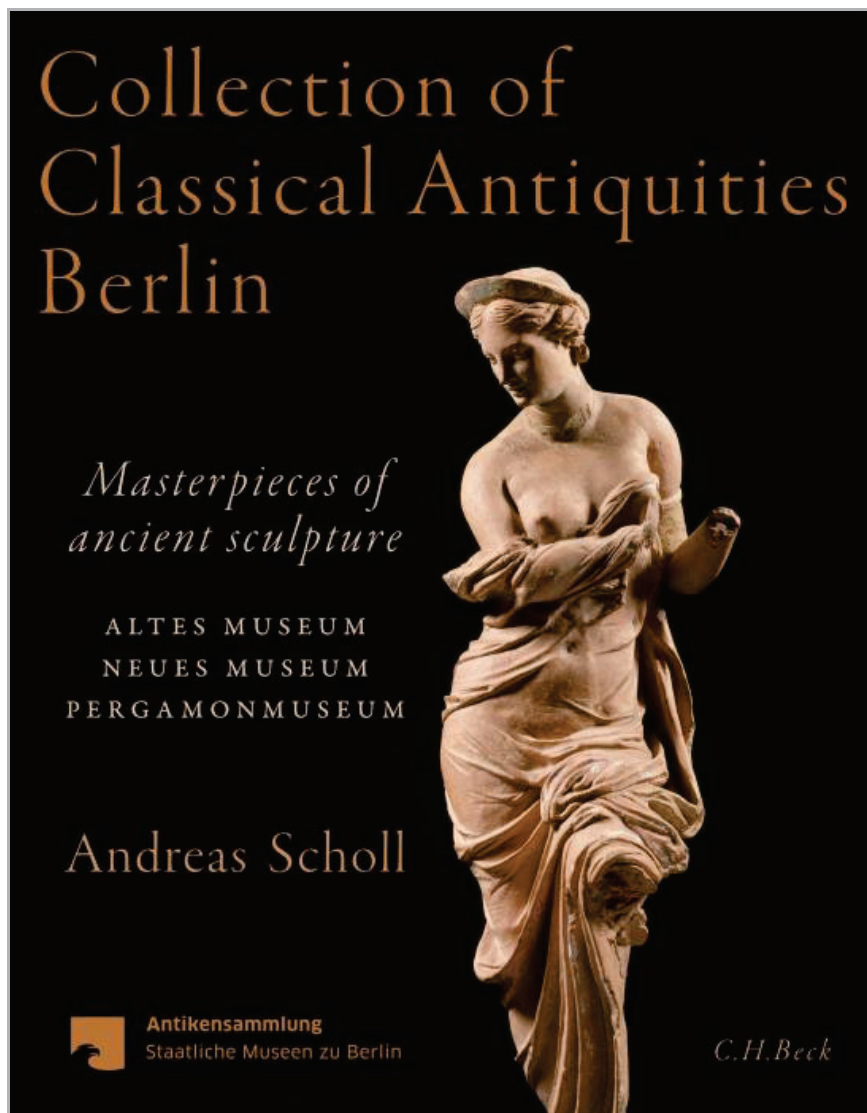


Unverkäufliche Leseprobe



Andreas Scholl
Collection of Classical Antiquities Berlin
Masterpieces of ancient sculpture

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Altes Museum

Neues Museum

Pergamonmuseum

With photographs by Johannes Laurentius

Translated from the German

by Giles Shephard

C.H.Beck

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IN MEMORIAM PATRIS MEI
HANS SCHOLL
(1930–2015)

The Collection of Classical Antiquities Berlin Today

The treasures that constitute the Collection of Classical Antiquities Berlin – the Antikensammlung – are spread throughout no fewer than three famous buildings on the Museumsinsel: the Altes Museum, the Neues Museum and the Pergamonmuseum (Fig. 1). This book reflects the presentation of the collection as it stands today, following the major upheavals and overhauls of the past decade. During our work we have kept in mind the same motto that guided the founding fathers of the collection in the early 19th century and this

