

The Mechelen Statuettes between 1500 and 1540: Material and Typological Study

FANNY CAYRON

DELPHINE STEYAERT

INTRODUCTION

Small wooden statuettes were produced in Mechelen from around 1500 and throughout the sixteenth century. Since the early twentieth century they have been known as the *poupées de Malines* ('Mechelen dolls'); in this essay they are referred to as the Mechelen statuettes.¹ Between 2005 and 2008, the Royal Institute for Cultural Heritage (federal institution KIK-IRPA) in Brussels conducted a wide-ranging study of the Mechelen statuettes preserved to date. This essay examines the period from approximately 1500 to 1540, which corresponds to the late Brabant Gothic.

Research into the Mechelen statuettes had been carried out previously², notably Willy Godenne's inventory of more than 265 statuettes, which was published between 1957 and 1976.³ An article written in 1959 by Joseph de Borchgrave d'Altena was another important source of information⁴, as were other more specific articles, museum and exhibition catalogues, and a recent article by Sophie Guillot de Suduiraut and Christine Lances-tremère.⁵ A digital inventory of the statuettes was compiled during the KIK-IRPA research project. By the project's end, this inventory contained more than 600 statuettes, including some small ensembles on view in domestic altarpieces or Enclosed Gardens.⁶

In the first part of this essay we shall explain the general findings from the study into the Mechelen statuettes. The second part will discuss the statuettes in more detail in four of the Mechelen

Enclosed Gardens. It was in these Gardens that the statuettes were preserved within their historic habitat. The full results of the study into the Mechelen statuettes – *Made in Malines. Les statuettes malinoises ou 'poupées de Malines', 1500-1540* – will be published in 2019.

THE FOUR MAJOR PERIODS OF PRODUCTION

We have been able to identify four periods of production between 1500 and 1540.

The first period (c. 1500-1510) was characterised by collaboration

between Mechelen sculptors and Brussels polychromers, evidenced by hallmarks from these two cities. Brussels sculpture is seen to have had a marked influence. During this period sculptors worked in a common style, resulting in a relative homogeneity concerning the statuettes that they produced. The statuettes' clothing was fairly sober: a surcoat (outer garment) worn over another garment, a wide cloak resting on the shoulders, draped on either side of the body or down the front in the form of a decorative apron. The saints' hair was carved in the shape of a skullcap on which a metal crown was meant to rest; however, the crown has been lost in most cases. Towards the end of this period we see the appearance of the first *bourrelet*, which was a padded roll of cloth bordered with a ribbon and a string of pearls. This *bourrelet* was usually combined with metal palmettes pinned around the forehead.

The second production period (c. 1505-1520) saw an end to collaboration with the Brussels polychromers and a reliance on Mechelen's workshops instead. Sculptures still bore the influence of the model adopted in the first phase of production. Fairly thick, deep, broken pleats continued to be the norm, but the Brussels model underwent a more liberal interpretation, leading to greater diversity not only in terms of style but also in quality. The *bourrelet* that appeared at the end of the first period became more commonplace. Costumes in the Mannerist style first appeared at this juncture.

The third period (c. 1515-1535) corresponds to an intensification of production. Although the Virgin and St Anne retained their sober costumes, Mannerist-style dress became more usual for the other saints (Ill. 74). A formula was devised with variants in the details of the decorative apron. With the exception of female saints wearing veils, the *bourrelet* became the norm and replaced the crown. Drapery pleats became finer and more fluid and rounder in shape.

In the fourth period (c. 1530-1540) the influence of the Renaissance was even more marked in the treatment of pleating. The speed of production accelerated, with a concomitant decline in quality. Nevertheless, attractive statuettes were still being created even then.

