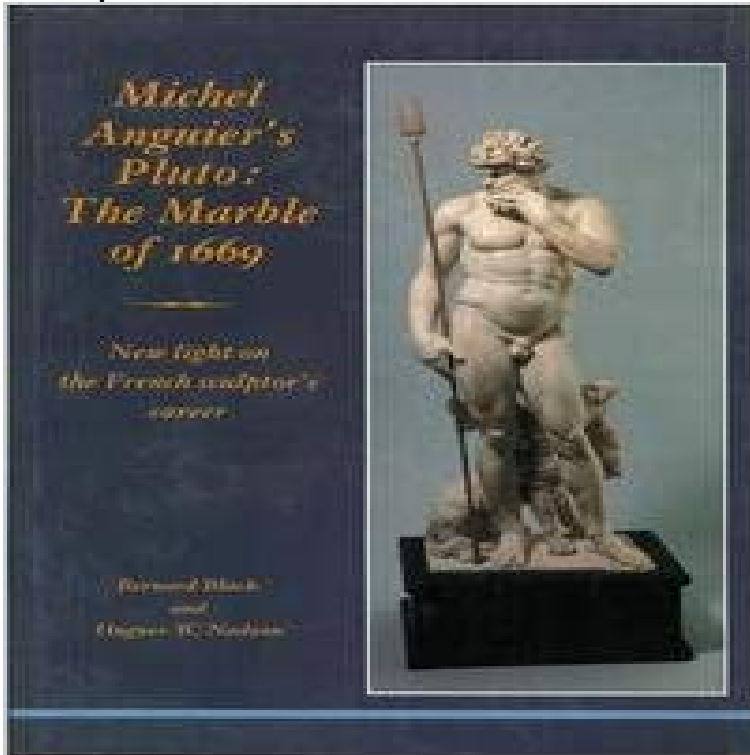


## Michel Anguiers Pluto: The Marble of 1669: New Light on the French Sculptors Career



Michel Anguier was one of the most outstanding and inventive sculptors in France in the seventeenth century. To this day, however, little is generally known or has been written about him, undoubtedly because many of his sculptures have disappeared. His name remains attached, instead, to the various bronze versions deriving from a suite of small gods and goddesses which he modelled in 1652. In the present study, which is the first monographic book on Michel Anguier, the authors reconsider this important, if neglected, master in the light of a recently-discovered, small marble statue of Pluto by him which, because of its scale, is unique for the period in France. Various aspects of Anguier's life and teaching are touched upon, including the series of lectures which he gave at the Academie royale de Peinture et de Sculpture which influenced the next generation of sculptors, as well as his long feud with Charles Le Brun, the director of the Academie, who maintained a despotic control over the artistic productions for Versailles. In their investigation into the origin of the marble Pluto and Anguier's use of it to demonstrate his theories, the authors present unpublished documentation and little-known engravings and photographs which will prove revealing to those not familiar with the work of Michel Anguier and valuable to students of French sculpture of the period. It includes a discussion of the bronze versions of Pluto and, finally, an account of an unprecedented scientific analysis of the marble used for the statuette which concluded that the figure of the god was carved from the same block as the sculptor's major group of The Nativity (1667), now in the Church of Saint Roch, Paris, which was recently called a masterpiece of the world's sculpture.

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