

MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS

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Guide to the Museum.

For the convenience of summer visitors to the Museum, the present Bulletin is prepared, containing a general description of the contents of the collections. It is necessarily brief, and its aim is restricted to directing the attention of the stranger to some of the most significant features in the galleries without attempting elaborate descriptions of any sort. The visitor will be much assisted by making himself familiar with the Plan of the Building at the end of the Bulletin before consulting the account of each room.

FIRST FLOOR.

ENTRANCE HALL.

The Entrance Hall contains works of sculpture produced by a former generation of American artists working in the classical spirit that culminated in the works of Canova and Thorwaldsen in Europe. *Thomas G. Crawford*, *Horatio Greenough*, *Hiram Powers*, and *Dr. W. Rimmer* are all represented. The pair of paintings on either hand are good examples of *Boucher*; the subjects, Scenes on the Road to and from the Market. Nearer the windows are ancient Greek inscriptions obtained by the Archaeological Institute of America in its excavations at *Assos* in the Troad (Asia Minor) in the year 1880. Beside the door leading into the Egyptian Department is a large *Assyrian* slab found in the palace of *Ashur-nasir-pal* at *Nimrud*, dating from the reign of that monarch, 885-860 B. C. It represents one of the so-called divine attendants. The cuneiform writing across the figure is the "Standard Inscription of Ashur-nasir-pal," and is a record of the king's conquests. A translation of it hangs framed beside the slab.

THE COLLECTION OF CASTS.

The collection of casts has been selected and arranged with a view to illustrating the history of the art of sculpture from the earliest times to the decline of Greece and Rome, and to showing some of the representative works of the Renaissance. Lack of space has prevented an equally representative illustration of the art of the Middle Ages; and the growth of the collections of original antiquities in the Museum during the last few years has been such as to crowd out many of the casts of the later classical period, as well as a number of those of Renaissance sculpture, which have been placed on storage until the erection of the new building. Consequently the collection at present appears in somewhat mutilated form, though it is still complete enough to serve as a companion to the more general or popular histories of sculpture. For detailed descriptions the Catalogue of Casts from Greek and Roman Sculpture should be consulted.

EGYPTIAN ROOM.

Beginning with the Egyptian Room, immediately at the right of the entrance to the Museum, here are seen reproductions of some of the earliest known examples of the art of sculpture. The most interesting among

them is the famous wooden figure known as the "*Village Chief*," of which the original is in the Museum of Cairo, and is supposed to be contemporary with the Great Pyramid of Cheops (IV. dynasty). On the wall next the entrance are some reliefs of about the same period, from the tombs of *Ti* and *Hosi*, which are referred to in all histories of Egyptian art for the skill they display in the art of carving, and for the life and individuality with which animal figures are represented. In this half of the room are other figures and reliefs illustrating the manner in which the spirit of conventionality overpowered Egyptian sculpture and checked its development. In the other half of the room are examples of Chaldaean and Assyrian sculpture, showing the differences between their sculptors and those of Egypt in the method of representing human and animal figures, and of composing sculpture in relief.

FIRST GREEK ROOM.

In the First Greek Room are arranged the earliest efforts of the Greek sculptors, which show from what humble beginnings the greatest sculpture of the world arose. In the centre of the room is a case of especial interest, containing electrotype reproductions of metal works executed in the *Mycenaean* age, which antedated the historical period of Greek civilization by several centuries. Our knowledge of this prehistoric period is being rapidly developed at the present time, by excavations in Crete and other places, and it is found that these early Greeks had developed an original, strong and noble art, of which the specimens in this case are typical examples. Their larger arts are illustrated in the colossal relief of the Lions from the *Gate of Mykenae* (No. 1) and in the sculptured decorations Nos. 2, 2A, 3. This civilization was wiped out by various causes, which are explained in Greek history; and after an interval began the wonderful period which reached its climax in the Parthenon. The crude efforts of the first sculptors of this period to represent the human figure are shown in the so-called *statues of "Apollo"*, Nos. 20-22, which become particularly interesting when it is remembered that they are the best work done in their time, and that not more than one hundred and fifty years intervened between the most primitive of them (No. 20) and the perfect sculpture of the Parthenon. The other casts in this room illustrate various phases of these early struggles in different parts of the Greek world; and in all of them the qualities of earnestness and sincerity are no less evident than the failure of the artists to accomplish what they were striving to attain.

