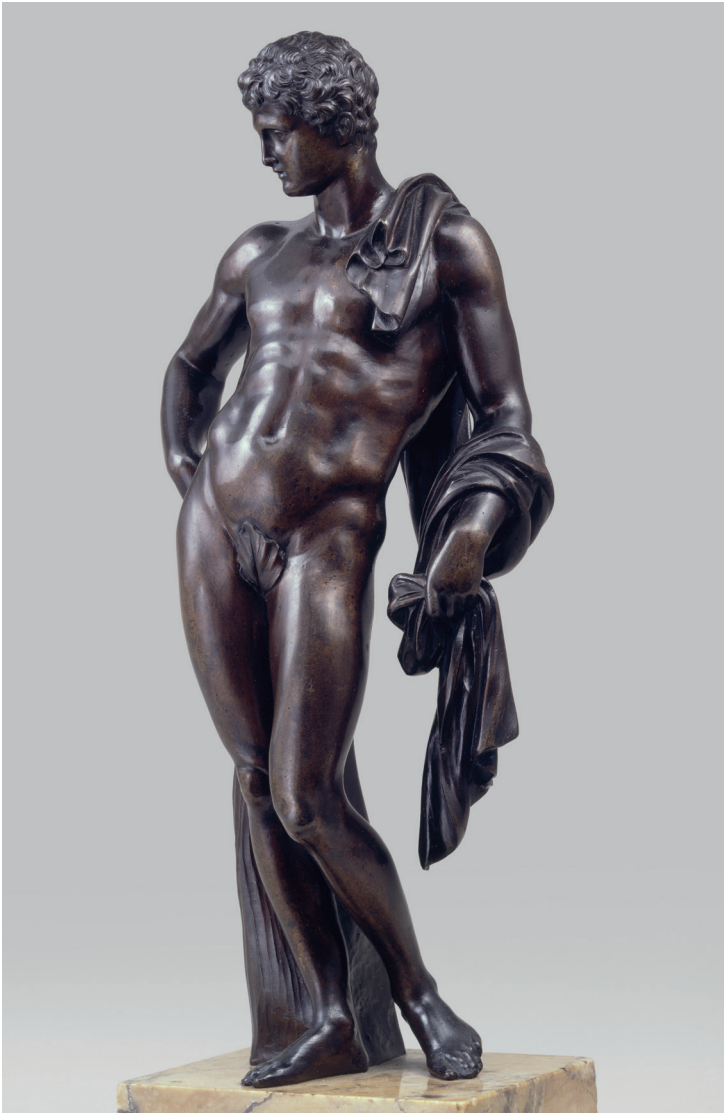


All Forms of Love

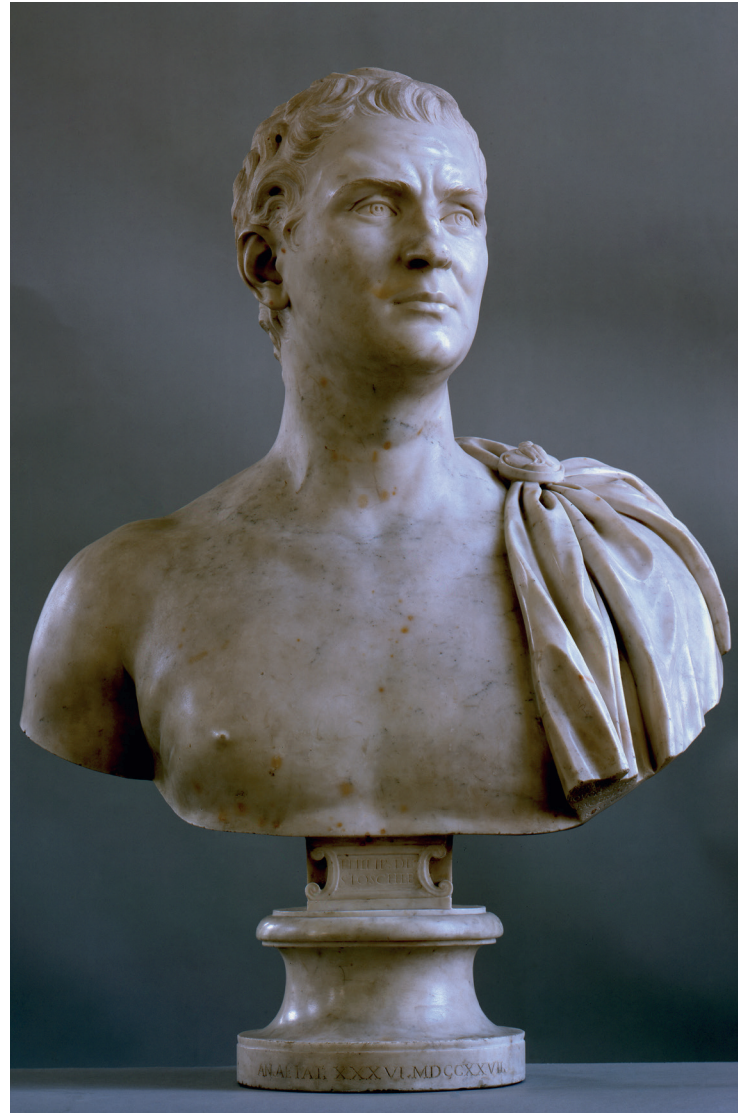
ART OF ANTIQUITY AND ENLIGHTENED COLLECTING

Path 3 – Male homosexual collectors are the focus of the third path



1
François Duquesnoy [1597–1643]
Antinous Belvedere, first half of the 17th c.
Bronze, 31,5 x 13,5 x 9 cm

Inv. Nr. 1/94
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2
Edmé Bouchardon [1698–1762]
Baron Philipp von Stosch, 1727
Marble, 85 x 65 x 34 cm