□ Fig. 1
The Museumsinsel of the future, seen from the south: at the front the Altes Museum (1830), behind it the Neues Museum (1859) with the James-Simon-Galerie (2019) to the left and the Alte Nationalgalerie (1871) to the right, behind it the Pergamonmuseum (1930) and at the north tip of the island the Bode-Museum (1904), rendering SPK/Art+Com 2015

□ Fig. 2

Karl Friedrich Schinkel,
by Carl Friedrich
Ludwig Schmid, 1832,
Nationalgalerie SMB

book likewise seeks “first to delight, then to instruct” (Karl Friedrich Schinkel). We hope it will most of all encourage readers to look more closely at the sculptures, one of the particularly fine holdings of the Antikensammlung. A selection of the most beautiful and most interesting of Berlin’s classical sculptures are included here, not only on account of their artistic value but also as testimony to Greek, Etruscan and Roman cultural history. ◆

The Altes Museum

Built next to the Lustgarten pleasure gardens and designed to house the Antikensammlung, the Altes Museum, which opened on 3 August 1830, is a masterpiece of German Neoclassicism and one of the most important works by its architect

□ Fig. 3
Friedrich Wilhelm III,
by Ernst Gebauer, 1834,
Nationalgalerie SMB

Karl Friedrich Schinkel (Fig. 2). Commissioned by King Friedrich Wilhelm III of Prussia (Fig. 3), Schinkel (1781–1841) erected this first public museum in Prussia between 1825 and 1830 for the collection of ancient sculptures and the royal collection of old master paintings (Gemäldegalerie). These two collections are thus the oldest in the formerly royal, now state museums of Berlin (Staatliche Museen zu Berlin). Schinkel gave the front of his museum the characteristic form of

□ Fig. 4

*Altes Museum, sketch
for the wall paintings in
the portico: Uranus and
the Dance of the Stars,
by Karl Friedrich
Schinkel, 1831,
Kupferstichkabinett
SMB*

a Greek stoa, or portico, open on one side – the choice of Classical Greek architectural and ornamental forms themselves alluding to the building's purpose and content (Fig. p. 6). The wide flight of steps on the Lustgarten side invites people to enter the museum. The proportions of the facade with eighteen monumental Ionic columns and of the building as a whole were conceived as a worthy counterpart and echo of the north facade of the Berlin Schloss. Thus the museum, in conjunction with the baroque Zeughaus to the west, the Schinkel cathedral to the east and the Schloss to the south, provided the Lustgarten with a handsome architectural frame and gave the Prussian state an emblematic focal point of great beauty. It demonstrated the political and military might of Prussia, but also its underpinning through religion, culture and education. Even before the devastation wreaked by the Second World War, this ensemble of buildings had been marred by the bombastic Berlin Cathedral erected in 1894–1905 (the work of architect Julius Raschdorff), which is out of all proportion to the square. But to offset this, reconstruction of the Hohenzollern palace will go some way to restoring the Lustgarten to its original form, and healing a deep wound in the heart of Berlin.

□ Fig. 5
 Altes Museum,
 sketch for the wall
 paintings in the portico:
Mourning at the Tumulus,
 by Karl Friedrich
 Schinkel, 1832,
 Kupferstichkabinett
 SMB

