

ABSTRACTS & GRAPHIC RECORDING

**Ein analoger
weg ins
ZEITALTER
der
DIGITALISIERUNG**

**EIN SYMPOSIUM
ZUR GIPSFORMEREI
DER STAATLICHEN
MUSEEN ZU
BERLIN**

26. UND 27. NOVEMBER
2015

**Gipsformerei
Berlin**

**1819
GRÜNDUNG
zur STÄRKUNG
VON
• KUNST
• WISSENSCHAFT
• INDUSTRIE**

**1794
PARIS**

**DU DEN
SCHILLER,
ICH DIE
NOFRETETE**

KUNST FÜR ALLE

**EINKAUF
DIREKT
IN
ITALIEN**

**PREIS
6 TALER
SCHILLER
16 TALER
NOFRETETE**

ARCHIV

**PRO-
DUKT-
ION**

**WERK-
ZEUG
=
PRODUKT**

**SAVED
HERITAGE**

2015

2015

* GABRIELE
SCHLIPP



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EUROPE AND PLASTER.

CAST WORKSHOPS, MUSEUMS AND PLASTER CASTS

Charlotte Schreiter



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The keynote presentation addresses the issue of the typical material qualities or ascribed characteristics that distinguish casts from other art works—in a nutshell, the question of whether plaster has a ‘value’ that needs to be revived or maintained. The paper sketches out the cast collection’s historical development, culminating in the mid-nineteenth century in the Neues Museum, where the plaster casts, as an educational policy tool in the form of an encyclopaedic depiction of world art that sought to be as complete as possible, are presented like originals. At the same time, the New Museum’s comprehensive concept also documents cultural exchange in Europe, as well as being an expression of national competition and rivalry.

The theory that plaster casts only assume ‘value’ or enjoy esteem as a result of users’ and viewers’ appreciation and valorisation is linked to the historical insight that the diminished stature of casts and their decline, due to the backlash proclaiming the primacy of the original, stem from the very advantages afforded by artworks made from plaster. These are related to the material per se and to the mode of production, and in particular to the flexibility of such artworks and the lack of copyright restrictions constraining their production.

Nevertheless great potential for constant change and innovation exists precisely by tapping into casts’ variability to experiment with ever-new constellations.

BERLIN AND BONN.

STRATEGIES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT AND PRESENTATION OF CAST COLLECTIONS

Nele Schröder-Griebel



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The paper compares two competing cast collections—on the one hand, the Königlische Museen zu Berlin’s encyclopaedic museum-format cast collection and on the other hand the university-based cast collection of the Akademisches Kunstmuseum in Bonn. Whereas Berlin had the largest cast collection of all, the Bonn collection was seen as a scholarly repository of knowledge.

Both collections benefited in multiple respects from Napoleon’s looting of art: due to the casts they received from the Paris Replica Workshop as compensation for artworks removed by Napoleon, and in addition because the Paris Replica Workshop provided the first opportunity to purchase good casts of countless antiquities from a wide range of European museums.

Fundamental differences between the two collections can be identified: in their genesis, underlying concepts, circumstances and scope for development, as well as in their intended purpose, utilization and development. Whereas over the course of history the Berlin collection had to give up its claim to be complete, the Bonn collection boasts virtually uninterrupted continuity in its utilization as a teaching tool and as an experimental testing ground.



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“INSTRUCTIVE AND HENCE USEFUL”.

ON THE EDUCATIONAL FUNCTION OF THE BERLIN CAST COLLECTION IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Elsa van Wezel



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The paper examines the changing status of plaster cast collections in museum discussions and practice in nineteenth-century Berlin. The position adopted by Aloys Hirt, professor at the Berlin Academy of Arts and initiator of the museum in Berlin, is compared with the stances assumed by Karl Friedrich Schinkel, Wilhelm von Humboldt, and Heinrich Meyer, Goethe’s confidant on artistic matters. Everyone agreed that the cast collection should be viewed as an academic teaching tool and positioned within an academic framework. There were however differences of opinion concerning the most suitable setting: the academy or the museum. Whilst Hirt wished to ensure that the cast collection would be taken into account when setting up the museum, in order to teach art lovers and artists about the classical canon, Schinkel held that plaster casts belonged in the academy, considering them inferior and lacking the aura of true art.