There were also developments in terms of statuette height. During the first two periods, the usual height was 35-37 cm. The third period saw the introduction of a height of 29-30 cm, which became the norm in the fourth period. This decline in standard height was the result of a process of rationalisation necessitated by large-scale production.⁷

In terms of iconography, we can see how the figure of the Madonna and Child became more dominant as production grew. This development could be explained as a result of increased production for the open market – in other words, not on commission. Demand was manifestly greatest for the figure of the Madonna and Child. Conversely, we also see more specific subjects appear, such as a statuette of St Bernardino of Siena, which is part of the collection held at the Bonnefantenmuseum in Maastricht.⁸ This quintessentially Sieneese saint could only have been produced to order and testifies to the international prestige of statuettes manufactured in Mechelen.



ILL. 74
St Catherine,
c. 1525-30, Museum
De Mindere, Saint-Trond

Without doubt, the high-quality polychromy of the Mechelen statuettes, with its attention to facial detail and its wealth of sophisticated decorative motifs, also explains the success of this serial production. The polychromy is chiefly characterised by the contrast between the brilliance of the gilding and the matt blue of the hemlines. The cloaks were systematically gilded, which was not always done in other centres in Brabant, where red or blue were frequent alternatives.

MARKS

The marks applied by the Mechelen guild of sculptors and painters are well known.⁹ The sculptors'

mark (or stamp) took the form of the three vertical stripes found on the city's coat of arms and known in heraldry as 'pales'. Such marks are found on the backs and socles of the statuettes, and sometimes under the base or the feet of the Christ Child. The 'three pales' mark rarely exceeds one square centimetre in size. The controllers most commonly applied the mark using a metal punch.¹⁰ Sometimes the mark was also branded on to the surface with a hot iron.

The polychromers' mark took the form of a capital 'M', the first letter of the city's name, and was visibly affixed to the gilded apparel or the socles.¹¹ This 'M' mark is always very small. More than eleven distinct types of 'M' have been identified; some remained current for long periods of time. There is a Gothic-type 'M' with curved downward strokes or 'legs'. All the other 'M's are Roman in style. In both cases, the diversity of punches used is striking, perhaps explained by the annual changeover of the guild's controllers. It is possible that some made their own punches, whereas others used existing ones.

A 'BRVESEL' mark often appears on statuettes from the first period, placed below on the socle, testifying to the aforementioned collaboration between artisans in Mechelen and Brussels. Of the sixteen known 'BRVESEL' marks on Mechelen statuettes, it was possible to examine and compare six in detail. They all appear to have been stamped with the same tool, corresponding to that used on the *Altarpiece to the Virgin Mary* (c. 1490-1500) in the Brussels City Museum.¹²

In addition to the stamps, we also observed some master craftsmen's marks. Sculptors' marks from the early sixteenth century are rare. The three known to date were described by Georges Van Doorslaer in 1933.¹³ Our study did not bring any new marks to light.

Polychromers' personal marks are more commonplace. According to our calculations, perhaps a quarter of the statuettes carried a polychromer's mark; however, these marks have often disappeared along with the polychromy and/or the socle. Unlike the sculptors' marks, they were visibly incorporated

into the polychromy used for the socle's lower moulding. They either take the form of a name in a rectangular cartouche, as with the 'BRVESEL' mark, or else appear as a monogram consisting of two initials or an acronym in a nearly square cartouche. These marks were usually applied with a punch. We have succeeded in demonstrating that statuettes bearing the same marks came from the same polychrome workshop. In other words, just as we had previously assumed, these are definitely polychromers' marks.

Ten polychromers' marks have been identified to date: six monograms and four names. In the main, these names and monograms were already well known, especially after Van Doorslaer's publication in 1933.¹⁴ However, we did discover one new name during our study – 'HEINRIC' – and we also found a few new statuettes bearing a previously listed monogram.

POLYCHROMY

Forty percent of the itemised Mechelen statuettes have retained their original polychromy. A great many are in very good condition, allowing an in-depth study of their polychromy. This can be divided into two categories: Brussels polychromy and Mechelen polychromy.

We know that production of the statuettes relied initially on collaboration between the Mechelen sculptors and Brussels polychromers.¹⁵ The peak of this collaboration was at some point between 1500 and 1510. Of the statuettes from the first period, all those that have kept their original polychromy have been attributed to the Brussels master 'I*T'.¹⁶ His polychromy is notable for the presence of 'applied brocade' – a form of decoration used to give a finishing touch to the hems of cloaks and other types of apparel.

