

in Roman houses was, in no small part, due to the accessibility of these stories, suitable for not only extolling learning and status but also, I would argue, for the exploration of the most indulgent and taboo of human desires. To this end more licence should be allowed to non-intellectual ways of viewing and understanding. That is, we should allow room for the Encolpiuses as well as Eumolpuses of the Roman empire.

This is an excellent and thought-provoking book that challenges the reader to consider a more careful ‘reading’ of Greek myths in Roman contexts. This book is consequently essential reading for both specialists in the field and students of Roman art. Furthermore, N.’s study raises important questions about the utilisation of Greek myth in other parts of the empire and regional variation. For instance, how did people in Gaul use Greek mythology? How does this vary from findings in Rome and Campania? N.’s approach necessarily raises expectations and brings into question how we should discuss Greek mythological iconography across the empire at large.

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SCULPTURES FROM THE BLUNDELL COLLECTION

BARTMAN (E.) *The Ince Blundell Collection of Classical Sculpture. Volume III – the Ideal Sculpture*. Pp. xii + 385, ills, pls. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2017. Cased, £75. ISBN: 978-1-78138-310-0. doi:10.1017/S0009840X17002098

This is the third volume in a series of publications resulting from the Ince Blundell research project, begun in 1984 by the University of Liverpool and National Museums Liverpool. The project aims to re-catalogue and re-publish the entire Ince Blundell collection, last catalogued by B. Ashmole in *A Catalogue of the Ancient Marbles at Ince Blundell Hall* (1929). Put together by Henry Blundell between 1777 and 1809, this was ‘the largest collection of Roman antiquities in England’ (p. 1). Volume 1 in the series covers the female and male portraits, in two parts, and Volume 2 the ash chests (J. Fejfer and E. Southworth, *The Ince Blundell Collection of Classical Sculpture. Volume 1. The Portraits. Part 1. Introduction. The Female Portraits. Concordances* [1991]; J. Fejfer, *The Ince Blundell Collection of Classical Sculpture. Volume 1. The Portraits. Part 2. The Roman Male Portraits* [1997]; G. Davies, *The Ince Blundell Collection of Classical Sculpture. Volume 2. The Ash Chests and other Funerary Reliefs* [2007]). This volume devoted to the ‘ideal sculpture’ catalogues some of the best-known works in the collection.

B. planned to ‘illuminate this critical episode in the history of collecting’ (p. 1) through analysis of Blundell’s behaviour and thinking, applied to the marbles. She also wanted to rehabilitate the sculptures from the dismissive opinions of earlier scholars: ‘notwithstanding sometimes heavy restoration and a lack of provenance, Grand Tour statues like those from Ince provide a wealth of archaeological information relating to subject and typology, thereby enhancing our knowledge of ancient sculpture’ (ibid.). The catalogue and its introduction rise well to these challenges, providing a wealth of interest not only for Classical art historians and archaeologists, but also for scholars of the history of collections, reception and restoration.

The introduction begins by elaborating the story of Blundell’s collecting, which was summarised in Volume 1. B. draws on recent studies on collecting and the Grand Tour,

and on Blundell's letters to Charles Townley, which became publicly accessible in the British Museum's Townley Archive in 1992. There is a good account of Blundell's relationship with dealers, including a new suggestion that Blundell was the Milord 'Bronte', 'Brontel' or 'Brontol' who features in the *Giornali* of the sculptor Vincenzo Pacetti (pp. 6–7). Blundell's relationship with Charles Townley has a short dedicated section, followed by a discussion of Blundell's display and interpretation of his collection.

Readers who come to B.'s volume in isolation are likely to find themselves wanting to turn to E. Southworth's introduction to the first volume, for further background and images of Blundell's collection displayed in the Garden Temple and Pantheon at Ince Blundell Hall. This is an inevitable consequence of putting together a volume that fits into a wider series. In general, B. effectively handles the challenge of writing text which complements rather than repeats material in the earlier volumes.

The introduction continues with a discussion of the collection's contribution to knowledge of Roman ideal sculpture. B. clearly states her position regarding the traditional activity of *Kopienkritik*, which is largely rejected in favour of discussing the function and meaning of ideal statues in Roman culture. Blundell's sculptures are significant as a 'cross section of the sculptures favoured by ancient Romans for the decoration of their private houses, villas and tombs' (p. 15). B. also highlights the unexpected number of works that emulate earlier styles – archaising, 'severising' and classicising. Overall, she concludes that none of the works featured in this catalogue is Greek: 'all are Roman in date, commissioned by Roman patrons living in the Roman Empire' (p. 16).

