

## Editorial

### Why Contemporary Art?

Dear readers

During Art Basel in June this year the Cahn Gallery staged an exhibition featuring artworks by Franz Erhard Walther in combination with archaeological objects, which much to my delight drew a very positive response from visitors. It was a memorable experience for me to partake in the curatorial work entailed by this project (see the feature in the centre of the magazine), and together with the many hours spent exploring Art Basel, it triggered a process of reflection, which helped me understand more fully why, in the past two years, I had repeatedly shown exhibitions with ancient and contemporary art.

For me ancient art is vibrant and alive. Although Antiquity as a historical period has long come to an end, it continues to influence our society and our way of thinking. The critical discussion and qualification of science's claims to objectivity are certainly not new, and obviously it must be admitted that a degree of subjectivity is also found in the field of classical studies. As a trained archaeologist I realise that academia does not have sovereignty over the interpretation of the past. Rather, findings and insights are dependent on the questions posed by researchers, on the sources available to them, on the school of thought they belong to, as well as on their point of view – and not least on the new data and research results.

To my mind, this dynamic process is not problematic. Quite the contrary, I find it fascinating how society is able to engage with the relics of the past over and over again, constantly reaching new conclusions and, on occasion, even redefining itself. For this reason, I invite only contemporary artists to participate in my art projects. I am interested in how artists living in today's world interact with Antiquity, in their perception and understanding of the past and the manner in which they link it to the present. I would like to emphasise that I do not represent these contemporary artists professionally. Therefore, the projects are always organised jointly with a specialist in the contemporary field. It has been a great pleasure to work together with Jocelyn Wolff



*Franz Erhard Walther (right) and Jean-David Cahn (left) during the installation of the exhibition "Le monde est désormais sans mystère" in the Cahn Gallery in June 2018.*

and his Paris-based gallery these past few years. Likewise, I was extremely pleased with the way our Ariane Ballmer, an archaeologist specialised in prehistory, managed the project with Franz Erhard Walther with much enthusiasm and without prejudice. Her intellectual openness and relaxed detachment contributed significantly to making this project the success it was.

I find it striking that in the days of my father, Herbert A. Cahn, scholars, museum directors, curators and professors regularly visited art fairs and gallery exhibitions, sharing their enthusiasm for the archaeological objects on display with art dealers in lively discussions. Nowadays, archaeological objects have been assigned a very different significance and are often seen first

and foremost by many scholars as bearers of factual information, while their artistic value is considered far less important. For me, however, it is the fascination of the object for its own sake and not merely as a means to an end that is crucial. This is why I have turned towards contemporary art. Working together with living artists makes it possible to approach archaeological artefacts in a very different, intuitive manner.

*Jean-David Cahn*

## Recent Research Findings

## A Matter of Life and Death

## Gladiators in Popular Imagination and Historical Reality

By Gerburg Ludwig



Fig. 1: Jean-Léon Gérôme, *Pollice verso*, oil on canvas, 1872, Phoenix Art Museum, Phoenix, Arizona.

“*Panem et circenses*”: This satirical phrase that was coined by Juvenal in his *Saturae* (10, 81) almost inevitably calls to mind the world of gladiator combats. Iconic works like Jean-Léon Gérôme’s history painting *Pollice verso* (fig. 1), Edward Bulwer-Lytton’s novel *The Last Days of Pompeii* or Stanley Kubrick’s film *Spartacus* have shaped our concept of gladiators. Nowadays, Ridley Scott’s epic drama *Gladiator* has almost become a fixture on prime time television. Scott laid claim to the authenticity of the costumes and weapons used in the film, but as an archaeologist one raises a critical eyebrow at such statements. Marcus Junkelmann, a historian and experimental archaeologist with practical experience in the exercises performed by legionaries and gladiators, had hardly a good word to say about Scott’s film. In his opinion the historical and geographical range of the arms and armour used was far too great and the fighting technique resembled “mass slaughter” (Junkelmann – 2000, 8). Only the recreation of the suggestive atmosphere in the arena was a success in his eyes.

Gérôme’s painting impressively captures the sizzling moment of decision. The loser is ly-

ing on the ground and the victor is awaiting the decisive shout: “*missum!*” for mercy or “*iugula!*” (“Slit the throat!”). The spectators have already turned their thumbs down, but the emperor, as ultimate arbiter, is hesitating. In general, the thumb position is subject to controversy, and *Pollice verso* simply means “turned thumb”, leaving the direction open. According to Junkelmann, Gérôme’s painting exerted a great influence, and although the armour was not properly assembled, the painting reflected the current state of knowledge in the 19th century.

Some historical facts: Originating in Campanian and Lucanian funerary rites, the gladiatorial games, which were termed *munera*, meaning a duty or gift to the deceased, became immensely popular in Rome. They were instrumentalised by members of the Roman upper classes to gain popularity and to acquire political influence. In the 1st century B.C. the frequency and scale of the games became so excessive that, following the murder of Caesar in 44 B.C., the senate intervened on behalf of the state. Augustus reformed the gladiatorial entertainments and decreed that the *munera* were an imperial privilege, thereby connecting them to the

cult of the emperor. They lasted into the 4th century A.D. when the increasing pressure on the Empire from the outside, financial problems and the rise of Christianity gradually led to their decline.

How did one become a gladiator? The *lanista*, a professional entrepreneur who owned and directed a gladiator school (*ludus*), bought slaves and prisoners of war. Furthermore, prisoners and criminals could be condemned to life as a gladiator (“*damnatio ad ludum gladiatorium*”). As food and medical care were good, some individuals even chose this profession of their own free will. The training closely resembled military practices. Wooden weapons were used by beginners at first to fight an “opponent” personified by a pillar (*palus*) and then, as they grew more proficient, in single combat with fellow gladiators. The *lanista* rented out gladiators to the organisers of entertainments. Although the average life expectancy of a gladiator was only 18-25 years, some achieved fame and fortune and could even, on occasion, gain their freedom.

