



**FALCONET, Etienne-Maurice**

Paris 1716 - Paris 1791

*Pygmalion et Galatée*

*Pygmalion and Galatea*

1763

marble

group

H. 23 in.

Acc. No.: 27.387

Credit Line: Acquired by Henry Walters, 1924

Photo credit: The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore

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**Baltimore, Maryland, The Walters Art Museum**

[thewalters.org](http://thewalters.org)

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**Provenance**

- Gaston Le Breton
- Ambatielos [date and mode of acquisition unknown]
- Arnold Seligmann, Rey & Co. [date and mode of acquisition unknown]
- 1924, Baltimore, Henry Walters, by purchase
- 1931, Walters Art Museum, by bequest

**Bibliography**

- Museum's website, 28 October 2011

## Exhibitions

- 2002 Munich/Cologne

Art about Art: Painting and Sculpture in Competition (Wettstreit der Künste. Malerei und Skulptur von Dürer bis Daumier), Munich, Haus der Kunst; Cologne, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, 2002

## Comment

Museum's information, April 2013:

This statue is very likely the one exhibited by the artist at the Salon of 1763. The subject is taken from the Roman poet Ovid's tale of Pygmalion. Pygmalion is depicted in rapturous amazement at the feet of his love object, a nude sculpture, just at the moment when it is given life by Venus, the goddess of love. It is one of several celebrated works that established Falconet as one of the most influential sculptors of the second half of the 18th century.

Falconet was supported by Louis XV's mistress, Mme de Pompadour, through whose influence he was put in charge of sculpture at the Royal Porcelain Manufactory at Sèvres. A version of this sculpture was supplied by the artist as a model for reproduction by the manufacturer in white biscuit porcelain. Although this marble statue shares the same spirit as the painter Boucher's lighthearted and often erotic works, Falconet also created ambitious sculptures noted for their sober Classicism, the most famous example being his heroic equestrian portrait of Peter the Great in St. Petersburg.

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