SECOND GREEK ROOM.

In the Second Greek Room is seen a more advanced stage of development, but not yet perfection. All the works represented here belong to the first half of the fifth century B. C., in which the advance was very rapid. Probably only about twenty years elapsed between the execution of the *Aeginetan* groups (Nos. 60A-O) and that of the great statues from the temple of Zeus at *Olympia* (Nos. 65A-H, 66A-I), yet it will be seen that the latter are infinitely more noble and dignified than the former, and introduce a much higher

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In the centre of the room is a collection of selected Greek coins, a Guide to which has been issued by the Museum. Of the coins of cities in Italy and Sicily, the *butting bull of Thurium*, No. 21; the superb head of *Ilera* on the coin of Pandosia, No. 32; the *eagles tearing a hare*, No. 37; the masterpiece of the artist Kimon, the *head of Arethusa*, No. 68; and the masterpiece of Evaenetos, No. 85; the *head of Persephone*, which is the most famous of all Greek coins, should be examined. On the mainland of Greece, the beautiful *head of Apollo*, No. 132; the regal series of Macedonia, including Nos. 147 and 148, should be observed, as well as the portraits of *Alexander the Great*, Nos. 206-210. Nos. 251-252 are famous for their beauty and rarity, and the series of *Athenian Coins* in division 5 appeal to all interested in the story of Athens. Passing to the Greek cities of Asia Minor, the coins of the wealthy cities of *Kyzikos*, Nos. 413-425; and *Lampsakos*, 426-430; and the rare series from *Klasomenae* with the swan and the head of Apollo, are among the most attractive. In the last division will be found a few good specimens of the portrait coins of the *Roman emperors*.

VASES.

The importance of Greek vases is altogether exceptional. Not only are they the repository of a great part of our information concerning the whole course of painting and the decorative arts in Greece, but it is to them that every investigator and teacher in every branch of Greek studies must turn for information and illustration. The Museum is fortunate in possessing a collection which for the importance and beauty of its specimens takes very high rank.

(1) Beginning at the entrance from the Room of Renaissance Casts, at the right is a case of *Cypriote vases*, many dating from the second millennium B. C. On the left are "*Mycenaean*" vases together with a later class of vases that are distinguished by their decoration with geometric patterns. These *geometric* vases date as late as the seventh century B. C., and include many characteristic examples of the earliest efforts of pottery in Athens. The two colossal vases on pedestals at the end of the room are early examples from Boeotia, in Greece.

(2) Passing down the right side of the room, the first case contains, on the top shelf, characteristic examples of *archaic Boeotian* ware. The early *Corinthian* and *Rhodian* vases on the lower shelves exemplify the influence of eastern textile arts on Greek decoration during the seventh and sixth centuries B. C.

(3) The rest of the collection, with the exception of one case, consists, mainly, of vases made in Athens, though most of them were found outside of Greece, where they had been exported in the course of trade. Those on this side of the room, dating in the sixth century B. C., have *black figures* on the red clay ground. The large amphorae decorated in this manner on the lowest shelf of the next case may be cited also for another reason: they are two of the vases that were filled with oil and given as *prizes* in the athletic contests held in Athens. Another attractive piece is the famous amphora in the last case on this side, with a picture of a *shoemaker's shop* on one side and a *blacksmith's shop* on the other.

