

## **ABSTRACTS - Reconstructing Pompeian Interiors: Decorations, Models and Virtual Reality**

### **Top Secrets: The First Excavations of the Bourbons**

In 1738 the excavations started at Herculaneum. The spectacular discovery excited the interest of the cultural scene in Europe.

But what was the state of information during the first decades? What buildings and what objects were really known to the public? How much time passed before the first official and unofficial publications? What about pictures and maps as patterns for artists and artisans? When and how did the reception of the sites start? What kind of reception was it? What were the reasons for the situation at Naples?

The paper will outline the conditions of reception, the consequences for the history of European art and the political background.

Agnes Allroggen-Bedel, Bad-Ems

### **Pompeii versus Cultural Import - Interpreting the Influence of Pompeii in its Land of Origins**

In the Bay of Naples and along the “Miglio d’Oro” – the “Golden Mile” of the splendid “ville vesuviane” – some palaces or villa with red facades and white columns and balconies “all’antica” announce the vicinity of Pompeii. Inside, maybe a staircase or room decorated with coloured panels reflects Pompeian wall painting in a simplified, economical way.

In this paper I will discuss the influence of the antique wall painting in the Kingdom of Naples, the original land of the glamorous relics of ancient paintings. Carlo Vanvitelli (1740-1821), architect of the Bourbon Court, was the main promoter of the so-called “Ferdinando” - a Neapolitan variant of the “Louis Seize” style - which may include decorative elements of Pompeian origin. Carlo Vanvitelli worked in a fertile milieu of local and foreign artists and intellectuals in which an interior decoration in encaustic painting was experienced perhaps for the first time. But the specific political, social and cultural context of 18<sup>th</sup> century Naples may have led to a unique perception of the antiquities of Pompeii.

Soon after the Napoleonic Era – with its French import of the “Empire” style – a remarkable number of so-called neo-Pompeian decorations were executed for the royal court and private patrons. These rich decorations, created by the architects Antonio Niccolini (1772-1850) and Guglielmo Bechi (1791-1852), the latter director of the Pompeian excavations, provided the impetus for the above-mentioned variants in the Vesuvian area.

I will examine examples of interior decoration in 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century Naples – in the Royal palaces as well as in some private villas – to see if the excavations had an immediate effect on the common imagination within Neapolitan society. This paper will discuss whether the Neapolitan decorations corresponded with the wide-spread international fashion for Neo-Pompeianism or whether proximity to the excavations and site-specific knowledge had their influence. Did the proximity of Pompeii and Herculaneum lead to a specific Neapolitan variant of neo-Pompeianism, or was this phenomenon a re-import developed “oltre alpe”?

Margot Hleunig Heilmann, Bern

## **The Absence of Pompeian Models in “Pompeian style” Interiors in 18th Century Swedish Interior Decoration**

Painted interiors in the classical style from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century are often named “Pompeian” in Sweden. When taking a closer look at the models used by the artists one observes that very few actually derive from paintings found in Pompeii. This paper will try to establish why.

The excavation history of Pompeii reveals that only a minor part of the ruins had been excavated when the Swedish king Gustavus III and the royal painter Louis Masreliez visited the site in the 1780s. In addition to this a host of well known limiting factors helps to explain why many artists’ sketch books turn out to be surprisingly void of sketches from Pompeii and Portici.

Another aspect of the excavation history, less considered by art historians, is how the mural paintings from the ruins were selected and exhibited at Portici. The selection is clearly marked by the academic hierarchy of genres, where the noblest form of art was history painting and where ornamental subjects were more or less disregarded. Mythological subjects were thus given precedence over ornamental motifs in the exhibition at Portici where the murals were presented as framed works of art rather than exponents of domestic decorative mural paintings. The same principles are obvious in the selection of motifs included in the influential *Le Antichità di Ercolano esposte*. All these factors help to explain why decorative painters had to look elsewhere for ornamental motifs for their interiors.

Yet another factor worth noting in this context is the fact that many of the treasures found in Pompeii did not meet with the high moral expectations of leading neo-classical art theorists of the time. Could it be that intellectual artists played it safe by turning to praised and sanctioned 16<sup>th</sup> century models like the murals in the Vatican logge when creating interiors in the classical style in 18<sup>th</sup> century Sweden?

Margareta Nisser Dalman, Uppsala University Art Collections

## **Who, When and Why? References to Pompeii in Stockholm**

The reception of the Pompeian tradition in Sweden can be divided into two phases. First Pompeii remained a distant source of inspiration, best described as an incitement towards classicising interiors using mainly the idiom of Renaissance grottesco painting. The second phase, that of direct and conscious quotation from and dialogue with the Pompeian artistic vocabulary, is rather late in Sweden. Although it may be traced back to the 19th century, its most remarkable period is the 1920’s when Pompeian influence is recycled to express Swedish values. In this paper we will follow the settings chosen for this kind of art, formerly reserved for royal dwellings, from reception areas of bourgeois houses, to artists’ homes and into the new palaces of popular culture, such as public baths, attraction parks and cinemas. The contents of the motifs chosen from the Pompeian repertoire to be recycled for the cinemas are particularly telling. They reveal both close acquaintance with the models and a strong desire to apprehend Pompeian decorative schemes and themes as the expression of a culture belonging to ordinary men and women of antiquity transmitted as a gift to similar people, the growing cultured masses of the modern working capital.