In 1840, the fortunes of the cast collection, under its new Director, General Ignaz von Olfers, began to improve, reaching an unparalleled climax in the status accorded to it in the Neues Museum, officially inaugurated in 1859. At the same time, the perspective within which the casts were viewed also expanded to encompass other eras and cultures—with far-reaching consequences for our understanding of art to this day.

“ISLAND OF PLASTER CASTS”.

THE ROLE OF THE PLASTER CAST COLLECTION IN THE 1883/84 MUSEUM ISLAND COMPETITION

Moritz Dapper



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In 1883, when the call for entries to the Museum Island Competition was announced, Berlin already had the world’s largest collection of casts from antique originals, which was constantly growing thanks to the excavations in Pergamon and above all in Olympia.

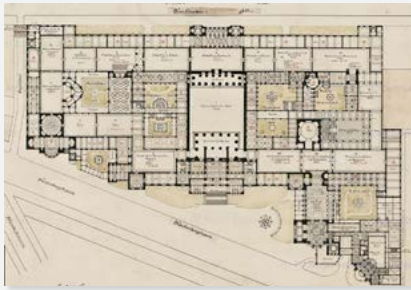
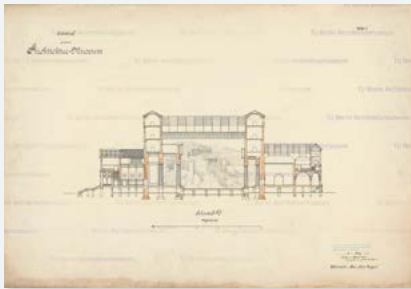
The paper demonstrates the significance of the plaster cast collection in the Museum Island Competition, already apparent in the enormous floor area it required: 6,650 m² to display casts from antique works, alongside 5,010 m² for originals, as well as 1,000 m hanging space for casts from the Christian eras and 300 m for originals. The casts were viewed in this context as autonomous, valuable exhibits, whereas the study collection was placed in the storage area. At the same time, there was an intensive drive to make display of the cast collection more monumental, for example in the façade construction of the Temple of Zeus from Olympia, as well through other architectural structures and large-scale sculptures.

The paper presents the architects’ engagement with key role models in Paris and London. It views the designs for the Museum Island as designs for an “island of plaster casts”—a site in which the casts assumed significance for shaping identity.

EDUCATIONAL REFORM AND MONUMENTALISATION.