Mechelen polychromy in the second period consisted of creative reinterpretations of the model previously established by Brussels polychromers. Applied brocade continued to be employed, but the sgraffito technique was an innovation at this time. This period was also marked by the first appearance of painted border motifs on an embossed background of the robes, created through the use of a 'roulette' (roll-on die).

The metal rosettes present on some of the socles dating from the first period were also used by the Mechelen polychromers. These ornaments were made by pressing lead or tin into a mould. The bas-reliefs created in this way were gilded and sometimes glazed, or painted blue, red or white. Interestingly, the same moulds seem to have been used for Brussels and Mechelen ornaments alike, and this suggests that they were produced in a specialist workshop – probably one in Mechelen.

The *bourellets* of the Virgin and the saints were also decorated with metal ornaments, pinned to the upper section of the headdress. Each statuette had four or five of these ‘combs’ or palmettes, but the vast majority of these very fragile ornaments have been lost. Nevertheless, traces of lead can still be detected in the small punctures around the edge of the headdress.

Painted decoration on a punched, embossed background is characteristic of the third and fourth production periods. The sgraffito technique found new uses in parallel with the development of more sophisticated costumes. Apart from a few exceptional cases, the painted decoration was placed on a punched background. Most of the flowers were represented in a naturalistic manner. A strawberry plant is the most typical Mechelen motif (Ill. 75).

It should be noted that while the sculptural quality of the statuettes varies, the quality of the polychromy does not, with the techniques and motifs always remaining extremely precise and neat.

We have identified some fifteen sculpture workshops and just as many dealing with polychromy. The statuettes attributed to them vary in number.



Ill. 75
Detail from the collar
of a mantle with a
painted strawberry
plant on a chased
motif

ILL. 76

Angel with a horn –
Garden with the Hunt
of the Unicorn



**MECHELEN
ENCLOSED
GARDENS**

A detailed study of the polychromed statuettes from four of the Mechelen Enclosed Gardens (*horti conclusi*) is provided below, with some of our findings.

The Gardens' protection behind glass has ensured that most of the statuettes are in an excellent state of preservation.¹⁷

1. The *Enclosed Garden with the Hunt of the Unicorn* (G1) is of particular interest. It contains a large number of statuettes that we can classify into two 'series'. Those from the first series serve to symbolise the purity of the Virgin Mary: the Virgin with the unicorn and the angel huntsman, the Tower of David, Gideon's fleece, Aaron's rod, Moses and the burning bush, as well as the fountain or well. The specific iconography of this ensemble, which is unique in relation to the production process as we currently understand it, suggests that these statuettes were made to order. The figures in this series are particularly homogeneous in terms of both sculpture and polychromy, and as a result we are able to attribute them without any hesitation to the same sculptor and the same polychromer. The faces have long, straight noses and large, slit eyes (Ill. 76). The figures' polychrome decoration takes the form of geometric patterns on a punched background. This decoration is very specific and does not appear anywhere else in the rest of the statuettes from this production period'.

The ensemble of Christ on the Cross, St John and St Mary Magdalene is less coherent. At first sight, this grouping is reminiscent of a Calvary, except that the figures of St John and the Virgin Mary in a traditional Calvary have been replaced by statuettes of St John the Evangelist, carrying the chalice and snake, and St Mary Magdalene, carrying the jar of ointment. Unlike the series of symbols representing the purity of the Virgin Mary in the other ensemble, this particular ensemble could well have been composed of statuettes of different origins. Although from a stylistic viewpoint the statuette of St John can be likened to those from the first series, this is not the case with the statuette of St Mary Magdalene, which displays different morphological characteristics: a rounder face, full cheeks and bulging eyelids (Ill. 77 and 78).