(4) Towards the close of the sixth century B. C. the technique of vase painting underwent a change. The figures previously painted in black were now drawn on the red ground, which was then glazed black so as to leave the figures red. The rare example standing alone in the centre of the room illustrates this vitally important change, where the same subject may be seen

treated in the "*black-figured*" style on one side of the vase and in the "*red-figured*" on the other. Starting again at the entrance of the room, three of the cases between the windows, the two long cases running down the middle of the room, and the case in front of the "*Porch of the Maidens*" are filled with these Attic red-figured vases. Reference must be made to the labels for the names of the shapes of the vases and the subjects represented on them, and for the names of the artists who painted them, but attention should be directed to the signally important group of vases by *Euphronios*, and those by *Brygos*, *Duris*, and other masters that will be found in the central cases. A small lekythos showing a *battle of Greeks and Amazons* is one of the most delicately drawn in the collection, and will be found at the end of the case facing the Porch.

(5) The Museum collection is particularly rich in vases moulded in *human and animal shapes*, which seem to have been popular in Athens about the beginning of the fifth century B. C. A series of these, including some remarkable representations of negroes, is arranged in the first case between the windows.

(6) The charming "*lekythoi*," or oil jugs, made at Athens for the purpose of funeral offerings, with designs painted on white ground, are illustrated here by several examples. The subjects are treated in bright colors, and are often connected with the grave. These *white lekythoi* will readily be distinguished in the following case, where they occupy the top shelf.

(7) The last case on this side is filled with vases made in Greek towns in Italy, which illustrate the *decline* of the red-figured technique in the fourth century B. C. Here one sees not only overcrowded design and hasty drawing, coupled with the lavish use of accessory colors, but also fantastic shapes and plastic decorations.

In conclusion, the small plastic lekythos representing the *Birth of Aphrodite*, where the goddess, exquisitely modeled, emerges from an opening shell, calls for particular remark. No more typical example of the refinement of design and delicacy of execution that characterize the best Greek work could be chosen. This vase will be found in the second of the long cases, in the middle of the top shelf.

EGYPTIAN ANTIQUITIES.

Entrance to the Egyptian Collection is gained through the second door on the right of the Main Hall.

The *Mummies*, *Cartonage Cases* and *Coffins* contained in the glass cases on the right-hand side of the room, belong to the period of the XX1st-XXVIth dynasties inclusive—about B. C. 1100-550. The brightly colored decorations of the cartonage cases represent various symbols, gods, goddesses and scenes connected with life in the Underworld, interspersed with hieroglyphic inscriptions recording the names and titles of the deceased, as well as prayers for offerings and other benefits bestowed by the gods. *Mummies* were frequently encased in three or even four coffins, and a glance at those standing on top of the wall cases will show how these coffins were fitted one within another. Masks attached to the inner and outer coffins are often beautifully carved: a good example may be seen on the coffin which stands in the tall glass case against the wall; others are shown in wall case PP.

Wall cases E and F contain *funeral stelae* of wood and calcareous stone. These tablets usually bear a scene representing the dead person in whose name

they were set up making offerings to certain gods; below is inscribed a prayer that "all things good and pure" be granted to the deceased.

Wall cases G, H, I and J contain *mummified crocodiles, birds, and other animals*, human fragments, masks, wooden statuettes, figures of the Triune god Ptah-Seker-Osiris standing on pedestals (often serving to contain papyri), miniature sarcophagi and other objects of funeral equipment.

Wall-case K contains a collection of *Ushabti figures* covering a period from the XIIIth dynasty to the XXVIth, and even later,—about B. C. 2200-500. These figures were made of stone, alabaster, wood or glazed faience, and were buried with the dead; being either laid about the tomb in rows or put into boxes. Their function was to perform for the deceased such agricultural labors as might be required of him in the Underworld; and the formula which, when recited, would call them into activity, is usually inscribed across the front of each figure: this formula constitutes the VIth chapter of the Book of the Dead.

Wall cases L, M, N, and OO contain *kohl-pots, jars for perfumes and unguents, vases, etc.*, made of alabaster; an assortment of similar objects made of pottery, one small but fine bowl made of blue-glazed faience, and a number of sandals, mirrors, writing-palettes, etc.

