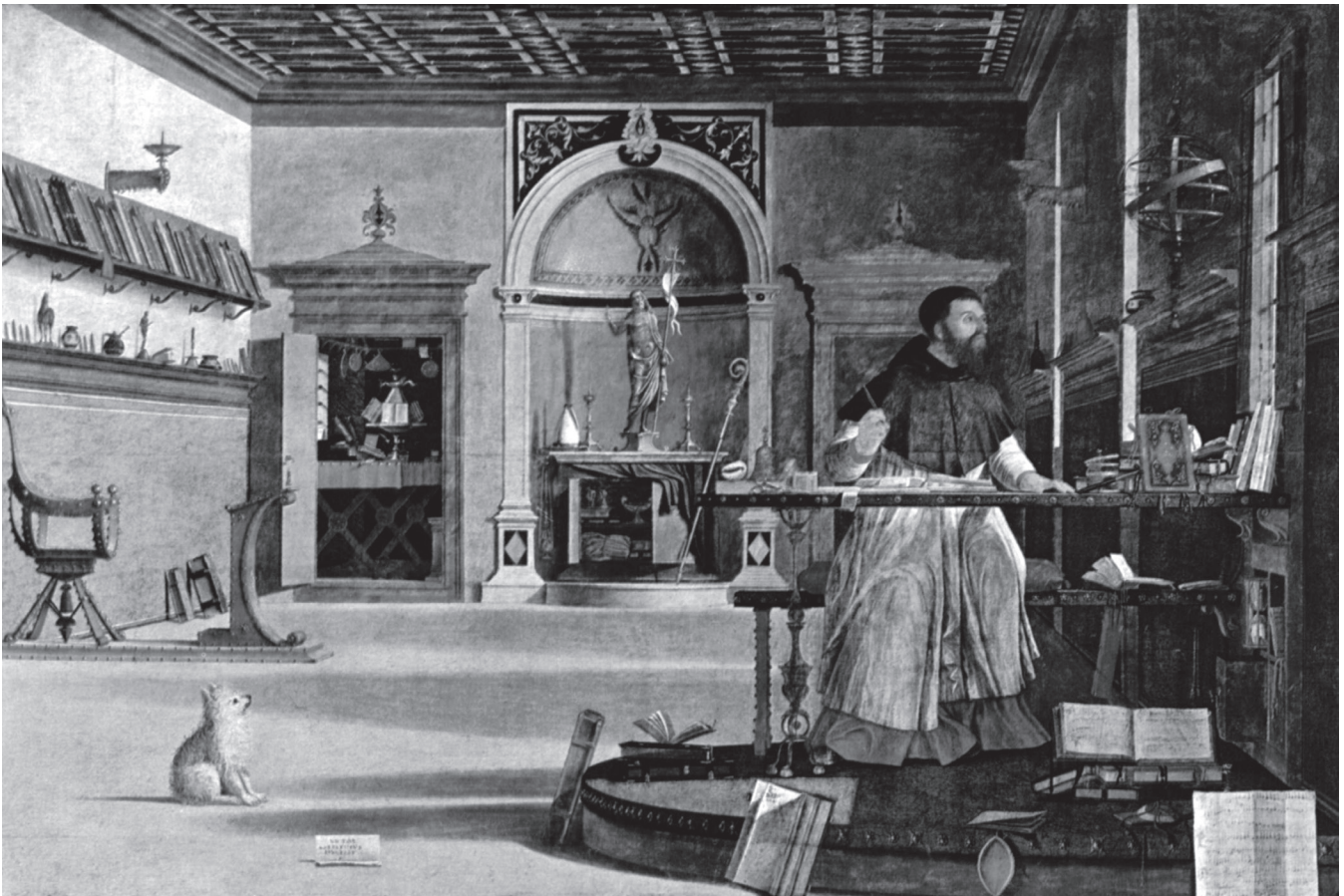


Technique and Process

What fascinates me is how sculptures provide us with evidence of historical cultures and how they unfold a mysterious and dignified ambience. Presented in museums, they escape the conceptual perception of the world by separating visible objects from their meaning. In most cases the figures contain a ritualistic background, in which one needs to research further in order to fully understand or else its consciousness may be lost. This absence of meaning has created something exotic: we strive for knowledge about the unknown and mysterious worlds. The Unusual offers us something different from the technical and rational assumptions about everyday life and it is also something that is perceived as threatening to the logic of natural science.

I like to explore this gap in my work between the unknown and fantasy or the various views of life and philosophies that emerge through our experiences.

In the Italian Renaissance the representation of the new order of the world can be observed through the formal studies, pictures and sculptures from the period. These small-scale works have become focal points in science.