Anne-Marie Leander Touati, Stockholm University

## **Reconstruction and Retrospection: Ludwig I's Pompejanum and the House of the Dioscuri in Pompeii**

Opened in 1850, Ludwig I's Pompejanum in Aschaffenburg offered the visitor a truly virtual experience of the ancient domus, complete with splashing fountains and marble columns that gave the illusion an ancient Roman might step into this space at any moment. Despite damage from Allied bombs and extensive renovations in the 1990s, the king's full-blown reconstruction of the House of the Dioscuri today may be the closest copy of an entire Roman house ever made. The paper compares the 19<sup>th</sup> century recreation with the ancient house as we think we know it and also with modern, ostensibly more "virtual" forms of reconstruction.

Bettina Bergmann, Mt. Holyoke

## **Living with Arria Marcella: Novel Interiors in la Maison Pompéienne**

In 1856, Prince Jerome Napoleon's Maison Pompéienne appeared on the Ave. Montaigne in Paris. Designed primarily as a private place for entertaining, the house was designed loosely on the Villa of Diomedes, famous in France as the home of Pompeii's most alluring bosom, that of Arria Marcella, victim of Vesuvius and anti-heroine of Théophile Gautier's novella.

This paper explores the connections between the archaeological and the imaginative, which played out in the complex relationship between the Maison and Parisian creative society, including Jean-Léon Gérôme and, particularly, Gautier, who wrote a special monologue for the opening entertainment in which Arria Marcella was again resurrected, this time in nineteenth century Paris.

The Maison is particularly interesting for its links with nineteenth century exhibition practice. The Maison drew on the precedents of both the Pompejanum at Aschaffenburg and the 1854 Pompeii Court in the Crystal Palace in South London, itself modelled on Britain's most famous Pompeian house, that of the Tragic Poet, home of Glaucus, hero of Lytton's *Last Days of Pompeii*. The links with the London house became stronger when the Maison, whose plans had been on display in a previous Exposition (organised by Jerome himself), was used as a restaurant for visitors to the nearby Expositions Universelles.

This paper examines the Maison in the light of the performative nature of its space, the rich and heavily exploited possibility of 'intertextuality' with the site itself and, crucially, its reception simultaneously as relic of antiquity and model for modern living. Such architectural recreations deliberately entered into contemporary discourses of reconstructive aesthetics, offering a 'panoramic', comprehensive experience. The paper ends by considering the ongoing impact on Pompeii of its association with these reconstructive techniques, an association that is evoked both by the computer modelling discussed in this conference and recent calls to rebuild the site itself as one giant 'Musée de Terre'.

Shelley Hales, Bristol University

Saturday

### **Models of Pompeii – Only Documentation and Didactic Tool or Source of Inspiration?**

Models of Pompeian public and private architecture have been built from the end of the 18th. century to today. Most ambitious were the model of the temple of Isis by Giovanni Altieri for Gustavus III (now in Drottningholm) and the 1:48 model of the excavations by Domenico Padiglione and his sons. This has been destroyed and replaced by the cork-model 1:100, still exhibited in the National Museum in Naples. These models document the ruins, others reconstruct the original appearance, mainly of private houses. Some were on display in more or less exact 1:1 reconstructions (Pompeianum in Aschaffenburg, Crystal Palace at Sydenham), others were bought as 'typical' specimens for archaeological collections. As 3D representations of a far-away reality, they showed every single detail of the Pompeian buildings, including wall paintings of every quality. But their scope was more documentary and didactic – inspiration for interior decoration of actual buildings came from drawings or printed publications.

Valentin Kockel, Universität Augsburg

### **The Decoration of the House of the Surgeon: Models Old and New**

The decoration of the House of the Surgeon has attracted little interest in the two hundred and thirty years since it was exposed. The house has been much discussed in terms of its architecture and date, but the decoration was generally regarded as of poor quality and has never attracted reconsideration. The investigation of the whole of Insula VI, 1 by the Anglo-American Project in Pompeii has reinterpreted both the primary plan and the date of the house, but it has also made important advances in reconstructing its internal appearance. It has shown that the house was in disrepair at the time of the eruption, but we have also been able to recover significant evidence for its redecoration in the period preceding the earthquake of AD62.

This has been possible through the use of many sources of evidence, including the careful examination of the surviving plaster, the discovery of fragments buried in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the records made in the 18th century and the evidence of the Plastico in the National Museum in Naples. This paper outlines the progress made in integrating this information and expressing it in terms of 3D computer visualization.