THE REDESIGN OF CAST COLLECTIONS IN THE NINETEENTH AND TWENTIETH CENTURIES

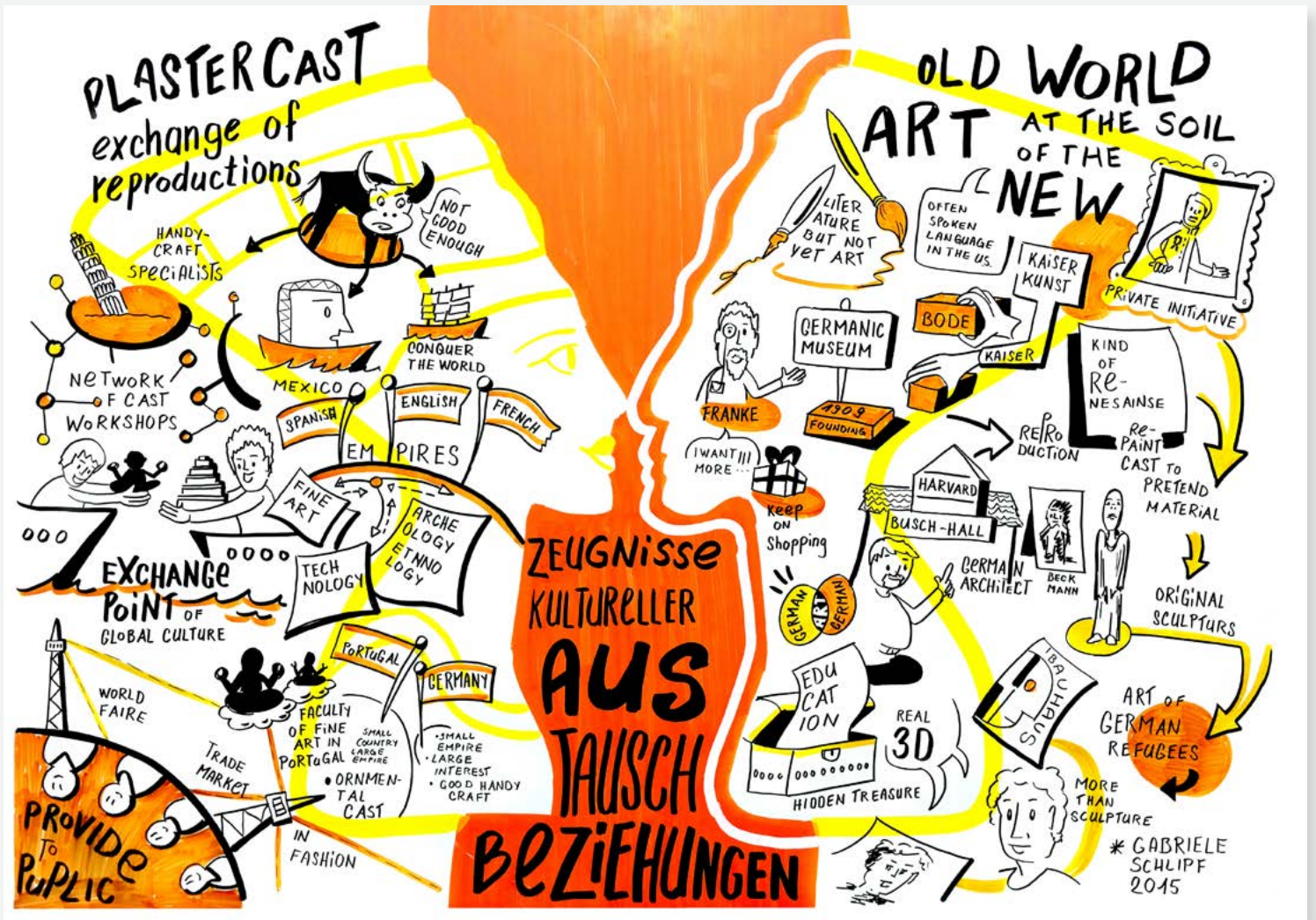
Nikolaus Bernau



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The paper places the planned monumentalised stagings of the Berlin cast collections in the late nineteenth/early twentieth century in a broader context. It presents the rapid international development of monumentalised cast collections since the inauguration of Crystal Palace in Sydenham, London, in 1854, and addresses the interests and protagonists behind this process. The paper sketches out the extending scope of perception, and engages with the new narratives and the nationalisation of art history thus introduced into the museum context.

The monumentalisation of cast collections is viewed as a strategy to reach out to a broad audience, and as a mode of national self-affirmation and assertion. Finally, the paper raises the question of why this failed in Berlin specifically, and takes a look at the re-discovery of monumentalised exhibitions, which continue to be correlated with the fragility—in conceptual terms too—of plaster cast collections.



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PLASTER CAST WORKSHOPS.

THEIR IMPORTANCE FOR THE EMERGENCE OF AN INTERNATIONAL NETWORK FOR THE EXCHANGE OF REPRODUCTIONS OF ART

Ricardo Mendonça



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Soon after its creation, in 1794, the Louvre workshop had already established itself as the world market leader of plaster casts, being able to supply up to 1,500 different models at the end of the nineteenth century.

This paper demonstrates how Napoleonic looting, as a driving force in the development of plaster cast production, disrupted Italy's dominance as a supplier of casts. Furthermore, by analyzing the changes in the supply chain of plaster casts across the world, it highlights the importance of world fairs, both as launch-pads for museums of casts and in establishing a cooperation system for exchanges of reproductions of art between European countries. It examines the 1867 "International Convention of promoting universally Reproductions of Works of Art" as a key document in which the supply of casts is seen as a service provided to society, and replica workshops are regarded as a means to make art institutions more sustainable. Nevertheless at the end of the nineteenth century, plaster cast collections in Europe also became more important from a national perspective, with smaller countries, such as Portugal, also becoming engaged.

This contribution concludes by tracing the importance of German plaster cast workshops in establishing an international cooperation system.

“OLD WORLD ART ON THE SOIL OF THE NEW”:

PLASTER CASTS AND THE GERMANIC MUSEUM AT HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Lynette Roth



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Founded officially in 1903 with Kuno Francke, professor of German literature at Harvard, as its curator, the Germanic Museum was to comprise only replicas, primarily of medieval and Renaissance sculptures and architectural stonework.