Schinkel never visited Greece and never saw the ruins of a Greek stoa. What inspired him were his travels in Italy, the Neoclassical buildings of his contemporaries, the drawings and engravings of early travellers to Athens and the Acropolis, and certainly also descriptions of architecture by ancient Greek and Roman authors. For instance, the monumental wall paintings in the stoa and stairwell of his museum (Figs. 4, 5), unfortunately almost completely destroyed in the Second World War, evocatively recall the *stoa poikile*, or “painted portico”, in Athens as described in antiquity. According to the Greek travel writer Pausanias from the 2nd century AD, this building stood on the north side of the Agora of Athens and was decorated with large wall paintings. Schinkel’s building thus takes Greek Classical architecture as its yardstick, not copying it but reinventing it. This is evident from the exterior sculptural decoration of the museum, its highly original staircase hall with the upper-storey loggia (Figs. 6, 7) – a viewing balcony set behind the rows of columns and looking out over the Lustgarten and the Schloss – and its central Rotunda. Above all, this architectural *hommage* and quotation of the Pantheon in Rome with its sculptural decoration almost

□ Fig. 6
*Altes Museum,
view of the loggia,
main staircase
and Lustgarten,
by Karl Friedrich
Schinkel, 1829,
Kupferstichkabinett
SMB*

completely preserved, was intended, as Schinkel himself stated, to put the visitor in the proper state of mind for the didactic experience of classical antiquity (Fig. p. 2). The eventful history of the Antikensammlung and particularly its sculpture display from 1830 onwards is told in the final chapter of this book. What interests us here first and foremost is the present and what meets the eye of visitors who come from all over the world to view the collections today.

This book is a response to the enthusiasm generated by the new installation of the Greek, Cypriot, Etruscan and Roman sculptures (excepting those from Pergamon) in Schinkel's Altes Museum and Friedrich August Stüler's Neues Museum (Fig. 1) on the Museumsinsel which became possible in the years 2009 to 2011. As a result of this total reorganization of the holdings, sculptures that had been on display in the north wing of the Pergamonmuseum since 1959 were eventually liberated after half a century from a display location that was much too dark. So it was that the majority of the sculptures could be reunited in Schinkel's museum for the first time since 1939. In the process it was possible to undertake comprehensive restoration work and greatly improve

the arrangement, lighting and explanatory presentation of the sculptures. The conservational treatment and hence the aesthetic enhancement of the works' appearance was accompanied by a completely revised museum education concept. Following David Chipperfield's reconstruction of the Neues Museum, the Cypriot sculptures along with those from the provinces of the Roman Empire went on display there in 2009, presented for the first time within the context of their cultural history (Fig. 20).

Scattered seemingly arbitrarily across several buildings, the Antikensammlung was finally reunified following the clearance of the north wing of the Pergamon-museum (Fig. 155), decided on in 1999 as part of the Museumsinsel Master Plan. Since January 2013 the world-famous museum has been undergoing a long overdue, comprehensive structural renovation and extension. The modernized building, completed by the addition of a fourth wing, is not expected to open before 2030, the 100th anniversary of its inauguration. It is hoped that both the redesigned Museum für Islamische Kunst in the north wing and the Antikensammlung's Hall of Hellenistic Architecture and the Pergamon Altar can start receiving visitors by the mid-2020s. So the public in the meantime does not

■ Fig. 7
Altes Museum,
the loggia overlooking
the Lustgarten (2016)

□ Fig. 8
“Pergamonmuseum.
Das Panorama”,
360° panorama of
ancient Pergamon in the
2nd cent. AD, by Yadegar
Asisi, 2018; detail of the
Trajaneum, the sanctuary
of Athena and the theatre

forget about Pergamon, central as it is to the Antikensammlung, a large, provisional exhibition space has been created in the museum courtyards (Museums-höfe) between the Bode-Museum and the Archäologisches Zentrum. Called “Pergamonmuseum. Das Panorama” and open since November 2018, it houses nearly all of the significant sculptures from Pergamon, the best preserved panels of the Telephos Frieze from the Great Altar, and also the Pergamon Panorama which has been substantially reworked by its creator, the Berlin artist and architect Yadegar Asisi (Fig. 8). Previously, this monumental, fascinating work that shows Pergamon as it was in the 2nd century AD went on show in September 2011 for one year as part of the temporary exhibition *Pergamon. Panorama der antiken Metropole* (“Pergamon. Panorama of the ancient metropolis”).