On top of these wall-cases is a row of so-called *Canopic jars*. These stood, in a set of four, near the sarcophagus; and each jar, consecrated to a particular deity, was used to hold a portion of the intestines removed from the body during the process of mummification.

Case SS contains a collection of *miniature figures of various gods*, made of blue-glazed faience and semi-precious stones. They were used as amulets, and are generally found in mummy cases—either worked into the scheme of decoration, or laid in among the bandages.

Cases T, U, V, and W contain *amulets* of another kind. These are made of jasper, carnelian, porphyry, lapis-lazuli, faience, etc., in the forms of various symbols which stand for life, protection, stability, happiness, and similar blessings. They were used by the living and buried with the dead; the precise use of many of them being governed by certain chapters of the Book of the Dead.

Case XX. The *scarabs* shown here are of two kinds: (1) *Funeral scarabs*, and (2) *scarabs worn for adornment*. The larger scarabs of the first kind, made of green basalt by preference, usually have chapter 30 B of the Book of the Dead inscribed upon the flat base. This chapter was supposed to prevent the heart of the deceased from being "repulsed in the Underworld," and the scarabs on which it was engraved were laid upon the breast of the mummy. Smaller funeral scarabs, made of steatite, faience, carnelian, etc., were inscribed with the names of gods, kings, officials, monograms and other devices, and were set in rings, placed on the fingers of the mummy, or wrapped up in the bandages with which the body was swathed.

Scarabs of the second kind, made of all possible materials, bore devices and inscriptions of unlimited

variety—most of which cannot be explained satisfactorily. It is probable, however, that they were used as talismans, and some of them even seem to have had a political significance.

In the next section of the room, directly opposite the entrance, sits a colossal granite statue of *Rameses II.*, the third king of the XIXth dynasty,—about B. C. 1400. Behind, on either side of the door, are basalt figures of the *goddess Pasht*, a personification of the sun's heat. To the right stand two large cases containing a *mummy of the XXVIth dynasty*, with the cartonnage case and coffins belonging to it. This set adequately shows the methods employed for a burial of the better class.

To the left, a *sphinx*, which once had the head of a ram, illustrates very well the way in which the Pharaohs and other royal personages often appropriated the monuments of their predecessors. This sphinx was made during the reign of some shepherd king, and at one time, doubtless, bore his cartouche and titles; these, however, were evidently erased,—the cartouches of Set-Nekht, the last king of the XIXth dynasty, being substituted. Another example of this practice may be seen in the *seated figure of a scribe* to the left of the sphinx. This figure was made during the XIIth dynasty, but was subsequently appropriated by the son of Rameses II.

Owing to the fact that nearly all the objects and monuments in this room are provided with labels, it will be unnecessary to describe them here in further detail. Suffice it to say that cases 3, 4, and 5 contain objects covering the greater part of Egyptian history, while those on the opposite side of the aisle are more exclusively devoted to relics of prehistoric times and the earliest dynasties, representing the latest results of modern archaeology.

SECOND FLOOR.

HALL.

On the landing of the staircase hangs a large sixteenth century tapestry from the *Brussels* factory representing *Scipio Africanus rescuing his Father*, who has been wounded by the Carthaginians at the battle of the Ticinus. Another smaller piece of the same set, the exact subject of which is undetermined, hangs in the Hall above. Great skill has been expended on the borders of these tapestries as well as on their main designs. The remaining tapestries hanging in the Hall are: *The Triumph of Peace*—another Brussels piece of the early eighteenth century, from a design from *L. van Schoor*; *Summer*, an eighteenth century work, probably of *Flemish* origin; and a *Raphaellesque Assumption of the Virgin*, of sixteenth century Italian work.

The works of sculpture in the Hall are mostly of recent date. Chief among them, beginning from the right, are a statuette in the style of *Bernini*—*Christ at the Column of Flagellation*; *The Flight of Love*, where the love god is flitting by a girl while she sleeps, a work of the living French artist, *Auguste Rodin*, a statue of *Diana* by *A. Falguères*; three small bronzes