A foundational selection of plaster casts was made under the auspices of the Königliche Museen zu Berlin and its General Director Wilhelm von Bode, as German Emperor Wilhelm II, seeking to build a stronger relationship between Imperial Germany and the U.S., made a notable gift to the museum. Thus the museum's early holdings can be seen to reflect a newly established national canon—conceived for export.

This paper highlights decisive historical moments in the development of the Germanic and later Busch-Reisinger Museum. After World War II, the museum and the canon of art from the German-speaking world shifted focus, concentrating more on defamed and exiled German artists, with Max Beckmann as a key figure.

In recent years, the plaster cast collection has re-emerged as an important resource for the museum's self-conception, identity and mission. Committed to its teaching and research mission to this day, in 2012 the Busch-Reisinger began a multi-phase project to revitalize its historic building and plaster casts.

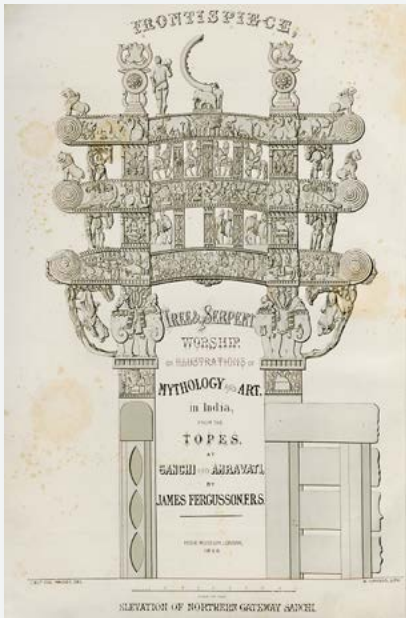


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THE BERLIN CAST OF THE SANCHI GATE:

CREATION, SIGNIFICANCE,
FUTURE PROSPECTS

Martina Stoye



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The Berlin cast—the last outside Asia—is an artificial-stone cast of an ancient Indian gate and was made from earlier plaster moulds in 1970 when the Museum of Indian Art was established. It is a replica of the eastern gate in a set of four sumptuous entrances to the Stupa of Sanchi, close to Bhopal in Madhya Pradesh, India, the centre of which dates back to the third century BCE.

The paper addresses the respect accorded to the monument since its rediscovery in the colonial period as the oldest Buddhist monument that has survived in situ. It presents the London cast of the east Sanchi Gate (1869/70) in the context of the “International Convention of promoting universally Reproductions of Works of Art” (1867) as an innovative and jointly organised form of dealing with cultural heritage that advocated in-situ conservation of ancient architecture.

It surveys Sanchi’s revival and re-appraisal thanks to the return of relics (1947/52) in the post-colonial era, in order to finally raise the question of how Berlin—in this context—will in future appreciate the last extant cast of the Sanchi Gate in Europe.

THE BERLIN ANGKOR WAT CASTS.

THE CULTURAL POLITICS CONTEXT AROUND 1900 AND THE CASTS' CURRENT SIGNIFICANCE AS TRANSCULTURAL HERITAGE

Michael Falser



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Taking as its point of departure many years of research on the reception, collection and reproduction history of Angkor Wat, the twelfth-century Cambodian temple, in French museums and at World Fairs or colonial exhibitions (1867-1937), this paper looks at the plaster casts of the temple that were commissioned around 1900 by the then Völkerkundemuseum and subsequently incorporated into the walls of the museum in Stresemannstraße.

The casts are considered within the context of the cultural politics of European colonialism and cultural imperialism; conventional art historical methods, along with cultural heritage narratives and identity constructions shaped by the idea of the nation state, are called into question by new approaches of a Global Art History.

With the call for a better understanding of plaster casts such as those from Angkor Wat, not only as secondary sources for South-east Asian architecture, but rather as primary sources of a critical collection history rooted in the provenance principle for all objects—originals and replicas—another key question arises: where and to whom do the Gipsformerei's casts, linking us with world civilisation in this truly transcultural itinerary in the heart of Berlin, really belong?



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THE MAKING AND MEANING OF PLASTER CASTS IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY:

THEIR FUTURE IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

Marjorie Trusted



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The Cast Courts epitomised the aims of the South Kensington Museum as envisaged by Henry Cole: not only breath-taking, but educational in the broadest sense, and encyclopaedic in their scope, giving the public a taste of the great monuments of Europe and indeed monuments from India, whether through plaster reproductions, electrotypes, photographs, brass rubbings, drawings or paper mosaics.