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Unlike in the Christian societies of the Middle Ages and the early modern period, which judged homosexuality as unnatural, in antiquity same-sex love (between men) met with greater tolerance and sometimes even approval. This was especially true for friendships between young men and older mentors, which were

of both an intellectual and sexual nature. The publicly celebrated love of the Roman emperor Hadrian (76–138 AD) for the young Antinous (ca. 110–130 AD) is legendary: after the latter drowned under tragic circumstances during a boating excursion on the Nile, Hadrian had his lover venerated as a god in several

of the temples that were dedicated to the emperor. In addition, he had Antinous' image reproduced hundreds of times, whether chiselled in stone, cast in bronze, or minted on coins. In later centuries these images of Antinous were in high demand among collectors and lovers of fine art, particularly in the 18th century,

when the excavations of the ancient monuments in Herculaneum and Pompeii aroused a great enthusiasm for antiquity among intellectuals and art lovers.

Furthermore, many of the artists of that era taught themselves using the antique statues and their proportions, which were considered ideal. Among them was the Flemish sculptor François Duquesnoy (1597–1643), whose bronze Antinous figure is in the Bode Museum (fig. 1). For this work, the artist used the famous antique marble sculpture known as »Antinous of Belvedere« (Vatican Museum; today identified as Hermes, Inv. Nr. 907) as his model. As a result, the beautiful young man became one of the most well-known personifications of Roman antiquity even to this day and additionally became in modern times a figure representing an era and social order in which homoerotic relationships, under certain circumstances, could exist openly and even gain societal acceptance.

One of the 18th century art lovers was the antiquarian and antiquities collector Philipp von Stosch (1691–1757), who had been named a baron by the Holy Roman and German emperor Charles VI (1685–1740) for his diplomatic services. He spent the second half of his life in Italy, first in Rome and later in Florence, where he made a name for himself as an art connoisseur and collector. The portrait bust of Stosch that the French sculptor Edmé Bouchardon (1698–1762) made during his ten years in Rome shows the baron, appropriately enough, with the bearing and garb of a Roman emperor and thus reflected Stosch's intellectual frame of reference (fig. 2, compare fig. 3). One might as well suspect that antiquity was also attractive for Stosch because it celebrated the ideal of

homoerotic friendship. His affinity towards his own gender was present throughout his life and was no secret to his close friends, although the baron did not act on it openly.

When Philipp von Stosch, shortly before his death, met Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717–1768), who nowadays is considered the father of modern archaeology and art history, he commissioned him to prepare a catalogue of his famous collection of antique engraved gemstones. However, the work (»Description des pierres gravées du feu Baron de Stosch«, 1760) was only completed thanks to a commission by Stosch's nephew and sole heir, Heinrich Wilhelm Muzel-Stosch (1723–1782), who, like his late uncle, was a life-long bachelor and probably also had same-sex attractions. Most notably, his correspondence with his friend Winckelmann, in which both men discreetly exchanged views on their erotic inclinations, supports this assumption. In their rhapsodies over antique works of art and the societies that produced them, the two could speak relatively freely about the topic; this took place within a fusion of aesthetic, intellectual, and erotic attraction to the sculptures of antique heroes and youths. Shortly after Winckelmann's death in 1767, Heinrich von Stosch was already striving to publish their correspondence. This fact can also be considered evidence that the nephew, like his uncle before him, did not categorically keep his sexual preference a secret.

This relative freedom did not, however, apply to the Prussian king Frederick II (1712–1786), who acquired the famous Stosch gem collection for the Prussian court in 1764 and thus laid the foundation for the Berlin antiquities collection. Unlike his aesthetic contemporaries Stosch



3
Egypt [Alexandria]
Torso of Emperor Statue, 4th c.

Red Egyptian porphyry,
96 x ca. 45 x ca. 36 cm

Inv. Nr. 6128

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and Winckelmann or even his younger brother Heinrich (1726–1802), whose love for the army officer Christian Ludwig von Kaphengst (1740–1800) was an open secret, Frederick, as the future king and

commander of the Prussian troops in time of war, had to fulfil the societal and dynastic expectations that were thrust upon him. These demands were reflected in most of the portrayals of the Prussian king, for example in Johann Gottfried Schadow's larger-than-life marble sculpture in the small dome of the Bode Museum (fig. 4), which shows him in the pose of a stern general.

However, it is very probable that Frederick was homosexual. There were no children from his marriage with Elisabeth Christine von Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel-Bevern (1715–1797), the couple always living separately. Instead, Frederick maintained particularly intimate relationships with certain men in his court, which was especially a thorn in the side of his father, Frederick William I (1688–1740), known as the »Soldier King«. The pivotal episode of the dysfunctional relationship between father and son can be considered the execution – carried out in front of Frederick – of his boyhood friend Hans Hermann von Katte (1704–1730), who was involved in the attempt of the artistically inclined crown prince to escape from his father's harsh discipline.

The fact that this text deals with exclusively male art lovers and collectors is no accident. On the one hand, today we barely have any information about female intellectuals and art lovers of the pre-Modern era. In contrast to the men, they remained in the background because of their societal status, which led to any traces of their contributions disappearing over time. On the other hand, antiquity, because of the explicitly masculine homoerotic and aesthetic idealisation of the male form in the 18th century, primarily provided a frame of reference for gay male love.



4

Franz Tübbecke [1856–1937]

Frederick the Great, 1904**[copy from an original by Johann Gottfried Schadow]**

Marble, 253 x 105 x 82 cm

Inv. Nr. 2829

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