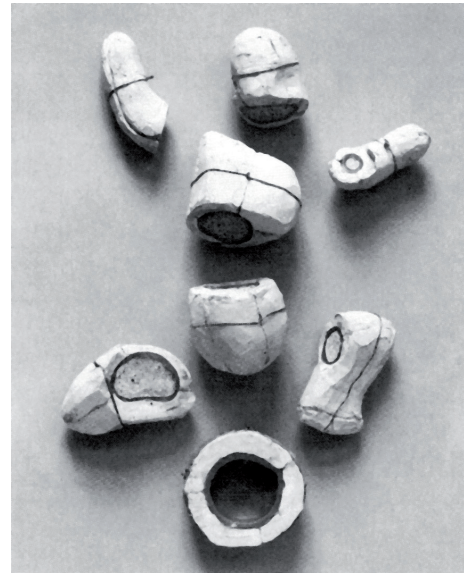


Vittore Carpaccio.
Life of St. Jerome:
Vision of St. Augustine. 1502–04

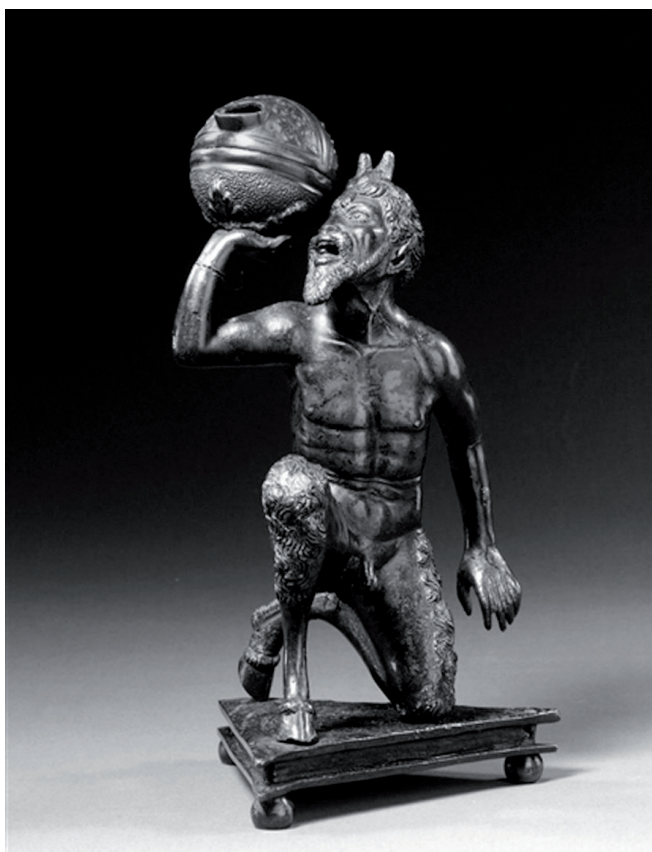
The small models and their forms and progresses created under technically difficult conditions are important aspects that I reference within my work. That said, my sculptures are not based on antique or mythological figures, but rather on contemporary and childlike figures.

While observing my work it is clear that they reference the process of their emergence. As a formal template I use similar methodology to those used for children's toys. The disjointed toys have become internationally renowned and are based on a very simple principle of connecting different parts and creatively modifying them into new forms. The figures reflect the worldwide associations with childhood imagination and creativity – which is the ideal point of departure for my artwork.

From a technical point of view this system is closely related to the historical production and process of bronze figures. In the Renaissance, antique figures were in great demand, which initiated a technique where several casts were made from the same model. This process called Antico was first discovered in Mantua, Italy (circa 1480), by Pier Jacopo Alari-Bonacolsi. This method consisted of dividing the clay model into several parts and placing them together to create one form. What resulted were many wax-positive parts that could be assembled and have bronze poured into it.