ILL. 77

In terms of the polychromy, the statuettes of both St John and St Mary Magdalene have applied brocade finishes, which is very rare in this production period and probably dates from an earlier period. Microscopic examination of this brocade has revealed differences in composition. However, in the absence of other common decorative elements, it is currently impossible to say whether the polychromy of these three statuettes is of a common origin. The polychromy of St Mary Magdalene is attributed to the master or monogrammist 'JE', to whom we shall shortly return. We would also like to point out the presence of small applied lead ornaments on the cross and its base. We shall return to these as well when discussing the *Enclosed Garden with a Calvary scene* (G3).



ILL. 78

The disassembly of Garden 1 for restoration purposes provided an opportunity to examine the statuettes in detail.¹⁸ We were already aware of the 'M' marks, which were visible through the glass, but that was not true of the 'three pales' marks. Impressions were taken of these marks to enable further study, which led to some interesting findings. We encountered at least five different 'three pales' marks in the series symbolising the Virgin Mary's purity. This was a surprise, because we had expected this extremely consistent series of statuettes to bear the same mark. The statuettes would certainly have been presented to the controller of the guild on several occasions during the manufacturing process. On the other hand, we established that statuettes forming iconographic pairs – the angel

ILL. 77
St John, Christ on the Cross and Mary Magdalene – Garden with the Hunt of the Unicorn

ILL. 78
Detail of Mary Magdalene – Garden with the Hunt of the Unicorn.



ILL. 79

Moses, front and back, showing in close-up the Mechelen mark (three pales) on the back – Garden with the Hunt of the Unicorn

with the hunting horn and the Virgin Mary with the unicorn, and Moses and Yahweh in the burning bush – bore identical marks. It is likely that the iconographic pairs were presented for inspection together (Ill. 79).

We observed greater consistency in terms of the 'M' marks. Christ on the Cross and St Mary Magdalene bear the same Gothic 'M', with rounded legs, which is quite rare and typical of the early years of production. St John does not display any 'M', but the gaps in the gilding on his apparel may explain this.

The other statuettes have been marked with a Roman 'M', possibly made using the same stamp. Therefore they could have been jointly presented to the polychromy controller prior to the order's delivery.

We can conclude that although this Enclosed Garden presents a certain iconographic consistency, it can be subdivided into two ensembles. Moreover, it is possible that the series symbolising the Virgin Mary's purity was produced in several stages.

2. The second Enclosed Garden to undergo a more detailed examination is the *Enclosed Garden with the Virgin and Child with St Anne* (G6). The three main figures consist of the Trinity of St Anne (the Virgin and Child with St Anne) in the centre, flanked on the left and right by St Augustine and St Elisabeth (Ill. 80). A Marianum is located in the uppermost part of the cabinet. The ensemble is completed by a small bust of God the Father and two cherubs on either side of a floral wreath and a medallion.

Although at first sight the ensemble's structure would seem perfect and very consistent, analysis of the statuettes leads to a different interpretation – that the statuettes belong to differing stylistic types. St Elisabeth is attributed to the sculptor responsible for the statuette of the Madonna and Child with Two Angels at the Royal Museums of Art and History in Brussels.¹⁹ The shape of the eyes is distinctive. St Augustine's face is rounder, has more prominent cheekbones, is more elaborately

modelled and, in particular, has eyes that are less arched than those of St Elisabeth. St Anne's smooth, round and schematic face points to a third sculptor. The Virgin Enthroned above is yet another type that would appear to match the two cherubs supporting the clouds from below, whereas the two upper cherubs are very different. The two cherubs holding the medallion in the centre of the Enclosed Garden display another typology again.

The polychromy of the Trinity of St Anne and the two central cherubs is questionable in terms of their decoration. It is uncertain whether either the gilding or the silver leaf is original. The paint seems extremely thick and shiny, which we consider suspicious. However, there are not enough elements

either to prove this or to date this intervention. On the other hand, St Anne's socle retains its original gilding with punched decoration and an authentic 'M' mark. The polychromy of the other statuettes is original.