Ancient Worlds. The New Presentation of the Antikensammlung in the Altes Museum

In 2011 we took the unavoidable removal of the Greek and Roman sculptures from the north wing of the Pergamonmuseum as an opportunity to present a new installation of the most beautiful and most significant part of the Antikensammlung – the art of ancient Greece – on the main floor of the Altes Museum. Shortly beforehand, in July 2010, the Etruscan and Roman collections had moved to the upper floor of the museum where they were displayed under the title “*Italia Antiqua*. Etruscans and Romans in Berlin”. The backbone of the display on the renovated main floor now consists of Greek sculptures from the late 7th to the 1st century BC. Here, masterpiece follows masterpiece in every category, lit by sunlight on bright days as well as by 600 ceiling lights and hundreds of new LEDs in the display cases (Fig. 9). The installation presents a good one thousand years of Greek cultural history in a chronological survey contextually augmented where appropriate. As a result the museum has now hopefully been restored to its original purpose and rediscovered its true identity. After more than four decades of being used for temporary exhibitions of every description, the Altes Museum has now – since 2011 – returned to what it was in the years between 1907 and 1939 in terms of content and function: it is once again the grand gateway to the Museumsinsel, a sanctuary of art and archaeology. Many Greek and a small selection of Roman antiquities were shown on the main floor of the museum as early as May 1998 when the Antikenmuseum of West Berlin vacated the western

Stülerbau building in Charlottenburg to make way for an exhibition of the Berggruen Collection *Picasso und seine Zeit* ("Picasso and his time"). While the new setting was beyond reproach, the exhibition design was intrusive (Fig. 157) and furthermore the bulk of the sculptures had to remain in the north wing of the Pergamonmuseum due to lack of space.

After the Ionic columnar facade of the Altes Museum and the Rotunda with its statues of deities have created a suitable mood for the appreciation of classical antiquity, visitors embark on their tour through ancient Greece's cultural history commencing in the east gallery of the main floor. This gallery not only faces the rising sun but also presents, in the first section, the meteoric rise of Greek art following the collapse of Mycenaean civilization and the two-century-long Dark Age at the end of the 2nd millennium BC (Room 1). In this section, The Age of Heroes, the visitor discovers early Greece, described so vividly in the epics of Homer at the dawn of European literature. Geometric and early Archaic vases, weapons, bronzes, terracottas and some first stone sculptures are evidence of a new beginning of a culture that had reestablished itself through contact with neighbouring cultures in the eastern Mediterranean. In the so-called orientализing

■ Fig. 9
Altes Museum, main floor,
Room 2: "Places of the
Gods: Sanctuaries in
Archaic Greece" (2011)

phase of the 7th century BC the Greeks then creatively assimilated major cultural developments from Near Eastern civilizations – notably the alphabet, borrowed from the Phoenicians and in use from the 8th century BC onwards, and also the cultural practice of the symposium.

Some visitors will expect the Berlin holdings on the archaeology of Bronze Age Greece to be exhibited at this point. It was our conscious decision, in 2011, no longer to show the collections of Cycladic culture and of Minoan and Mycenaean Greece of the 2nd millennium BC in the Altes Museum, but instead to place them in the broader context of European and Mediterranean prehistory on the top exhibition floor of the Neues Museum (Level 3, Room 306). A historically rational point at which to divide the holdings is the two-century long Dark Age. After this, around 1000 BC a new start for Greek culture can be observed with the transition to what is known as the Geometric period. From all that we know, the plastic art of the period from 1000 to 700 BC consisted almost exclusively of small-format artefacts of clay and bronze. Stone sculpture appears to have been completely absent in Geometric Greece.