Junkelmann conducted research on the equipment used by gladiators, studying ancient images and weapons unearthed in the Casa dei Gladiatori in Pompeii and testing his findings in practice. A carefully chosen combination of protective elements worn on the body and evenly balanced weapons of attack and defence prevented the all too rapid death of one of the combatants, thus guaranteeing a suspenseful and thrilling fight. At the same time, depending on the experience and fitness of the opponents, a fatal outcome was not ruled out. The basic outfit of a gladiator included shield and sword, a wool or linen loincloth (*subligaculum*), a broad leather belt (*balteus*), leather or linen padded armbands (*manica*) and bronze greaves to protect the legs (*ocreae*). Mosaics with gladiators found in Zliten (Libya) and Kaiseraugst (Switzerland) represent the typical matched pairs recruited from eight different gladiator types: *retiarius* versus *secutor* and *thraex* or *hoplomachus* versus *murmillo*, as well as pairs of *provocatores*, *essedarii* and *equites*.

Recent research conducted on cranial bones and teeth from male skeletons buried in the



Fig. 2: A RETIARIUS. H. 9.2 cm. Bronze, solid cast. Roman, 2nd cent. A.D. CHF 7,600

gladiator cemetery in Ephesos (Turkey) revealed that the helmets of varying shapes worn by gladiators did indeed afford a certain degree of protection against blows inflicted by their opponents. Using techniques developed in forensic pathology, including microradiography, computer tomography and microscopic tissue analysis, scientists were able to determine that the deceased persons reached a maximum age of 20-30 years. Furthermore, they were able to identify different types of cranial injuries. These included well-healed antemortal cranial blunt force traumata, sharp force traumata inflicted by swords and daggers as well as puncture wounds caused by swords, daggers and tridents. In a second group of injuries, termed perimortal traumata, the cranial bones were destroyed or the weapons pierced the *dura mater*, a thick membrane surrounding the brain – both with lethal outcome.

Forty male skeletons found in a necropolis in York (England) – presumably likewise a gladiator cemetery – provide remarkable corroborative evidence for the findings made in Ephesos, although the atypically large number of decapitations in the York burials pose a riddle that archaeologists still need to solve.

The *retiarius* on offer in the Cahn Gallery (fig. 2), the only type of gladiator without a helmet, protects himself with the prominently raised shoulder guard (*galerus*) and *manica* on his left arm. Keeping his distance, the lightly armed gladiator first attempts to throw a net (*rete*) over his opponent, the se-



Fig. 3: A PYXIS WITH HOPLOMACHUS. H. 7.7 cm. Bone. Roman, 1st-2nd cent. A.D. CHF 3,800

*cutor* with his smooth, closed helmet, sword and large, rectangular shield, in order to force him to the ground. The pair then engages in hand-to-hand combat with trident (*tridens*) and short sword. The defeated gladiator in Gérôme's *Pollice verso* is a *retiarius*.

On the pyxis also on offer at the Cahn Gallery (fig. 3), a heavily armed *hoplomachus* is represented twice in fine relief. He keeps his adversary, a *murmillo* who is not depicted, at bay. The arms and armour of the *murmillo* are similar to those of the *secutor* whereas the *hoplomachus* fights with a lance (*hasta*), a small round shield (*parmula*) and a short sword. His attire consists of a *manica* around his right arm (on our pyxis around both arms), long trousers and *ocreae*, which reach above his knees. On losing his lance, he uses his sword in close combat.

Gladiatorial combat was a strictly regulated, highly athletic and extremely risky form of swordsmanship that required a great deal of practice. For many spectators, gladiators embodied esteemed moral qualities such as fearlessness in the face of death, strength, courage, discipline and perseverance. This may have been one more reason why they were so enthralled by the action in the arena.

*Bibliography: M. Junkelmann, Das Spiel mit dem Tod. So kämpften Roms Gladiatoren (Mainz 2000). F. Kanz-K. Grossschmidt, Head injuries of Roman gladiators, Forensic Science International 160 (2006) 207-216. K. Hunter-Mann, Driffield Terrace. An Insight Report, York Archaeological Trust for Excavation and Research (York 2015)*

## Gallery

# Welcome!

We would like to extend a warm welcome to Lillian Bartlett Stoner, who joined the gallery team in August 2018. Lillian is a classical archaeologist specialised in Greek and Roman art with a special interest in Attic vase painting. At the gallery she will be responsible for the cataloguing of objects, especially vases, provenance research and the organisation of fairs. Due to her strong ties to the USA she will also act as liaison for the American market.

Lillian received her Bachelor of Arts at Harvard University, where she was supervised by David G. Mitten. She continued her studies at the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, attaining her PhD with the doctoral thesis "Hair in Greek Art: An Anthropological Approach". Lillian has worked as adjunct professor at Fordham University and as a research assistant at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in the Greek and Roman department. She has received numerous awards and was Panofsky Fellow at the Institute of Fine Arts, NYU.



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Malzgasse 23  
CH-4052 Basel  
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mail@cahn.ch  
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**Editors**  
Jean-David Cahn  
Yvonne Yiu

**Authors**  
Jean-David Cahn  
Martin Flashar  
Vincent Geerling  
Ulrike Haase  
Gerburg Ludwig  
Yvonne Yiu

**Translations**  
Bronwen Saunders  
Yvonne Yiu

**Photos**  
Niklaus Bürgin  
Vincent Geerling  
Ulrike Haase  
Marina Milella  
Yvonne Yiu

**Design and Layout**  
Ariane Ballmer  
Michael Joos  
Yvonne Yiu

**Printer**  
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## The Debate

# Preserving Find Spots in Source Countries

By Vincent Geerling



Excavations at Dura-Europos, Syria, in June 2016.

The great achievement of the UNESCO 1970 Convention was to make art and antique dealers clean up their act where necessary and to induce organizations like the British Antiquities Dealers' Association (ADA) and the International Association of Dealers in Ancient Art (IADAA) to introduce strict codes of ethics and due diligence rules. However, in recent years, art and antique dealers have suffered from the fact that in the debate no distinction is made between illicit activities, which we all want to fight, and the legitimate trade that has a tradition dating back hundreds of years.