The polychromy of St Elisabeth was produced by the same master polychromer who worked on the aforementioned Madonna with Two Angels. The inscription on the latter's mantle reads *Maria Mater Dei ora pro nobis* ('Mary, Mother of God, pray for us'). On St Elisabeth's mantle the inscription reads *Maria Elisadeth* (Ill. 81). The typography, in a blue on gold sgraffito, is characteristic of this particular craftsman. Both statuettes also have very similar applied brocades.

ILL. 80

The Virgin and Child with St Anne, flanked by St Augustine and St Elisabeth – Garden with St Anne





ILL. 81

The polychromy of St Augustine is of another type. It is attributed to the monogrammist 'JE'. Named after his monogram, even though we know of only two such examples,²⁰ this master craftsman enjoyed a long and flourishing career. The polychromy of thirteen other statuettes is attributed to him based on a comparative study of the motifs and techniques that he employed. (Interestingly, the polychromy of the statuette of St Mary Magdalene from the *Enclosed Garden with the Hunt of the Unicorn* (G1) is also attributed to him.) The lettering along the borders of St Augustine's robes differs from that on the statuettes of St Elisabeth and the Madonna with Two Angels; it is more ornate and does not form words. A characteristic ornamental foliage motif reappears in several variations. It appears in the sgraffito on the underside of St Augustine's robes and on the strip of blue sgraffito at the base of St Mary Magdalene's robes.²¹

As a result, it is very likely that the statuettes were not all made by the same hand. Unlike the statuettes symbolically representing the Virgin Mary's purity in the *Enclosed Garden with the Hunt of the Unicorn* (G1), which were the result of a specific order produced by one craftsman, it seems probable that the *Enclosed Garden with the Virgin and Child with St Anne* (G6) was assembled from statuettes purchased separately on the open market, consequently making it less unified.



ILL. 82

3. The *Enclosed Garden with St Ursula* (G2) is interesting from several points of view. St Ursula is at the centre, flanked by St Elisabeth and St Catherine (Ill. 83). In the upper section are two cherubs supporting a relic. The saints' names are inscribed on their respective socles. The first instance of inconsistency is that St Elisabeth's socle bears the inscription 'MARIA'. This led us to suspect that the statuette of St Elisabeth was not the original, but a replacement, a supposition supported by further examination. Her statuette is different in style and somewhat smaller than the statuette of St Catherine, while the statuette of St Ursula is larger. The polychromy also differs in both technique and motifs. According to the name on the socle, the original statuette would have been of a Madonna and Child. If that is the case, why would it not have been placed in the centre, and would it have been smaller than the statuette of St Ursula? These remain unanswered questions.

ILL. 81
Detail from a gilded mantle bearing the mark 'M' – Garden with St Anne

ILL. 82
Detail of the master's mark 'DOERMAEL' – Garden with St Anne

Ill. 83
St Ursula –
Garden with
St Ursula





St Anne (G6) has identical ornaments, which were very likely pressed into the same mould, despite the involvement of two different polychromers. Naturally, this raises the question of the origin of these ornaments. Were they produced by specialist workshops and then sold to different polychromers?

4. We shall finish by examining the *Enclosed Garden with a Calvary scene* (G3). Although the polychromy in the statuettes of St John the Baptist and the Virgin Mary is not original – they were probably repolychromed at a later date – Christ and his Cross have been executed beautifully. A virtually identical Christ on the Cross can be found in the Enclosed Garden at the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Arras. The cross is entirely decorated with gilded or painted metal ornaments. A frieze of fleurons forms a border along the four arms. The four extremities have been decorated with a large floral motif of four petals surrounding a central cabochon. The Cross and the socle have been further decorated with small flowers of different types (Ill. 84).

ILL. 84
Detail of the crucifix
socle, signed
'CORNIELIS' –
Garden with a Calvary

All three socles bear the polychromer's mark: 'DOERMAEL' (Ill. 82). This mark also appears on the socle of a Mechelen statuette of the Madonna and Child, which is in Berlin.²²

Here, we are presented with a consistent ensemble. With the exception of the replacement statuette of St Elisabeth, the statuettes and their socles were very likely produced by the same sculptor and polychromer.