Rick Jones, University of Bradford

### **The “As-is” 2D and 3D Documentation of the City Block IX 3 in Pompeii**

This presentation describes the on-going work at the city block IX 3 in Pompeii, which the Pompeii Project of the University of Helsinki (EPUH) has documented since 2002. During the years, the aim of the project has changed from creating 2D plans and sections to the total 3D documentation of all the visible structures. The measuring documentation comprises total station measurements, photogrammetric imagery and a test 3D laser scanning. 3D imaging techniques, such as 3D laser scanning, allow us to record a very

detailed surface geometry of the structures and to create an “as-is” model of the site. When the model is textured with high quality photographs, details, such as wall paintings, can be studied using the model at any later date. In co-operation with EPUH, the EVTEK Institute of Art and Design has also created a visual, photo-textured 3D model of the House of Marcus Lucretius, which will also be discussed and presented here.

Nina Heiska, Helsinki University of Technology

### **Visualising the Imagined Spaces of Pompeian Frescoes**

A research team at King's College London has, for a number of years, been using computer-based visualisation techniques to try to obtain a better understanding of aspects of the intermedial allusiveness of Pompeian frescoes. This paper will trace this work, and also outline a new project, recently funded by the Leverhulme Trust, to use 3d scanning technologies to capture the entire architectural and decorative ensemble of the Villa at Oplontis as it exists today, and to create a number of hypothetical reconstructions of the Villa as it may have been at different phases and in different states of use. The paper will also demonstrate how emerging online platforms are providing new opportunities for international research consortia to work together in high-quality, real-time, virtual environments, and will suggest how these could be used to advance the study of Pompeian interiors and their reception.

Hugh Denard, King's College London

### **The VR Digital Model of the Villa of the Papyri Project: The Surviving Wall Paintings and their Reconstruction**

The VR digital model of the Villa of the Papyri project is a new research tool that incorporates data from past and recent excavations, proposes a reconstruction of the Villa and provides a virtual reality “access” to the Villa, which still lies largely underground. In this paper I discuss the evidence, methodology and tools used for the construction of the digital model and for the proposed reconstruction of the Villa: (1) the ways in which the data from the 18<sup>th</sup> century excavations were combined with the data from the recent excavations; (2) the decisions taken in proposing a reconstruction for the Villa of the Papyri; and (3) the ways in which the VR environment of the model advanced research on the Villa. Furthermore, I present new work on the digital model of the Villa of the Papyri, namely the placement of the surviving parts and fragments of wall paintings from the Villa in the model as well as a proposal for their reconstruction after Eric Moormann’s recent reconsideration of his 1984 reconstruction.

The plethora of computer applications available for the discipline of archaeology prompts methodological approaches that enhance research in the field. The VR digital model of the Villa of the Papyri project points to the ways in which digital tools, such as virtual reality models, may be employed to investigate archaeological sites. This paper presents the use of this project in studying the wall paintings of the Villa.

Mantha Zarmakoupi, UCL Institute of Archaeology

**PICTURA POMPEIANA REDIVIVA - Reconstruction Experiment of the Frescoes of the Triclinium of the House of Marcus Lucretius (IX 3, 5 & 24) in Pompeii for the Exhibition "Domus Pompeiana – A House in Pompeii" at the Amos Anderson Art Museum, Helsinki, Finland, 1 March – 25 May 2008.**

The objective of the paper is to summarise the main results of the preparation of the fresco reconstructions of the once large and lavishly decorated triclinium of the House of Marcus Lucretius (IX 3, 5 & 24) in Pompeii. The reconstructions were made in 2007-08 for the exhibition (1 March – 25 May 2008) "Domus Pompeiana – A House in Pompeii" at the Amos Anderson Art Museum, Helsinki, Finland, as part of the studies led by the Pompeii Project of the University of Helsinki (Expeditio Pompeiana Universitatis Helsingiensis = EPUH), since 2004 in collaboration with the EVTEK Institute of Art and Design of University of Applied Arts (Vantaa). Showing also the reconstruction of the garden with its fountain decoration and its original statues, the exhibition provides the first opportunity in 150 years to see both the original frescoes from the triclinium now in the Museo archeologico nazionale di Napoli and the statues from the deposits of the Soprintendenza archeologica di Pompei.

Antero Tammisto, University of Helsinki  
Helena Wassholm, EVTEK institute, Helsinki

Sunday

**Reconstructing a Museum Interior: a Project for the Palazzo Reale in Portici**

This paper presents a project aimed at reconstructing – in an aisle of the Royal Palace in Portici (Naples) – the principles that guided the display in the Museum, where finds from the Vesuvian excavations were exhibited during the 18thC.

Since much of the Museum is still not precisely known – despite the deep efforts devoted by scholars to this theme – we do not intend to 'reproduce' the Herculaneum museum, also because, the excavations being a 'work in progress', it underwent several, important changes.

Rather, by adopting different types of 'reproductions', selected on the basis of the suggestions they should convey:

- 'static', 'classic' reproductions, such as plaster casts or wooden models

- 1:1, high quality reproductions of one of the most commented upon exhibits of the Museum, i.e. the paintings

- a 'multi-media' reconstruction, trying (as in a time machine) to 'bring back to life' the walls in Herculaneum and Pompeii, showing through their physical remains the different actions to which they have been subject (and the different 'actors' involved in them)

we intend to communicate, using different media, the rôle and meaning of this Institution in 18thC. Europe.

Irene Bragantini, Università di Napoli – Orientale  
Renata Cantilena, Università di Salerno