Increased awareness and the measures generated by UNESCO 1970 have helped dramatically diminish the trafficking of cultural goods over the past 45 years, and it is time to acknowledge that. The focus of UNESCO's efforts should turn more to tackling the problem at the roots, in source countries like Syria and Iraq, but also in Egypt and Turkey. Most of the attention has been focused on the return of cultural property, thus fighting the symptoms and not the causes of trafficking. But all the signatories of the convention have also committed themselves to obligations, the most important of which are formulated in Article 5. Art. 5 b commits these countries to "*establishing and keeping up to date, on the basis of a national inventory of protected property, a list of important public and private cultural property whose export would constitute an appreciable impoverishment of the national cultural heritage.*" For decades, the art world has been waiting in vain for those lists, which would help improve due diligence processes. However, with the exception of a few countries like The Netherlands and Germany, there are to my knowledge no lists available from

any of the source countries. UNESCO needs to help those countries to fulfil their obligations. With the tragedies unfolding over the past few years in Iraq, Syria and recently Yemen and Libya, now is the time to do so.

The formulating of the benefits and obligations from the UNESCO Convention has been a long and careful process. Therefore it is important to point to some more obligations, formulated in Art. 5 d, "*organizing the supervision of archaeological excavations, ensuring the preservation in situ of certain cultural property, and protecting certain areas reserved for future archaeological research.*" If source countries had fulfilled these obligations, severe damage to archaeological sites would have been prevented, thus protecting the objects in their context, *in situ*, as the convention obliges. That is crucial for archaeology. Once the context of an object is lost, the object has lost its archaeological value forever. Such objects might be returned to the country of origin, but this will not give them back their archaeological value. This means that prevention by protection, as clearly for-

mulated in Art. 5, is of vital importance. Another obligation, under Art. 5 f, commits signatories to "*taking educational measures to stimulate and develop respect for the cultural heritage.*" I would argue that helping source countries to fulfil the obligations they signed up to years ago should be the primary aim of UNESCO in the years to come.

During the TAIEX-PI Workshop on Protecting Iraqi Cultural Heritage and Fighting Terrorism hosted by the European Union in Brussels on 30-31 May 2018, I gave a presentation in which I argued that the real challenge will be thinking outside the box, and I asked them not to dismiss the ideas I presented without first giving them due consideration. I pointed out that the majority of objects are only of importance for archaeology if they are found in undisturbed circumstances, so preservation *in situ* is crucial. Everybody understands that the 30,000 archaeological sites in Iraq, for example, can never be protected by the police alone; the state needs the help of the local population. However, if one realizes that "in England alone there are almost 20,000 scheduled monuments" (cf. *Cahn's Quarterly* 1/2018, pp. 4-5) that are protected by law – a set of regulations that are mostly respected – there is no reason why such protection could not be set up in "source countries". To this effect, the local population should be educated about the importance of the past, as UNESCO formulated 45 years ago. Experience shows that if locals take pride in their past it will help prevent them from stealing their own history, and they are more likely to protect it. If such policies are carried out properly, eventually many of these places could generate tourism and with that prosperity.

In source countries, people find ancient objects almost every day during agricultural



The TAIEX-PI Workshop on Protecting Iraqi Cultural Heritage and Fighting Terrorism in Brussels, 30-31 May 2018.

and building activities. Possessing such objects is strictly forbidden, but these people are poor, so in all probability they sell the objects quickly to merchants. It would be far more productive if the law allowed the regulated sale of unimportant chance finds. Authorities would not have to punish these people, but could reward them for reporting their finds, thereby helping to create a viable registered database of objects. The state should give the honest finder a fair share of the proceeds, say 25% of estimated market value. In this way people would be encouraged to co-operate and support correct reporting procedures.

Yes, I do strongly believe that the sale of unimportant chance finds should be allowed in source countries, following the example of the UK and The Netherlands. The current restrictive regime with severe penalties clearly fails to prevent trafficking, as history has shown, so why not try something else? Source countries could hugely benefit from following the example of the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) in the United Kingdom, which has enjoyed twenty years of success already. To give you an idea of the numbers, I quote from the 2016 report: "81,914 finds were recorded; a total of 1,303,504 on the PAS database to date. (...) 90% of finds were found on cultivated land, where they are susceptible to plough damage and artificial and natural corrosion." Such numbers could never have been achieved without the help of the population and I believe people will be happy to help. Reported and recorded finds that are not important could even be exported with a licence, and the proceeds used to finance excavations on behalf of the state.

I proposed during the EU workshop that the European Union, with the help of UNESCO experts, should create a task force to support source countries with setting up the systems needed for this vital protection of archaeological sites.



Vincent Geerling began collecting ancient art 40 years ago. In 1995, he turned his hobby into his profession by founding Archea Ancient Art in Amsterdam. He has been a board member of IADAA for many years and its chairman since 2013.

## My Choice

# A Cypriote Head

By Jean-David Cahn



A VOTIVE HEAD OF A YOUTH. H. 12 cm. Limestone. Cypriote, 1st quarter of 5th cent. B.C. (Cypro-Achaic II). Formerly Coll. Louis de Clercq (1836-1901), Oignies, France. Thereafter, Swiss priv. coll., acquired in the 1960s. Published: A. de Ridder, *Collection de Clercq, Catalogue Tome V, Les Antiquités Chypriotes*, Paris 1908, no. 66. CHF 36,000

Cypriote sculptures have a fascination all of their own which is in part due to the unique way in which Levantine and Phoenician influences blend with the art of Greece to form an independent artistic language. It would, therefore, be wrong to locate Cypriote art on the periphery of that of Greece. As there were no marble quarries on Cyprus, sculptors used limestone, a softer and more brittle material that required a somewhat different working technique. Despite the constraints posed by this more humble stone, the Cypriote artists succeeded in creating great masterpieces.

I would like to present this well-preserved Archaic head, not only because it is of exceptionally high quality but also because it has a superb collecting history. It formed part of the collection of Louis de Clercq (1836-1901) which was published in 1908 by André de Ridder, the then conservator of Greek and Roman art at the Louvre. The fine, soft

face with sharply drawn, almond-shaped eyes and distinctive smile is offset by the energetically and somewhat more summarily sculpted hair that is adorned by a wreath of upright laurel leaves. The sculpture was made about a generation after the Archaic Style had passed its peak in Greece, as this style flourished in Cyprus slightly later. The head captivates the eye on account of the almost perfect balance of its overall shape and the visual excitement engendered by the contrasts in its design, such as the tension between the delicately modelled face and the abstract rendering of the hair.