Of particular interest are the metal ornaments pinned to the statuettes' headdresses. Decorative elements of this type have usually been lost and thus are very rare. On examination of all the statuettes, it emerged that the Mechelen *bourrelet* worn by the Virgin Mary and the saints was systematically adorned with such ornaments – as evidenced by traces of lead found in punctures around the *bourrelets*. The extreme fragility of these ornaments also explains why most of them have been lost. The Enclosed Gardens' protected state behind glass meant that a few managed to survive the passage of time. They were formed in a mould and then gilded. It is noteworthy that the statuette of St Elisabeth in the *Enclosed Garden with the Virgin and Child with*

CONCLUSION

The ensembles of sculpted statuettes and elements in the Enclosed Gardens involved in this research project were either only partly sculpted and polychromed by the same workshop, or not made by one workshop at all. Research into the marks from the homogenous ensemble of symbols of the Virgin Mary in the *Enclosed Garden with the Hunt of the Unicorn* (G1) indicates that the components were inspected at different stages, in iconographic pairs, and probably as the production process progressed.

1 The Royal Institute for Cultural Heritage (KIK-IRPA) research project into the Mechelen sculptures was initiated in 2004 by Myriam Serck-Dewaide with the support of Christina Ceulemans and Emmanuelle Mercier. The authors would like to express their sincere thanks to them all.

2 A detailed bibliography and historiography concerning research into the Mechelen statuettes can be found in the forthcoming book (published in 2019) by Fanny Cayron and Delphine Steyaert under the scientific direction of Emmanuelle Mercier with the assistance of Famke Peters. *Made in Malines. Les statuettes malinoises ou 'poupées de Malines', 1500-1540*. Scientia Artis (Brussels: Royal Institute for Cultural Heritage (KIK-IRPA)), with support from the Léon Courtin-Marcelle Bouché Fund and managed by the King Baudouin Foundation.

3 Between 1957 and 1976, Willy Godenne published thirteen articles in the *Handelingen van de Koninklijke Kring voor Oudheidkunde, Letteren en Kunst van Mechelen*.

4 Joseph de Borchgrave d'Altena, 'Statuettes malinoises,' *Bulletin des Musées royaux d'Art et d'Histoire / Bulletin van de Koninklijke Musea voor Kunst en Geschiedenis*, 4th series, no. 31 (1959), 2-98.

5 Sophie Guillot de Suduiraut and Christine Lancestremère, 'La production de statuettes à Malines au début du xvi^e siècle (vers 1500-1525/1530),' in *L'art multiplié. Production de masse, en série, pour le marché dans les arts entre Moyen Âge et Renaissance*, ed. M. Tomasi (Rome: Études lausannoises d'histoire de l'art, 11, 2011), 89-103.

6 The researchers also consulted the photo library and old treatment dossiers at the KIK-IRPA. Approximately 150 statuettes were studied and described at their repositories, and this included both detailed and general photographic images, dimensions and a systematic description of the polychromy. The database was compiled by Fanny Cayron and Delphine Steyaert, as well as by Ingrid Geelen in the first year of the project. It was updated in 2016 by Sara Pallemmaerts.

7 Ingrid Geelen and Delphine Steyaert, 'Considérations sur la vente et la diffusion des statuettes malinoises de la première moitié du XVI^e siècle,' *Il collezionismo locale: adesioni e rifiuti*.

Atti del convegno, Ferrara, 9-11 novembre 2006. Quaderni degli Annali dell'Università di Ferrara, Sessione Storia, 7, eds. Ranieri Varese and Federica Varatelli (Florence: Le Lettere, 2009), 19-49.