This paper is based on the premise that the exhibition spaces' past and present appearance is fundamental to presenting an understanding of the casts and is indeed one reason why the V&A's cast collection survives, while other collections of reproductions in museums elsewhere have been dispersed, or even destroyed.

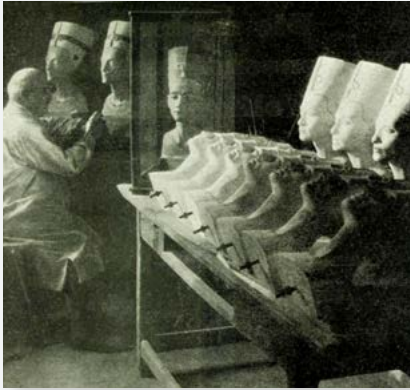
It looks at the recent and ongoing renovations in the Cast Courts that have had to tread a delicate line between preserving, if not re-creating, their Victorian splendour and moving forward to the twenty-first century. It touches on questions of renovation—including re-decoration of the Cast Courts and re-configuration of the casts within the space—and conservation, as well as on communication and labelling issues.

It concludes with the idea of the contemporary, with casts as a source of inspiration for contemporary artists.

NEFERTITI: A SERIALISED STAR.

NEW SOURCES FOR 3D RECEPTION OF THE BUST PRIOR TO THE 1924 AMARNA EXHIBITION

Martina Długaiczek



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The paper is based on new sources concerning the history of Nefertiti's reception and reproduction, which reveal how the "brightly coloured queen" functioned as an object of desire even before her first public presentation in the 1924 Amarna exhibition. It presents a new chronology of appropriation of the Nefertiti bust: evidence is now available for 75 previously unknown reproductions made in the period from July 1921 to the end of September 1922 alone. By the mid 1950s the number of reproductions had increased to 1,285. Assumptions about the target audience for the first copy, based on a hand-measured model by Tina Haim, are also addressed.

Nefertiti can thus be seen as a serialised star, and plaster as a medium of icon creation. The paper examines the prerequisites for the enormous rate of reproductions as well as the spectrum of different versions—ranging from a precise copy to a reconstruction with two eyes or even an entirely completed replica, including the option of polychromatic casts. It raises questions pertaining to copyright that remain controversial today.



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“LOST MOULDS”.

AN ARTISTIC AND SCIENTIFIC ENGAGEMENT WITH SENSITIVE COLLECTION PIECES

Margit Berner, Britta Lange,
Thomas Schelper, Kerstin Stoll



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The paper addresses an artistic/scientific project on a historical full-body cast, commissioned by anthropologist Felix von Luschan in 1905 in Johannesburg. The cast of N'Kurui is now held in the storage facilities of the Anthropological Department at the Naturhistorisches Museum, Vienna; the moulds, along with the measurement calipers and the relevant entry in the records, have been identified at the SMB Gipsformerei.

Combining a range of different perspectives—encompassing cultural studies, artistic, handicraft, psychological and ethical dimensions—in addressing this cast taken from a living figure gives rise to a re-enactment with inverted roles—a white European academic as the subject of the cast.

“Lost moulds” lie at the heart of this paper: the rigidified negative moulds, which generally break during production of the positive form, as artefacts to be conserved and testaments of a historical and political process.

This is linked with a call to expand the scope of the category of “culturally sensitive objects and materials”, which is understood in the ICOM ethical guidelines for museums as “human remains or objects of religious significance”, but does not include media such as plaster casts, photographs, films and audio recordings.

THE INTRINSIC MEANING OF PLASTER CASTS.

THE EMANCIPATION OF THE CAST IN CONTEMPORARY SCULPTURE

Veronika Tocha



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Plaster as a material and casting as a technique play a central role in contemporary art as part of the analogue/digital dialectic. Drawing on examples from works by George Segal, Teresa Margolles, Duane Hanson, Mark Quinn, Karin Sander, Charles Ray, Rachel Whiteread, Katharina Fritsch, Isa Genzken, Jeff Koons and Liane Lang, this paper reveals the extent to which the cast has become emancipated in these artists' conception of sculpture, from the viewpoint of media aesthetics as well as from a technological and philosophical perspective. While casts are still made with plaster in this context today, this practice is almost always linked to invocations of the material's intrinsic physical value. In addition, synthetic and organic materials, new casting processes, and digital 3D technologies are also deployed. Ultimately, the cast becomes a fully-fledged autonomous art work that no longer sees itself as referencing an 'original'. Over and above the obvious visual, conceptual and ideational differences from the original, the 'copy' becomes an allegoric procedure that draws out additional strata of meaning, functioning as a mode of generating meaning.