This artwork is a lucky find as it is absolutely on a par with Greek sculpture. Greek marble heads of the Archaic Period of a comparable artistic quality and state of preservation – not to mention provenance – are all but non-existent on the art market. I can therefore warmly recommend this Cypriote head.

## The Emperor's New Clothes – Garments in Antiquity

New Artworks Monthly  
on [www.cahn.ch](http://www.cahn.ch)

A FRAGMENT OF A SARCOPHAGUS. H. 50 cm, W. 34 cm. Marble. The upper parts of two figures are preserved on the far left section of this sarcophagus front, both facing sharply to right with expressions of surprise or consternation. Mercury, wearing petasos (winged?) and a cloak typically secured with a large pin at right shoulder, is readily identifiable by the top of his messenger's wand (caduceus), carved in shallow relief at mid-field overlying the folds of a mantle that has been raised, sail-like, aloft. In front of him and to his proper right is a female companion, doubtless a goddess, clothed in chiton and heavy cloak, her long locks of hair drawn back and bound into a chignon, with loose tresses trailing onto her shoulder. Scene bordered above by a narrow projecting moulding; left edge regularly finished. Roughly worked surfaces at back preserving part of the curved left end of sarcophagus's interior. Noses of both figures restored, as well as upper lip of the female figure. These figures in all likelihood once formed part of a multi-figural scene of the discovery and seduction of Rhea Silvia by the god Mars, by whom she conceived and gave birth to the twins Romulus and Remus, legendary founders of the city of Rome. Formerly part of the decorative scheme of a villa in Aachen, Germany, 1950s-1960s. Roman, Early Severan, 1st quarter of 3rd cent. A.D. CHF 26,000

A THYMIATHERION. H. 22.8 cm. Terracotta, painted. Female figure. With head held high, she gazes straight ahead. Flat face with discreet modelling in the area of the chin, eyes, and eyebrows. The nose is long, slender and pointed. Incised circles with brown dots painted on in the middle for eyes. Painted eyebrows. Applied tresses or braids that once converged at the lower back. Upper body and arms concealed underneath a shawl-like garment which is stretched across the back and whose two ends come together in a point at the front. Ears and hands with perforations, presumably to attach jewellery and other attributes made of a different material. Lower part of the figure with flared, bell-shaped skirt. Clothes painted with lines and simple bands of meander. The band of small, incised circles (possibly indicating a waist chain) in the lower back area disappears underneath the shawl at hip height on the front side of the figure. On her head the figure carries a large, shallow dish, which is painted both inside and out with encircling lines, hanging bundles of lines and rows of dots, and is pierced with five holes around the edge. Function: incense-holder from a cultic context. Largely intact, worn in various places, hands and parts of the applied coiffure broken off and missing. Priv. coll. M. S., Basel, since 1980. Daunian (Subgeometric III), ca. 400-300 B.C. CHF 8,800



A DRAPED STATUETTE OF A YOUNG WOMAN. H. 20 cm. Terracotta. The young woman is shown with her right leg engaged and left arm angled. She wears a long chiton, with her feet clad in shoes peeking out from underneath it, and over it a loose, heavily pleated himation that covers her whole body and is drawn up over her neck and head. She holds the folds of her mantle gathered up in her right hand. Finely worked facial features. Mould-made and finished by hand. Veil slightly worn, otherwise undamaged. Formerly priv. coll. Lyon, France, 1980s. Greek, probably Tanagra, 4th-2nd cent. B.C. CHF 5,800



Report on

## *LE MONDE EST DÉSORMAIS SANS MYSTÈRE* FROM NOW ON, THE WORLD IS WITHOUT MYSTERY

Franz Erhard Walther at Cahn Gallery during Art Basel 2018  
A joint project by Jocelyn Wolff and Jean-David Cahn

It was not difficult for the Parisian gallery owner Jocelyn Wolff to win me over for an exhibition project with Franz Erhard Walther. Indeed, the oeuvre of this 79-year-old luminary of international contemporary art seems to cry out for an encounter with archaeological artefacts.

Whenever I curate an exhibition in my gallery, it is a matter of principle for me not to work with a preconceived plan. Rather, I take the liberty of reacting spontaneously to the given circumstances, in this case the works by Walther that were placed at my disposal by Galerie Wolff (Paris) and the Franz Erhard Walther Foundation (Fulda). These comprised drawings as well as three-dimensional objects made of cotton fabric, foam material, cardboard and paper. For my part, I decided to engage in a dialogue with Walther's works by means of an inventory of prehistoric artefacts, especially Palaeolithic and Neolithic stone tools. We then added a selection of exceptional ancient art works, mainly marbles and bronzes, as well as Coptic textiles. Franz Erhard Walther was personally involved in the setting up of the exhibition, as was his wife, Susanne Walther, who is also the director of the Stiftung Franz Erhard Walther. Thanks to the flexible approach to established exhibition concepts evinced by all those involved it was possible to create a completely new type of presentation which in turn enabled the beholder to view the artworks in an unaccustomed and stimulating context. Walther's art was literally presented in a new light, and the archaeological objects were displayed from a different perspective. The resulting "actions" (in a figurative sense) created connecting lines and delineated boundaries, caused consternation and led to moments of recognition, provided food for thought and by no means least invited the viewer to savour both the beauty of the works and their aura. Ultimately, what could be sensed in this dense web of temporal, spatial, aesthetic and thematic references, was the "mystery" of the world and with it a daring antithesis to the provocative title of the exhibition.

That Franz Erhard Walther presided over the opening of the exhibition was highly appreciated not just by me but by numerous guests who know the artist personally. I will remember the audience as expectant and generous, eager to explore and hungry for knowledge. The visitors were at first surprised by the juxtaposition of artworks from such very different periods, but then displayed a refreshing ease and openness to the situation. Their great respect for the objects and their creators was readily felt. It was touching to witness lovers of ancient and contemporary art alike undauntedly and enthusiastically embarking on an exploration of "foreign" territory and thereby discovering more about the world and about themselves.







