his work are to be found in a printed cata-







logue which he had published in French in 1794, dedicating it *Aux Amateurs de l'Antiquité et des Beaux Arts*.

Righetti was appointed master of the Vatican Foundry in 1805, taking the place of Giuseppe Valadier who had retired voluntarily, and became one of Rome's most important bronze-smiths. An extremely skilled artist, he specialised in the production of bronzes after the Classical statuary that was so popular at the time, and his work was much sought-after by gentlemen conducting the Grand Tour. While his bronzes tend to be smaller than the originals, they invariably maintain a sculptural character and a sense of grandiose monumentality which lifts them out of the realm of mere decoration and adornment. The crowning achievement of Francesco Righetti's career was unquestionably a cast of the large

horse for Canova's equestrian monument to Charles III in Naples, the preparatory work on which got under way in June 1816. Righetti worked on it with immense enthusiasm and dedication, and in view of the excellent result achieved in casting it, he decided to stay on in Naples for a few months. He fell ill shortly thereafter, however, and on 26 September 1819 he decided to return to Rome, where he died on 25 November of that same year.

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