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EMBRACING HISTORICAL REPLICAS THROUGH A DIGITAL MEDIUM:

THE IRISH CONTEXT

Michael Ann Bevivino & Robert Shaw



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In Ireland, as elsewhere, there has been a recent resurgence in interest in plaster casts and other replicas of cultural objects. At the same time, the digital revolution keeps evolving, and the creation of digital replicas (such as 3D models) is now widespread in cultural heritage practice.

This paper looks at some potential areas of interest that came to light during the first phase of a project addressing Ireland's replicas of cultural objects. It highlights some parallels between 'historical replicas' and 'digital replicas' such as demand and prestige, documentation, preservation and conservation as reasons for making replicas. It touches on the topic of canon creation as well as the idea of an 'icon', which is still integral to the creation of replicas today—for example, the recent EU-funded 3D-Icons project exploring monuments and buildings identified by UNESCO as being of "outstanding cultural importance".

It concludes with a short case study involving various replicas of the Market Cross from Kells, Co. Meath, highlighting potential problems with deviations between the models. Finally, it demonstrates the flexibility of the 3D-model environment and how it affords scope for experiments—for example, tests with colour to explore the 'painting' of the High Crosses.

COMPARATIVE 3D SCANNING OF HISTORICAL CASTS:

THE PARTHENON CASTS AT THE BRITISH MUSEUM

Emma Payne



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The British Museum houses a little-known but important collection of plaster casts, taken from the Parthenon sculptures. While the Parthenon marbles rank among the museum's most famous objects, few are aware that Elgin's collection also included moulds and casts of those sculptures left in situ at Athens. These have great archaeological significance as documentary records of the sculptures' condition at the time of moulding, as well as being illustrative of nineteenth-century craft practice.

This paper explores comparative 3D scanning to enhance our understanding of these objects. Comparison of the Elgin casts with the later Merlin casts and the earlier Fauvel casts shows the potential for alterations by the formatori that add complexity and significance to the Parthenon casts. It also prompts questions about the nature of the evidence the casts preserve and their archaeological significance.

Digital techniques like 3D scanning do not always provide easy answers. The techniques help to identify and quantify surface differences, but this data requires interpretation. This does, however, encourage greater understanding of the intricacy of casts and the interplay between their status as historical objects and role as documentary sources.



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THREE-DIMENSIONAL MEMORY.