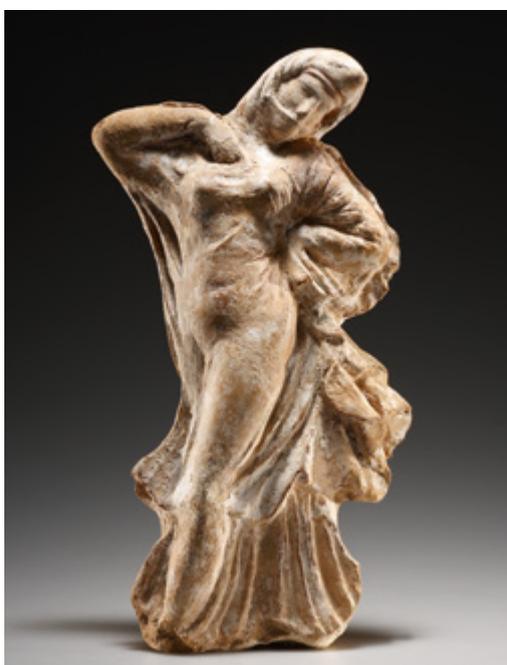




AN ANTEFIX WITH VENUS AND MARS. H. max. 27 cm. Terracotta. An antefix with a relief depicting the divine lovers Mars and Venus. The god of war sits to left with his legs crossed and rests his right hand on a round shield. Similar representations reveal that Mars probably wore a helmet and held a lance in his left hand. On his proper left Venus leans against a column in a lascivious pose. Her chiton has slipped from her shoulders and barely covers her breasts and its sheer fabric reveals the sensuous forms of her slender body. A cloak is draped around her legs and left arm and would originally have been held in place by her (now missing) raised right hand. Several antefixes with the same composition have been preserved. They were originally painted and formed the lowest row of tiles on the eaves of a temple or public building. On the reverse of the relief the beginning of the kalypter (an elongated tile which covered the butt joints between the roof tiles and thus prevented rain water from entering) is visible. Top quarter of the antefix missing. Formerly priv. coll. J. R. L., England, acquired on the European art market in the 1980s. Roman, late 1st cent. B.C.-early 1st cent. A.D. CHF 12,800



A STATUETTE OF A DRAPED WOMAN. H. 21.7 cm. Terracotta. Standing with right leg slightly bent and right arm akimbo, the young woman is almost completely enveloped in a voluminous himation. The heavy drapery is pulled over her head as a veil, then wrapped from her chin around her upper body in thick folds and gathered in her bundled left hand. A shod right foot peeks out of the folds of her skirt, on which traces of the original pink colour are preserved. From the estate of the Swiss art dealer and collector Elsa Bloch-Diener (1922-2012), Berne, acquired between 1968 and 1983. Greek or Western Greek, 3rd-2nd cent. B.C. CHF 6,500



A STATUETTE OF A DANCING WOMAN. H. 20.3 cm. Terracotta. The dancing woman raises her right arm, bending it so that her hand lies above her breasts. Her left hand is placed energetically akimbo and she twists her body in an ecstatic, serpentine motion. Echoing her movements, the richly pleated, almost transparent garment clings to her body, revealing her slender form and staggered legs. The dynamism of the body's posture is further enhanced by the dancer's delicate head which is turned sharply to the left. Her himation envelopes most of her head, leaving only her forehead, eyes, nose and cheeks free. Extensive remains of the white coating that served as a ground for the paint preserved. Delicate traces of yellow and red paint. Reassembled from large fragments. Formerly priv. coll. Charles Martyne (1876-1936), librarian at the École des Beaux-Arts and a friend of French poet Robert Desnos. Thereafter by descent in the collection of his nephew Jean-Louis Debaue (1926-2016). Thereafter in possession of the family. Greek or Western Greek, 4th-2nd cent. B.C. CHF 6,800

A MIRROR LID WITH DIONYSIAC SCENE. Dm. 11 cm. Bronze. Raised relief showing the drunk god of wine Dionysos leaning on Eros. A mantle is draped over his left arm, and he shoulders a thyrsus. The kithara player could be Ariadne, Dionysos' lover. Picture field almost completely framed by an encircling frieze of lines. Reverse lined with lead. Tiny pieces missing at the edge. Priv. coll. B.-S., Switzerland; acquired from Münzen und Medaillen AG, Basel, 30.9.1967. Etruscan, 3rd cent. B.C. CHF 7,800





A STATUETTE OF VENUS WITH CUPID. H. 27.1 cm. Marble. The goddess stands in a casual pose. She rests her weight on her right leg, while the slightly angled left leg is somewhat set back. Her slender body is wrapped in a long chiton that reaches down to her feet. A richly pleated, knee-length himation is draped around her waist and left shoulder. The left arm is angled and the back of the hand rests gracefully on her hip. With her right hand the goddess grasps the tip of the garment cascading down over her left breast. The goddess can be identified as Aphrodite/Venus due to the small figure of her ubiquitous companion, Eros/Cupid, who sits on her left shoulder. Our statuette belongs to a type found mainly in terracotta sculpture. It was being used for representations of Aphrodite by the 3rd cent. B.C. at the latest and the type was still current in Roman times. The motif of the left hand clutching the tip of the garment descending from the shoulder onto the chest was possibly inspired by statues of philosophers created in the Late Classical Period. The motif of the hand resting against the hip was very popular in the Hellenistic Period and was employed in various statue types representing Aphrodite. The relief-like character of our statuette, whose reverse is only roughly hewn, is due to the emphasis this statue type places on the frontal view. Completely preserved save for the head of the goddess and the right arm of her companion. Surface slightly worn. Formerly Collection Roger, France. Thereafter priv. coll. Daude, France, acquired from Galerie de Serres, Paris. Roman Provinces, 1st-2nd cent. A.D.

CHF 7,600



A BLACK-FIGURE OINOCHOE. H. 22.4 cm. Clay. Two hoplites crouching to left, protecting themselves with small round shields and wearing Corinthian helmets. They are both armed with two spears and one sword. Behind each one, a tendril. Line and dots as ornaments. Red colour. Reassembled from fragments, complete. Formerly coll. H. W., Switzerland, acquired 1980. Attic, ca. 510 B.C.