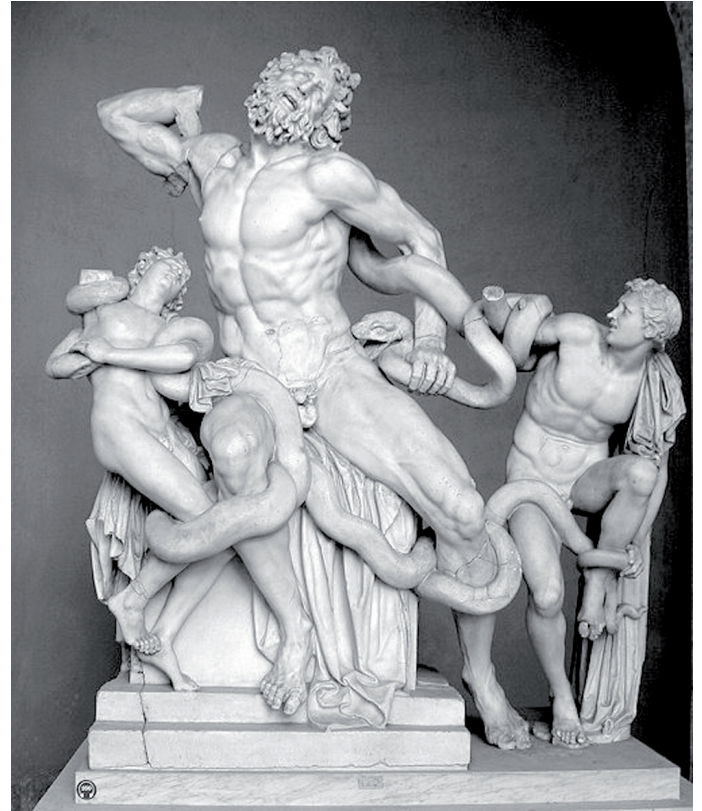
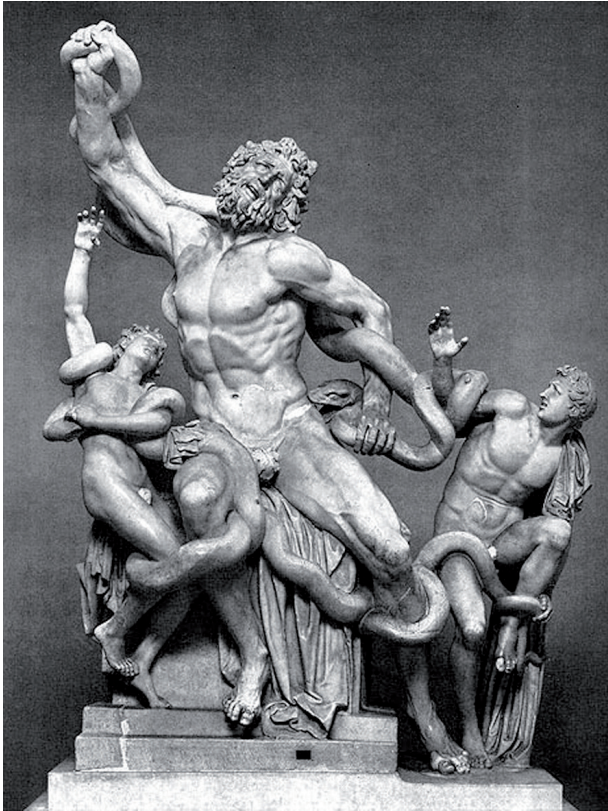


The work of Renaissance artist Severo da Ravenna (ca 1496-1538?) is also an important reference in my process: He used the Antico method to create new and original forms by combining different individual parts from various basic models. For example, he would start with 5-6 basic models with one of them possibly kneeling like Satyr and when he produced the separate parts for the figures he didn't necessarily place them in their corresponding areas in which they were originally placed. This usually happened before the casting where he had the possibilities to make adjustments, for example, he would place the arm from the second model on the body of the third; then replace the hands with those that were from the fourth figure and so forth.



Donatello (c. 1386-1466) used a more practical method to his ambitious casting methods. It has said that he had a figure of John the Baptist that he delivered to Siena in three separate parts. Over his time as an artist he learned how to be smarter about the way he preformed his business: he retained the right arm of the saint until he was paid in full for his work. Therefore, if the payment was not received the figure would be left without an arm, or one that appeared out of place.

Technical inadequacies led to the changes within the form in the Renaissance sculptures. This happened because the antique-copying was faced with various issues regarding supplementation. This loss of opportunity pushed the sculptors into new space that was open to experimentation and contemporary interpretation. An eloquent example of this was with the Laokoon group. These marble copies were found near Rome in 1506. The unfinished sculpture was later completed by the Laokoon Group with the arm stretched out. Because of the geo-institutionalisation of the group, the ancient form and its historical and mythological content was lost. It was not until 1960 that the original form of the bent elbow started to appear again.



By the end of the 19th century, transformation processes were undertaken because of the rise and acquisition of antiquities which initiated new sculptures to be made that at the time were only known through literature.

The use of the oldest material – bronze – not only provides freedom in its shaping and moulding. The character of the Divine also contributes to the meaning of the bronze through its casting, matter is transformed through heat (wax into bronze) and also the action and traces of creation are visible.

For me, I find this technically challenging and modified procedure as a possibility to create varied sculptures is something that I investigate in my work. I explore various size choices available and the different casting materials such as placing a well-known toy into the context of history and life experience. However, on the other hand, I play with the notion of fantasy and the possibilities that the toy can inhabit through the 'incorrectly assembled' forms originally made out of plastic. I look at the formal qualities of material and present new perspectives through form, such as imperfection. The figures play their role by displaying characteristic and unique features, they also attract the viewer's gaze, who are encouraged to question the functionality of what they see. Just like the views on antiquity in the Renaissance disrupted the views of one's world, my sculptures trigger new ways of looking and to put an end to the everyday perspective of a Utopian-visionary moment.