PLASTER CASTS IN THE RESTORATION AND PRESENTATION PRACTICE OF THE STAATLICHE MUSEEN ZU BERLIN'S SCULPTURE COLLECTION

Julien Chapuis

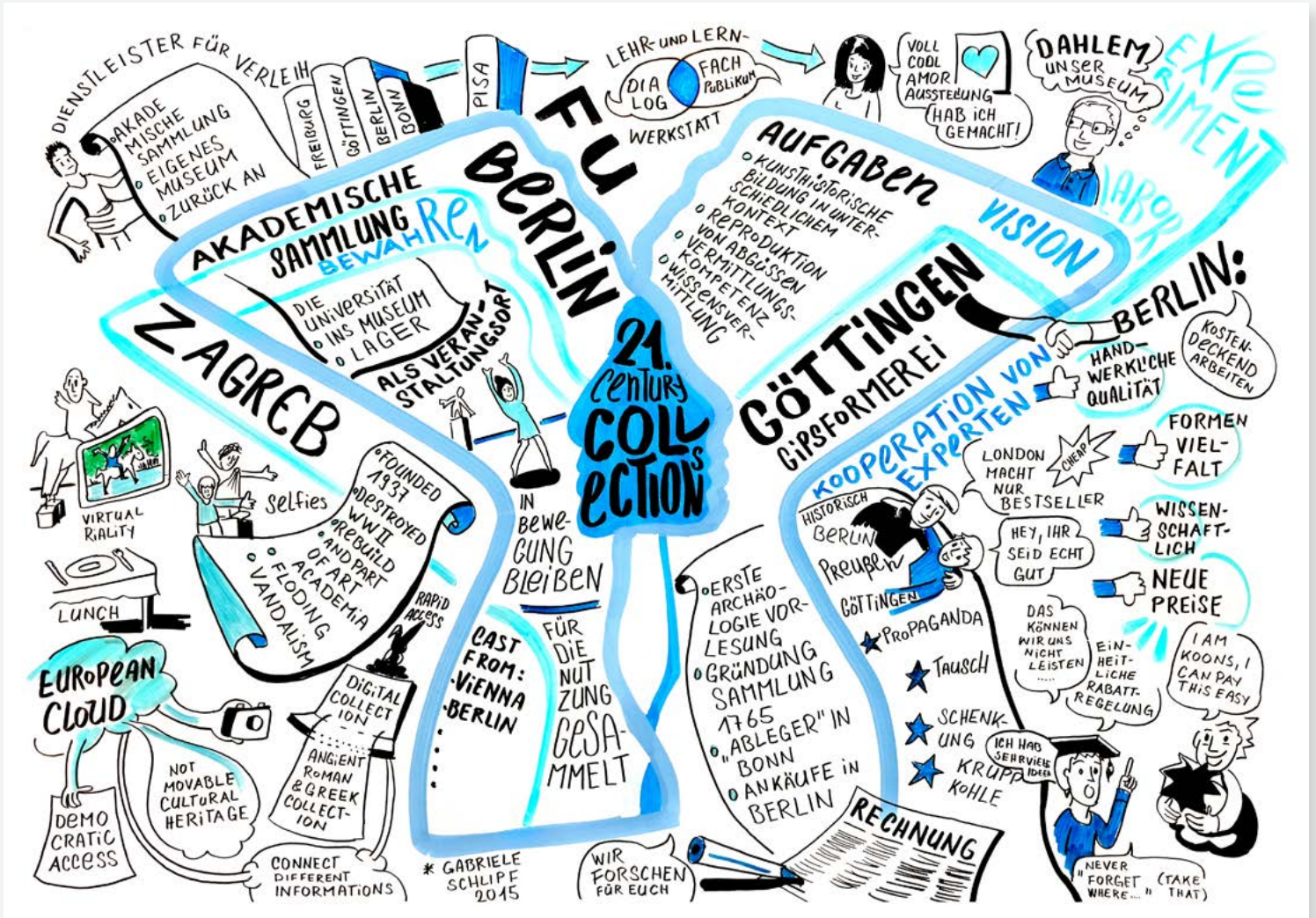


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This initial speech addresses plaster casts as the three-dimensional memory of museums. It references the 2015/16 exhibition ‘Das verschwundene Museum’ (‘The Lost Museum’) at the Bode Museum, which tackled the events of May 1945 and their consequences, seeking to engage, through the example of the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin’s Sculpture Collection, with casts as proxies for vanished or lost works, as well as tools for restoration of sculptures extant only as fragments. The impetus for the exhibition came from encounters at the SMB Gipsformerei with plaster casts of lost works from the Sculpture Collection, which convey a sense of the physical presence of works and how they unfold in space much more forcefully than photographs do.

The idea of incorporating casts of lost artworks into the permanent exhibition touches on the museum’s self-perception. Precisely because there is no ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ approach in this context, we need a clear conception of which image of the past is conveyed through particular decisions.

This paper reveals the enormous significance of casts in the museum context, particularly when both functions—as memory and as a restoration tool—are connected, with plaster casts operating as a medium of cultural relationship and exchange.



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NEW TASKS AND CHALLENGES.

THE PLASTER CAST COLLECTIONS OF THE GLYPTOTHEQUE OF THE CROATIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES AND ARTS IN ZAGREB AND THEIR DIGITISATION

Magdalena Getaldić



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The Glyptothek of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts (Gliptoteka HAZU) is a unique institution in the Republic of Croatia, combining the most systematically assembled collection of plaster casts of ancient sculpture and of works from the Croatian monumental heritage, systematically cast in the first half of the twentieth century.

Although its scope is now somewhat smaller than earlier in its history, its value has not diminished, but rather increased: it is part of the European cultural heritage. The Academy and the Glyptothek digital collections are involved in the eCloud project, launched in 2013.

The contribution highlights new tasks and challenges faced by plaster cast collections of museums and universities in the twenty-first century. It draws attention to the shift towards new interdisciplinary approaches that identify cross-sectoral aspects as well as to new forms of communication. It demonstrates the opportunities digitisation offers, which can fulfil several museological functions simultaneously in terms of protection, research, and communication.