CHF 16,000

A PSI IDOL. H. 12.4 cm. Terracotta. Hand-modelled, stylised female figure. The body is composed of basic geometric forms. Cylindrical lower body with flaring hem as base. The upper body with flat breasts and raised arms forms a crescent. Narrow, elongated head with pronounced, pinched nose and flaring headdress (polos). Brown glaze for the eyes, mouth, hair and details of the garment. Clay figurines of this type are typical of the apogee and Late Period of the Mycenaean culture. The canonical phi, tau and psi idol types are based on the position of the arms and the figure's overall resemblance to letters of the Greek alphabet. Our specimen belongs to the psi idol type. The arms are raised in an epiphanic gesture documented for images of deities from at least the early 2nd mill. B.C. onwards. For this reason, these stylised, female idols, which are found in the entire region influenced by the Mycenaean culture, are thought to have a religious significance. Nonetheless, as they were found not only in sanctuaries but also in graves (often of children) as well as in settlements, they probably had varying functions. Minor chipping on polos. Glaze slightly abraded in places. With Christie's London, 6 June 1989, lot 464. Formerly priv. coll. William Froelich, New York, 1990. With Antiquarium, Ltd., New York, 2013. Published Antiquarium, Ltd., Ancient Treasures XI, 2013, 16. Greek, Mycenaean, Late Helladic IIIB, 13th cent. B.C.

CHF 12,000





A STATUETTE OF APHRODITE. H. 47.3 cm. Marble. Hellenistic variant of the Urania motive. The goddess Aphrodite stands in contrapposto on a narrow base that follows the contours of the figure. She rests her weight on her right leg while the left leg is flexed and placed slightly to the side. The foot rests on a raised part of the base. An archaising kore on a round base with raised right arm flanks the left leg of the goddess. Similar sculptures show that Aphrodite originally rested her left lower arm on the head of the kore. The goddess wears a chiton, which clings sensuously to her midriff and cascades to the ground in generous folds. The chiton shows through the thin himation covering it. The himation covers much of her left leg, is bundled at the right hip and drawn diagonally over her body. It is tied into a bow at the left thigh and its ends trail down between her legs. The reverse of both Aphrodite and the kore are only summarily worked. The left leg of the goddess is slightly worn, as is the himation at the right hip and between the legs. The front of the kore is heavily worn. Previously American priv. coll., Hudson, New York, since the 1970s. Formerly Sotheby's New York, Antiquities and Islamic Works of Art, Auction Sale 15 June 1988, lot no. 119. Greek, Hellenistic, 3rd-2nd cent. B.C. CHF 22,000

A FEMALE PROTOME. H. 25.5 cm. Clay. Mould-made bust of a woman with alert eyes framed by sharply drawn eyelids, a slender nose and small mouth with full lips, hinting at a typical archaic smile. She wears a chiton laid in numerous folds over her upper body and breast. Her hair is finely defined with centrally parted waves swept back behind the ears. On her head she wears a stephane and a thin veil, draped in zigzag folds over the shoulders and breast. Remains of white clay slip. Two ancient drill holes on the top. Formerly Coll. Léon Rodrigues-Ely (1924-1973), Marseille, France. Western Greek, 4th cent. B.C. CHF 9,800



AN APPLIQUE IN THE FORM OF A VICTORY. H. 16.5 cm. Bronze. The goddess of victory with large wings is represented hastening to right. The impression of dynamic movement is heightened by the angle of her head and the fluttering drapery. She wears a belted peplos which is fastened at her shoulders with round fibulae and whose large overfold reaches down to her knees. A cloak is wound loosely around her right arm. The powerful wings are finely incised. The iconography of this magnificent applique suggests that it comes from a military context. Formerly Coll. J., Brittany, 1940s. Roman, 2nd half of 1st-2nd cent. A.D. CHF 22,000



A STATUETTE OF A YOUTH. H. 10.5 cm. Clay, white paint. He sits on a stone in a slightly slumped posture with his right hand placed on his right knee and his left hand resting in his lap. He wears a short-sleeved chiton under a finely pleated chlamys which is fastened by a fibula on his right shoulder. Reverse only summarily sculpted. Traces of white paint. The head is reattached and the right foot is missing, otherwise well preserved. The figure may have worn a now missing hat. Formerly The Fine Arts Museums, San Francisco, California, acquired by the museum in the late 19th/early 20th century, and subsequently sold to benefit The Acquisition Fund. Old label "28" on the back, two hand-written inv. nos. on the inside of the statuette. Greek, Boeotia, 3rd cent. B.C. CHF 2,600

## Recipe from Antiquity

## The World's Oldest Alcoholic Beverage

By Yvonne Yiu



Neolithic rice wine after a find in Jiahu with grapes (left) and hawthorn berries (middle) as well as mead (right). Four silex tools, from left to right: A POINT. H. 13.5 cm. France, Middle Palaeolithic, Magdalenian, ca. 120,000-40,000 B.P. CHF 1,800. A KNIFE OR A SICKLE BLADE. L. 18.2 cm. North-East Germany, Late Neolithic, ca. 3500-2200 B.C. CHF 2,500. A SICKLE BLADE. L. 14 cm. Europe, Late Neolithic, ca. 4400-2200 B.C. CHF 2,900. A LEAF POINT. L. 8.3 cm. France, Late Neolithic, ca. 3000-2200 B.C. CHF 1,200

Humans have experimented with countless psychoactive substances during the past millennia. Amongst these, alcohol – or to be more precise, ethanol – with its immediately noticeable, pleasant effects, such as cheerfulness, the enhanced ability to communicate and interact with others and the reduction of inhibitions and anxiety, is by far the most popular and widely used agent. The production of alcoholic beverages from locally available sources of sugar is an almost universal phenomenon, which can be encountered in human societies of every level of complexity. Since ancient times, these beverages have played an important role in defining the social status of group members and in the enactment of rituals that mark major life events.