The next section, Places of the Gods: Sanctuaries in Archaic Greece, in the middle of the east gallery (Room 2; Fig. 9), shows virtually everything that one might have found at a major Archaic sanctuary. Votive gifts of all kinds – ranging from tiny offerings made of bronze to the splendid *kore* statues (Fig. 36) and the imposing *kouros* from Didyma (Fig. 38) – can be seen here, along with the reconstructed altar of the Delphinion of Miletus, a pediment from the temple of Artemis in the same city, monumental sacred inscriptions and even an evocation of a sacred way lined by enthroned female figures. Few museums outside Greece can offer so complete a picture of the furnishings and amenities of important sanctuaries in the 6th century BC.

The following section, Memory and Representation: Funerary Monuments in Archaic Greece, is the last one in the main-floor east gallery (Room 3; Fig. 10). In the centre stands the legendary “Berlin Goddess” (Fig. 40), restored and once again placed in a glass case to protect the large amount of preserved ancient polychromy. She is ceremoniously flanked and guarded by the two funerary lions from tombs in ancient Knidos and Miletus. They are joined by important fragments of Attic grave stelai of the 6th century BC (Fig. 43), reliefs from Ionia and Laconia that commemorate the dead in a heroized manner, as well as grave inscriptions from other Greek regions. Also here is the “Sabouroff Head” (Fig. 42), which has an important part to play in the debate about the beginnings of Greek portraiture.

The first part of the long north gallery (Room 5; Fig. 11) is dedicated to the Gods and Heroes of ancient Greece and hence to sculptures with mythological subject

matter. The central aisle, which leads towards the High Classical Aphrodite with Tortoise (Fig. 149), is lined by tall display cases containing some of the most famous Attic vases in the collection. Several original Greek marble sculptures, a selection of Roman copies of Classical-period prototypes, an array of vases, bronzes, terracottas and other small-format works of the highest quality illustrate the main legends of the Greek gods and heroes – the Trojan War, for instance, or the labours of Heracles and Theseus.

The central section of the north gallery has been transformed into an atmospheric arena of classical beauty and is entitled Masterpieces: The Human Image in the Greek Classical Period (Room 6). Four masterly Roman copies of Greek 5th century BC originals and four Attic vases of exceptional quality have been placed around the “Praying Boy” (Fig. 50) which has been one of the signature works of the Antikensammlung since 1830. Four recessed cabinets in the partition walls serve to illuminate the cultural historical context of the masterpieces on show, with small-format artefacts related to the themes of athletics and the symposium.

The final section of the north gallery – Life and Death in Classical Athens: Everyday Life in an Ancient Metropolis – presents a sweeping panorama of

■ Fig. 10
*Altes Museum, main floor;
Room 3: “Memory and
Representation: Funerary
Monuments in Archaic
Greece” (2011)*

■ Fig. 11
*Altes Museum, main floor,
Room 5: "Gods and
Heroes: Images from
Greek Mythology" (2011)*

cultural history (Room 7; Fig. 12). It deals with politics and society in Attic democracy, the world of work, and the lives of women, children and slaves. A selection of Greek grave stelai closes this section, culminating in a large display cabinet containing an Attic tomb terrace with pottery used in funerary rituals (Fig. 57). Here, too, is the entrance to treasure troves from four millennia, with ancient jewellery and vessels made of precious metal (Room 8).

When visitors enter the west gallery, which is excellently lit especially in the afternoon, they are met by the life-sized statue of an actor (Fig. 60) in the section on Greek theatre (Room 9). This figure functions as a link between the cultural history of Athens and the presence of the theatre-obsessed Greeks in southern Italy and Sicily (Room 10). An example of the independent art of this region – Magna Graecia – stands in the centre of the room, the famous goddess of Taranto (Fig. 61), one of the few original cult images of ancient Greece that have come down to us. The female figure seated on a throne is surrounded by treasure from tombs in ancient Apulia – gold jewellery, silver and sumptuous vases – and by the luxury tableware of rich landowners on Sicily. The most notable assemblages here are the incomparably exquisite gold jewellery of a wealthy woman from

Taranto and the silver treasure from Paternò, found buried at the foot of Mount Etna.