8 St Bernardino of Siena, Maastricht, Bonnefantenmuseum, inv. 4804, KIK-IRPA object no. 11021312.

9 See in particular: Camille Poupeye, 'Les jardins clos et leurs rapports avec la sculpture malinoise,' *Bulletin du Cercle archéologique, littéraire et artistique de Malines*, no. 22 (1912), 102-103; Willy Godenne, 'Préliminaires à l'inventaire général des statuettes d'origine malinoise présumées des XV^e et XVI^e siècles (fin),' *Handelingen van de Koninklijke Kring voor Oudheidkunde, Letteren en Kunst van Mechelen*, 66 (1962), 69; Jan Crab, *Het Brabants beeldsnijcentrum Leuven* (Leuven: Ceuterick, 1977), 61-62.

10 According to the regulations of 1564 for the Guild of St Luke in Mechelen, two controllers were appointed annually from among the members of the guild. The first articles of association were thought to have dated from 1500 and have been lost, as have the updated versions which underwent regular revisions throughout the course of the 16th century in order to keep pace with developments in the profession. The text of the new regulations of 1564 is all that has been handed down to us. Concerning this scroll, see Emmanuel Neeffs. *Histoire de la peinture et de la sculpture à Malines* (Ghent, 1876), vol. 1, 10-16; Adolf Monballieu, 'Documenten van het Mechels schilders- en beeldsnijdersambacht. I. De Rolle van 1564,' *Handelingen van de Koninklijke Kring voor Oudheidkunde, Letteren en Kunst van Mechelen*, 73 (1969), 88-106.

11 Poupeye, 'Les jardins clos,' 103-104; Georges Van Doorslaer, 'Marques de sculpteurs et de polychromeurs malinois,' *Revue belge d'Archéologie et d'Histoire de l'Art / Belgisch Tijdschrift voor Oudheidkunde en Kunstgeschiedenis*, no. 3 (1933), 159-176; Crab, *Het Brabants beeldsnijcentrum Leuven*, 62-63; Erik Vandamme, *De polychromie van gotische houtsculptuur in de Zuidelijke Nederlanden. Materialen en technieken* (Brussels: Verhandelingen van de Koninklijke Academie voor Wetenschappen, Letteren en Schone Kunsten van België, Klasse der Schone Kunsten, 44, 1982, no. 35), 173-174.

12 Willy Godenne had already reached this conclusion in part when he noted that the 'BRVESEL' mark on a St Catherine held in a private collection (at the time the Welker collection) was identical to that seen in a small altarpiece to the Virgin Mary kept at the Brussels City Museum. Godenne, *Préliminaires*, 1962, 74-75.

13 Van Doorslaer, 'Marques,' 159-176.

14 Van Doorslaer, 'Marques,' 159-176.

15 Myriam Serck-Dewaide, 'Matériaux, techniques et polychromies,' in *Retables flamands et brabançons dans les monuments belges*, Monumenten en landschappen, Cahiers, 4, eds. Marjan Buyle and Christine Vanthillo (Brussels: Ministerie van de Vlaamse Gemeenschap. Afdeling Monumenten en Landschappen, 2000), 94-95.

16 Ingrid Geelen and Delphine Steyaert, *Imitation and Illusion. Applied Brocade in the Art of the Low Countries in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries*. Scientia Artis, 6 (Brussels: Royal Institute for Cultural Heritage (KIK-IRPA), 2011), 113, 210-215 (cat. 6), 332-339 (cat. 28 and 29).

17 The leaded glass was probably incorporated in the 19th century. The glass was removed to allow conservation and has not been returned for the present museum display at the Museum Hof van Busleyden (Mechelen).

18 The authors would like to thank the Enclosed Gardens conservation team who so warmly welcomed us in 2017 and allowed us to handle and photograph the statuettes of the *Enclosed Garden with the Hunt of the Unicorn* (G1).

19 Brussels, Royal Museums of Art and History, inv. 920 A/B/C, KIK-IRPA object nos. 20033417, 20045222 and 20045223.

20 *Trinity of St Anne*, Berlin State Museums, inv. J471, KIK-IRPA object no. 11016764; *Madonna and Child*, private collection, KIK-IRPA object no. 50007379.

21 See: Cayron and Steyaert, *Made in Malines*.

22 *Madonna and Child*, Berlin State Museums, inv. 80/74, KIK-IRPA object no. 11016794.