ACADEMIC CAST COLLECTIONS BETWEEN TRADITION AND THE FUTURE.

THE ANTIQUE SCULPTURE CAST COLLECTION OF THE FREIE UNIVERSITÄT BERLIN

Lorenz Winkler-Horaček



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The Antique Sculpture Cast Collection of the Freie Universität Berlin has been developed since the 1970s as a cooperation project between the university and the Gipsformerei of the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin. It picks up on the tradition of the cast collection founded in 1696, which was largely destroyed after the Second World War.

The paper addresses traditional and new utilization concepts, whose viability is the precondition for the collections' future. It reveals the great opportunities linked to the particular profile of university cast collections, which offer a platform for teaching and learning, whilst also serving as a locus of experimentation, communication of knowledge and a playful approach to antiquity. They can convey knowledge from antiquity and at the same time recontextualize it, e.g. through encounters with contemporary art.

The paper is linked to the vision of a large Berlin cast collection as a reflection of world cultures that extends beyond antiquity. With a university-based utilization concept, this would contain a future prospect for the museum site in Berlin-Dahlem after the Ethnological Museum and the Museum of Asian Art move to their new premises.

THE BERLIN FORMEREI AND THE UNIVERSITY CAST COLLECTIONS:

HISTORICAL REVIEW AND PROSPECTS FOR FUTURE COOPERATION

Daniel Graepler



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The paper sets the Berlin Gipsformerei's foundation in 1819 in the context of the heightened scientific foundation and greater institutionalisation in studies of antique art. It notes the current renaissance of plaster casts after decades of worldwide decline and destruction of collections. The Berlin Gipsformerei and the university collections participate in these developments, which do however make it difficult for the latter to expand their collections, as the casts have simply become unaffordable.

The paper is linked to a call to build on the long tradition of close cooperation between the Formerei and universities, with a view to developing new ways to work together, offering added value and opening up new perspectives for both parties. It sketches out a broad frame of options for cooperation: research into the network of relationships linking universities, museums and the Formerei, establishing a joint body of experts to devise standards for cast conservation, expanding the Göttingen Virtual Museum (www.viamus.de) by incorporating the Gipsformerei's collections, as well as joint research projects at the interface between classical archaeology, traditional and digital casting techniques.



MEETING POINTS.

COOPERATION BETWEEN THE 3D-LABORATORY AT TU BERLIN'S INSTITUTE OF MATHEMATICS AND THE GIPSFORMEREI OF THE STAATLICHE MUSEEN ZU BERLIN

Joachim Weinhold



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The paper indicates key areas for current and future cooperation projects, including digital safeguarding of “lost objects” and digitalisation as a tool for visual memory, academic research, and educational outreach. The Gipsformerei, with its large collection of pieces that form a Musée imaginaire not accessible to the public, serves as an outstanding example when developing diverse and comprehensive options for utilisation of digital data; these offer a useful supplement to traditional working methods, as well as extending the space of the museum into virtual educational and presentation formats.

In the “THEMSE—3D-Technologies for Berlin Museums” project, funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the 3D-Laboratory had an opportunity to cooperate on a larger scale with the SMB Gipsformerei for the first time. The project demonstrated the potential of combining digital 3D-technologies and traditional casting techniques to repair and reconstruct damaged sculptures. It generated a hybrid of two historical moulds, creating a result it would have been impossible to achieve in this quality using traditional/analogue or digital methods alone.

Digi.anALOG

THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN DIGITAL AND ANALOGUE TECHNOLOGY IN CONTEMPORARY PORCELAIN DESIGN

Claudia Kanowski



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Nowadays many artists, artisans and designers draw on possibilities afforded by digital technologies to create objects at their computer and print them with 3D-printing processes, particularly in the sphere of porcelain design. The boundaries between functional household objects and (free) art become permeable in this context.

The paper presents examples illustrating the symbiosis between digital and analogue structures, digital techniques in an unfettered approach to historical models, synergies between Rapid Prototyping and traditional production techniques, 3D-printing methods combined with classical jewellery techniques or using porcelain as a “fourth ceramics production option”, and digitally designed household goods for the online community.

The new dimension in the latter realm is that artists/designers make their methods available in an open source format, enabling clients to compile a personal range and add their own creative contribution. Digital technologies offer more diversity and freedom, which however also entails a risk of arbitrariness.