The following section on the art of the Hellenistic period, by juxtaposing rulers, citizens, slaves and the disabled, seeks to paint a picture of humankind that encompasses extremes (Room 11; Fig. 13). We see masterpieces of Hellenistic sculpture in the original alongside accurate Roman-era copies of famous Hellenistic works such as the “Berlin Dancer” (Fig. 65) and the “Fisherman of Aphrodisias” (Fig. 63). The “Heyl Aphrodite” (Fig. 67), a High Hellenistic terracotta statuette that stylistically is very closely related to the Venus de Milo in the Louvre, bears witness to the high standard of terracotta art in this period. The end of the west gallery also commemorates one of the celebrated accomplishments of the Antikensammlung from the late 19th century: the excavation of Priene, the “Pompeii of Asia Minor”. As already mentioned, the famous Hellenistic marble sculptures from Pergamon are currently in the Pergamonmuseum’s interim display space opposite the Bode-Museum, but later they will move to the renovated architecture halls of the Pergamonmuseum and the Altes Museum. How much we owe to generations of colleagues that went before us and how they assembled and developed the collection in the course of 350 years, can be seen in the final room which explores the history of the museum itself (Room 12).

■ Fig. 12
Altes Museum, main floor,
Room 7: “Life and Death
in Classical Athens:
Everyday Life in an
Ancient Metropolis”
(2011)

■ Fig. 13
Altes Museum, main floor,
Room 11: “Alexander and
the Outcome: The Age
of Hellenism” (2011)

In the middle, as though in mute testimony to the barbarity of war, stands the Caffarelli Sarcophagus, which was carved in the reign of Augustus and badly damaged by fire in the Friedrichshain bunker in Berlin in May 1945. Two historic ebony cabinets made in 1906 display a selection of pieces acquired by the Antikensammlung from some sizeable private collections of the late 17th to early 19th century. Portraits of notable archaeologists of the Antikensammlung placed in front of a timeline on the south wall illustrate the evolution of the Berlin Antikensammlung from 1648 to 2011.

Italia Antiqua. Etruscans and Romans in Berlin

The redesigned upper floor of the Altes Museum opened on 1 July 2010. The Museums of Berlin and their visitors had had to wait a long time for the Etruscan antiquities to be put on permanent display and for the Roman collection to be

reunified. The latter had been held at separate locations – the Altes Museum, the Pergamonmuseum, the Antikenmuseum in Charlottenburg, and sundry storage vaults – for decades. In 2010, 71 years after being evacuated from the Altes Museum at the outbreak of war in 1939, the art of ancient Italy returned to the Antikensammlung's purpose-built home. The monuments of the Etruscans, that fascinating civilization from the ancient Italian heartland, were once again housed in an appropriate setting, in the south-east room and in the big east gallery on the upper floor.

The south-east room (Room 1) is devoted to the rise of the Etruscan civilization in the late 8th and 7th century BC. High-quality imports testify to the Etruscans' far-flung trading network. Following on, the east gallery offers a virtually complete panorama of the cultural history of ancient Etruria – its cities, sanctuaries and cemeteries (Room 2; Fig. 14). Apart from the large-format wall-paintings of Etruscan chamber tombs, all the major categories of the Etruscans' highly idiosyncratic art are represented here by outstanding specimens. Among the stone sculptures (Fig. 110), architectural terracottas (Fig. 112), bronzes (Fig. 113), sarcophagi (Fig. 114), cinerary chests, vases, gold jewellery, engraved gems and coins there are unique monuments and find assemblages preserved in their entirety. Highlights include the entire find complex of grave goods from a warrior's

■ Fig. 14
Altes Museum, upper
floor, Room 2: "Etruria –
Cities, Sanctuaries,
Cemeteries" (2010)

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