The human preference for alcohol appears to be rooted deep in our prehistory. The question of when and in what form humans first began to ingest alcohol has been the subject of in-depth medical research with the aim of reaching a better understanding of the mechanisms leading to addiction and other alcohol-induced illnesses. Within this context, the biologist Robert Dudley developed the hypothesis that alcoholism might be an “evolutionary hangover”. He suggested that for about 40 million years the diet of frugivo-

rous anthropoids might have been characterised by the regular ingestion of low levels of ethanol from fermenting fruit. Possibly those primates who developed the ability to localise fruit crops by following the scent of ethanol and who could metabolise the calories it contained enjoyed a selective advantage. The resulting strong attraction to the smell and taste of ethanol might have been retained by humans despite a significant increase in dietary diversity and the easy availability of beverages with a high ethanol content due to the development of human-directed fermentation. The excessive consumption of ethanol would then represent a “maladaptive co-option of ancestrally advantageous behaviours”. (*Addiction*, 2002, 381-388).

Some aspects of Dudley’s controversial hypothesis recently received support from the field of palaeogenetics. In order to determine since when our ancestors were able to metabolise ethanol, the team headed by Matthew A. Carrigan “resurrected ancestral ADH4 (alcohol dehydrogenase class 4) enzymes from various points in the ca. 70 million years of primate evolution” and tested them for their ability to oxidise ethanol. Remarkably, nearly all the ADH4 were inactive against ethanol. The situation, however, changed dramatically in the time of the last

common ancestor of humans, chimpanzees and gorillas (HCG ancestor), who lived about 7-21 million years ago. Due to a single mutation, an ADH4 emerged that was able to oxidise ethanol forty times better than the same enzyme of the preceding common ancestor (HCGO ancestor, before the divergence of the orangutans). As the appearance of this ethanol-active ADH4 occurred at approximately the same time as the major climatic shift known as the Middle Miocene Climatic Transition, Carrigan *et al.* suggested that it might represent an adaptation to changing environmental conditions. In the Middle Miocene, the replacement of forests by grassland ecosystems coincided with a wave of extinctions, and the fossil record reveals that hominids, too, experienced selective pressures which may have led to increased terrestriality. As overripe fruit that has fallen to the ground has a higher ethanol content, the transition to a terrestrial mode of life may have led to a greater consumption of ethanol by the HCG ancestor, so that the improved ability to metabolise ethanol would have provided a selective advantage. (*PNAS*, 2015, 458-463).

The long path leading from a possible preference of hominids for fermenting fruit to the intentional production of alcoholic beverages by humans remains largely in the dark. However, it seems reasonable to assume that human experimentation with alcoholic fermentation started out with simple processes, such as the fermentation of honey water or palm sap, the former yielding mead and the latter palm wine. These beverages can occur naturally without human intervention, as both palm sap exuding from injuries in the bark and honey which is diluted by water, following a storm, for example, rapidly begin to ferment. The encounter with such natural phenomena may have provided the incentive to reproduce these processes. Cave paintings reveal that honey was collected in the Mesolithic Period and possibly as early as the Palaeolithic Period (cf. CQ 2/2018) and it is indeed possible that the first mead was produced at about the same time. Soft, juicy fruits such as grapes and berries would also have been suitable for early fermentation experiments.

Since when cereals were used to make beer-like beverages has been the subject of lively debate since the 1950s. This question is also

## Mead



After harvesting the honey, soak the combs in water for 1-2 days. Strain the honey water through a sieve and pour into a bottle. As the fermentation process releases large amounts of carbon dioxide, to not close the bottle tightly as it may otherwise explode. The mead can be drunk young but storing it for a couple of months improves its flavour.

linked with the controversy over whether it was the desire for bread or for beer that was the driving force behind the incipient domestication of cereals in the Epipalaeolithic Period in the Near East. These issues were recently addressed by Hayden *et al.* in an archaeological assessment of brewing technology in the Natufian culture (ca. 12,000-9500 B.C.). On the basis of ethnographic observations, the researchers surmised that the Natufian proto-brewers would have been able to discover the three steps necessary for beer production by means of “natural variations or accidents in food preparation and consumption”. These steps are firstly the germination of the grain to produce the enzymes that transform starch into sugar, secondly the process of mashing in which the crushed grain is mixed with water and heated in order to create optimum conditions for saccharification, and thirdly the inoculation with the yeasts that carry out the fermentation. “Mortars” made of stone or chiselled into the bedrock were recovered at numerous Natufian sites. Hayden *et al.* argue that particularly the long, narrow types could have conceivably been used in brewing. The cereals would first have been pounded in the “mortars”. Then the brewers would have added water and heated it to the required temperature by adding hot stones. The yeasts necessary for fermentation might have been air-borne or introduced either from previous batches of beer or from other foods, for example acorns, that had been processed in these “mortars”.

Having evaluated cereal finds made in Epipalaeolithic and Pre-Pottery sites, Hayden *et al.* reached the conclusion that cereals constituted a minor element in Late Epipalaeolithic diets. Against this background,

it is all the more remarkable that “where cereals were not locally available, unusual efforts were expended by groups relying predominantly on hunting and gathering to obtain them from distant sources or to expend considerable efforts to cultivate them mainly in predomesticated forms”. Hayden *et al.* therefore suggest that beer was a prestigious luxury food that was consumed during feasts of a competitive nature and that the increased demand for brewed beer “was likely a major motivating factor for cultivating and domesticating cereals in the Near East.” They do, however, concede that similar arguments could be put forward for breadmaking. (*Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory*, 2013, 102-150).

Evidence that Hayden and his team were correct in assuming that the technical and social prerequisites for the production and consumption of beer were present in the Natufian culture was published in October 2018 by the research team led by Li Liu. Their analysis of starch granules from residues in three stone “mortars” from a Natufian burial site in Raqefet Cave in Israel revealed that the granules showed various forms of damage indicative of the beer-making process. Thus, the oldest alcoholic beverage for which there is archaeological proof is a wheat/barley-based beer, which was brewed some 13,000 years ago and which predates the appearance of domesticated cereals in the Near East by several millennia. (*Journal of Archaeological Science: Reports*, 2018, 783-793).