B. also considers the collection's significance for scholars of restoration, deliberately avoiding the pejorative tone of some previous scholarship and showing obvious admiration for the 'technical mastery' (p. 18) of the eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century restorers. The introduction concludes with an assessment of the collection that similarly seeks to overturn the negative opinions of Townley, Clarac, Waagen and Michaelis, instead describing Blundell's collection as a 'superb Grand Tour ensemble'. As V. Coltman has previously argued (*Classical Sculpture and the Culture of Collecting in Britain since 1760* [2009], pp. 36–48), assessment through a traditional scholarly hierarchy of ancient originals, restored and reworked Roman sculptures, and modern copies has coloured past treatment of Blundell's and other collections. These can be more productively studied if due attention is also paid to their eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century context.

B.'s take on Blundell's recutting of his Hermaphrodite as a Sleeping Venus, with which the introduction concludes, is a good example of her success in achieving this throughout. She acknowledges that 'Blundell's deliberate mutilation of what was a rare and well-preserved work of sculpture would seem be the act of both a philistine and a fool' (p. 22, *sic*). This follows typical assessments of his decision to cut away the suckling infants and castrate the figure. But B. is more even-handed, pointing out that Blundell thereby gained a statue which was likely much more valuable, a bargain Venus that joined a prestigious tradition of sleeping Venus figures in eighteenth-century art.

The catalogue is arranged principally by subject (Athena, Female, Apollo and other male gods etc.), concluding with two stylistically determined sections (Archaistic and severising works; Egyptianising). Entries are clear and well structured. Each begins with dimensions, descriptions of provenance, stone and condition, followed by bibliographic references for the particular sculpture. The discussion for each entry typically provides a detailed description, moving into comparable and related pieces, dating where possible, and concluding with a consideration of the modern context. B. covers an impressively wide range of relevant material, with a wealth of bibliographic references. For example, in the entry for the Sleeping Venus, she draws in comparisons with other hermaphrodite

sculptures, sleeping figures, figures with infants and figures shown outdoors, as well as making effective reference to eighteenth-century tastes.

The writing style is very readable, with occasional humorous observations dropped seamlessly into the flow of clear academic prose: she observes of the Sleeping Venus' gaping mouth, 'if the hermaphrodite could make noise, she would snore' (p. 37 n. 7). Descriptions are typical of Classical art history, with detailed coverage of features such as drapery, form and expression. Following the policy she set out in the introduction, B. is sensibly cautious throughout on dating, attribution and identification with well-known statue types, given the degree of restoration. Possibilities and previous suggestions have clearly been thoroughly researched and are reported in some detail, but the dominant message is the uncertainty of such attempts.

The volume is clearly laid out and well edited. I spotted only a very few inaccuracies. Most seriously, Figure 11 is captioned as showing restorations to Ince 1, whereas it clearly represents Ince 8, an error also reflected in the placement of the figure and its reference (p. 29). These are very minor quibbles in a publication which is clearly meticulously researched, well evidenced and carefully edited. The quality of the photographs is variable, and it is a shame that not everything has a rear view. This is perhaps inevitable, given the cost of moving large scale sculpture for photography.

The long gaps between the volumes in the Ince Blundell series suggest the scale and difficulty inherent in a cataloguing and publication project such as this. It is unusual to find a regional, non-university museum service able to devote such energy and resources to the detailed academic publication of its collections. This is a praiseworthy endeavour to which Liverpool's museums and galleries have been committed over a long period, not only for the Ince Blundell collection, but across other venues and collections (E. Morris and T. Stevens, *History of the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool 1873–2000* [2013], p. 145). The wider public benefit of this detailed academic research can already be seen in the excellent selection of highlights of the Blundell collection which can be browsed on the National Museums Liverpool's website, including information drawn from B.'s catalogue. As almost none of the collection is currently on public display, this online presence and the printed catalogues are even more valuable in drawing attention to its significance.

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BUILDING WITH RE-USED MATERIAL

FREY (J. M.) *Spolia in Fortifications and the Common Builder in Late Antiquity*. (*Mnemosyne* Supplements 389.) Pp. xii + 222, ills, maps. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2016. Cased, €93, US\$120. ISBN: 978-90-04-28800-3.

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F.'s book, based on his doctoral thesis (*Speaking Through Spolia: the Language of Architectural Reuse in the Fortifications of Late Roman Greece*. Ph.D. Diss., U.C. Berkeley [2006]), focuses on 'the reused fragments of architecture commonly referred to as *spolia*' (p. 1), which he addresses through three case studies of late-antique fortification projects in the Roman province of Achaëa (modern Greece). The book represents a much