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**Date:** July 28, 2015

**Re:** Metropolitan Museum of Art

Tullio Lombardo's statue of Adam was the centerpiece of the Metropolitan Museum of Art's newly installed Italian Renaissance sculpture exhibit. Carved around 1490 for the tomb of the Doge of Venice, purchased by the Museum in 1936, it was their most important Italian Renaissance sculpture and one of the most significant Italian sculptures outside Italy. On October 6, 2002, after the museum had closed for the evening, guards discovered the sculpture shattered on the marble floor. The pedestal designed to support the sculpture had collapsed sending the prized sculpture crashing to the floor. The value of the sculpture was estimated at \$40 to \$80 million.

Rapperport Associates was retained to conduct a failure analysis of the pedestal. It was determined that the plywood pedestal was inadequately designed and could not support the 770 lb sculpture. Adam underwent an unprecedented 12 year reconstruction effort and is now back on display at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in Manhattan.



Image 0133



Image 0083



Image 113

## Links:

[After the Fall: The Conservation of Tullio Lombardo's Adam](#)

[Tullio Lombardo's Adam Back on Display After a 12-Year Restoration](#)

[Recreating Tullio Lombardo's Adam after the fall](#)

[Shattered 500 year old statue made whole again](#)

[Recreating Adam, From Hundreds of Fragments, After the Fall](#) (slide show with 8 photos)

[Tullio Lombardo's Adam – A Masterpiece Restored](#)

Old article – could not find a link:

## The Fall of Adam

By Paul Jeromack

NEW YORK. In what Metropolitan Museum authorities are describing as a “tragic, freak accident”, Tullio Lombardo’s Adam, the most important Renaissance sculpture in the museum’s collection and one of the most important Italian sculptures outside Italy, crashed to the ground on the evening of Sunday 6 October when one section on the base of its reinforced plywood pedestal apparently buckled. The broken statue was discovered by a museum guard at 9pm that evening, three hours after closing time.



A thorough examination has revealed no evidence of vandalism or indications that the statue had been struck or pushed. The sculpture, which weighs approximately 1,000 pounds, is most damaged in its extremities—the trunk of the Tree of Knowledge around which the serpent was coiled, and Adam’s arms and legs are broken. One leg has broken into six large pieces, though other parts were pulverized in the fall. Miraculously, the head and torso are the least damaged.

Sculpture curator James David Draper told The New York Times that “The features of the face are legible, and suffered only minor losses, mostly scratches.” The museum

estimates that restoring the Adam will take about two years, though Metropolitan director Philippe de Montebello told the Times that “The figure will stand again on a solid pedestal and frankly only the cognoscenti will know that it had been damaged.”

With the Frick Collection’s “St Francis in Ecstasy” by Giovanni Bellini, Tullio’s Adam is the greatest Venetian 15th-century work of art in America. The sculpture was carved around 1490 for the tomb of Doge Andrea Vendramin in the Church of Santa Maria dei Servi, Venice and it was originally paired with a now lost companion of Eve. It is the first monumental classical nude carved since antiquity and was admired by both Michelangelo and Canova. By the beginning of the 19th century both Adam and Eve were censured for their sensuousness and were banished from public view around 1819 when the monument was moved to the Church of SS. Giovanni e Paolo in Venice.

Adam was returned to the Vendramin family who passed it on to the Duchesse de Berry around 1842. It was later successively owned by Parisian banker Henri Pereire and the Dukes of Frohsdorf, Vienna from around 1893 to around 1921 and was purchased by the Metropolitan in 1936.

Despite its travels, the marble remained in impeccable condition, and since its acquisition it has never left the museum. Since 1964, it stood in the 16th-century Spanish marble Velez Blanco Patio on the museum’s main floor.

In May 2000, following a three-year restoration of the patio, the original cherry wood pedestal on which Adam rested was replaced with one made of Medium Density Overlay Plywood which was believed to be much sturdier and durable. A thorough investigation of all the other bases in the museum made with the same material is underway.