Further evidence that cereals were used very early on to produce alcoholic beverages comes from the early Neolithic village Jiahu in Henan Province in China. The chemical analysis of ancient organic substances absorbed into pottery jars dating from the 7th millennium B.C. performed by a research team directed by Patrick E. McGovern suggested that the vessels contained a beverage composed of rice, honey and a type of fruit. The chemical findings could in part be substantiated by archaeological observations. The earliest finds of domesticated rice in northern China, for example, were also made in Jiahu. Furthermore, the seeds of grapes and Chinese hawthorn (*Crataegus pinnatifida*) could be identified in the Neolithic levels of Jiahu. Both these fruits are rich in tartaric acid, the biomarker indicating the presence of a fruit component in the beverage. Although direct chemical evidence of alcohol was lacking due to its volatility and susceptibility to biodegradation, fermentation of the mixed ingredients could be inferred because of the yeast contained in the honey and on the skins of the fruit. Once the juice had been exuded from the fruits or the honey diluted, the yeasts would inevitably have initiated the fermentation process. McGovern *et*

*al.* assume that to enable the yeast to exploit the starch contained in the rice, it was first saccharified either by mastication or malting. (*PNAS*, 2004, 17593-17598).

Neolithic Rice Wine  
after a Find in Jiahu (China)

Unfiltered rice wine with hawthorn berries (left) and grapes (right).

To malt the rice, soak 100 g of germinable rice in water overnight. Rinse well and then place the jar upside down in a sieve so that the excess water can drain off but the rice stays moist. Repeat twice a day until the roots are a few millimetres long (about two days). Dry the rice to stop germination and crush in a mortar.

To saccharify the rice, add 300 ml water and heat slowly until the mixture is too hot to touch with your fingers but is not yet simmering (ideally 50-75 °C). After about two hours it should taste fairly sweet and can be left to cool.

Mix the rice water with 200 ml mead and 200-300 g crushed grapes or hawthorn berries. The fruits of the hawthorn species found in Europe are not as fleshy as those of the Chinese hawthorn, so it might be more appropriate to use cornelian cherries or sloes. Pour into a bottle taking care not to shut it tightly so that the carbon dioxide can escape. The mixture ferments powerfully and two of my batches did indeed explode. The rice wine can be drunk after 1-2 weeks or stored for a longer period of time. Before serving, strain through a muslin cloth.



## Highlight

## Love Games Within and Without

By Martin Flashar



A RED-FIGURE PELIKE. H. 40 cm. Clay. Attributed to the Eucharides Painter (Workshop of Nikoxenos) by Herbert A. Cahn. First published: Münzen und Medaillen AG Basel, *Kunstwerke der Antike, cat. Sonderliste R* (Dec. 1977) 53, no. 50. BAPD no. 13607. Attic, ca. 490–480 B.C. Price on request

Most art works must be studied and described in detail in order to be understood; only very few can be comprehended *prima vista*. The vase presented here is no exception. The main side (A) of this impressive pelike features the more intensely figural drawing of the two: On the left, a male couple interacts. The dominant role is played by a bearded man who embraces his younger, beardless partner in a “wrestling hold”, as it were. The latter does not attempt to fend him off, stands upright, his rather unspectacular penis peeping out from among the many cloak folds at the centre of the composition, signalling pleasure; hence the prominence accorded it by the painter. The cloaks of both men envelop large sections of their bodies, leaving little of their flesh exposed, even if the naked buttocks of the younger lover, rendered in fine contour, naturally could not be left out. A closer look reveals three powerful parallel lines that lead from the mature man to the youth, below the latter’s genitals. This must be, albeit slightly concealed, the phallus of the dominant figure, preparing to engage in intercrural lovemaking.

On the right a disproportionately small young man crouches on the ground, leaning against a column with a heavy base. His reduced dimensions evidently reflect the figure’s lesser

importance. Likewise, the way in which he sits – frontally and with opened legs – tells us that he belongs to a lower level of society, the slave of the older suitor, with his master’s staff in hand. He seems to be sleeping, or at least dozing, resting his head in his left hand. Is this subtle irony in view of the excitement on his right? Or is he not even watching, his sense of shame rather serving as a place holder for the social criticism directed against the licentiousness of the *noblesse*?

Above, suspended from an imaginary wall, are a sponge, a strigil and an aryballos: accessories of youthful athletic prowess, and as such charged with erotic implications.

A further telling detail is the tree on the far left, which not only serves as a framing element, but is also a metaphor from the world of plants. It is completely overgrown and ensnared by ivy, just like the youth, who is caught in the overpowering embrace of his older lover. The tree and the abbreviated architecture indicate that the scene is located in an outside space, possible in a palaestra.

Depicted on the less elaborately decorated side B is a typical moment of uninhibited companionship during a wine-lubricated

symposium – a male affair but with women present, this interior scene complementing the outdoor one on the other side of the vase. The musician plays a double flute. His instrument is thrust towards the female dancer and seems to touch her upper body. The exceptionally long flute evidently serves as a metaphor for the penis. Its thrust is not directed towards the vagina – no, its target are the female breasts as the secondary sexual characteristic. The wild and shrill sounds of the flute, which in Ancient Greece were regarded as “barbarian” – the myth of Marsyas is a case in point – spurs the musician’s playmate on. Although she is still completely enveloped in her garment, the affected movements of her arms foretell the imminent striptease: this is ancient table-dancing *par excellence*.

Nonetheless, both scenes ultimately appear somewhat “restrained”. They do not reveal the inevitable outcome of the entertainment but only allude to it. The sexual activities do not reach their consummation; everything remains suspended in innuendo. This was not always the case in the representational history of this subject matter. Just a few decades earlier, such images of licentious excesses at symposia – a carousal held by older men and younger boys, at which female playmates (*hetaerae*) were also present – were quite different. Naked bodies dominated the picture and the intention of the depictions was to represent explicit sexual actions.

But the times had changed in Athens by 500 B.C. The tyrants’ rule of the polis had come to an end, the first clear signs of democratisation were unmistakable, and *isonomia*, the equality of full citizens before the law, had become a political buzzword and principle. The old aristocratic ruling elite did not disappear, but it had to learn how to define itself afresh in the new social and political context. Thus, “visual communication” on the theme of courtship and carousal also changed. Drastic effects were tempered, and the painters preferred to play with allusions, things hidden, minor details, and moderation.

The oeuvre of the painter by now numbers some 130 vessels. Of these roughly one third are still in black-figure. Thus, he belongs to the generation of artists who experienced this period of radical artistic and political change – and inevitably mirrored it in their paintings.