



7th ANNUAL STUDENT CONFERENCE

The Sculpted Body: Sculpture through Time



Athens 22-23 April 2024
Daphne & George Hatsopoulos Hall
CYA

The origins of sculpture can be traced in the first haphazard anthro- and zoomorphic renderings of the Palaeolithic era, hundreds of thousands of years BP. Humans have systematically explored stone, clay (fired and otherwise) and perishable materials (leather, wood, straw) for the creation and manufacture of sculpted forms and sculpture to this day remains a powerful means of artistic expression.

The 7th Annual Student Conference celebrates sculpture in the memory of Anne Stewart, a beloved colleague and brilliant scholar, who taught Ancient Sculpture at CYA until her retirement. We invite contributions by sculpture enthusiasts, in a wide range of themes and eras relating to sculpture.

Conference Committee

Athena Hadji, Art History Professor, CYA (Chair)

Angelos Papadopoulos, Academic Director, CYA

Kate Donnelly, Academic Writing Advisor, CYA

Conference Program & Abstracts

MONDAY 22 APRIL

- 15:00** **Welcome notes**
Angelos Papadopoulos, CYA, Academic Director
- 15:10** **Teaching Sculpture at CYA: The Legacy of Anne Stewart**
Athena Hadji, CYA, Art History professor
- 15:20** *Antiquity Anew: Exploring the Development of Ancient Greek Sculpture through the Lens of Modernity*
Benji Hess, CYA - Washington and Lee University '23,
Classics, Art History and Archaeology
- 15:40** *Unearthing Authenticity: The Impact of Modern Art on Early Cycladic Art and its Unintended Consequences*
Sofie Koutroulis, CYA - Scripps College, Art Conservation
- 16:00** *The Sculpted Body through the Photographer's Eyes: Nelly's*
Chloe Mae Revier, CYA - St. Olaf College, English, Film and
Media Studies
- 16:20** *Modernity Meets Mythology: Jeff Koons' Apollo at DESTE Hydra, 2022*
Bilal Razzak, CYA - Davidson College, Economics
- 16:40** *Discussion*

TUESDAY 23 APRIL

- 11:00** *A Chronological Metamorphosis of Medusa: From Apotropaic to Idol*
Lila Odile Pepples, CYA - Vassar College, Art History
- 11:20** *Sculpting Sensuality: Unveiling the Evolution from Modesty to Nudity of the Sculpted Female Form*
Sasha Kushner, CYA - Skidmore College, Psychology and Gender Studies
- 11:40** *The Trojan War Reflected Through Sculpture: The Myth and Why it is Important to the Greeks*
Paige Closser, CYA - Indiana University, Classical Studies and Computer Science
- 12:00** *Perceptions Through Time: Persians and Greeks in Sculpture*
Nikki Ghaemi, CYA - George Washington University, Art History and Journalism
- 12:20** *Discussion and concluding remarks*

Benji Hess

CYA - Washington and Lee University '23

Classics, Art History and Archaeology

Antiquity Anew: Exploring the Development of Ancient Greek Sculpture through the Lens of Modernity

Millennia removed from the milieus in which the canonical works of ancient Greek sculpture were created, it is no surprise that today's students often feel a disconnect between works from antiquity and the art of their contemporary world. However, what if sculpture from the last century—playing with expressions, ideals, and forms more likely to be familiar to today's observer—could be used as a tool to convey the narrative of stylistic development and achievement from the Archaic through to the Hellenistic era? Through the use of a theoretical exhibition wherein works from antiquity are displayed in stark juxtaposition with contemporary sculpture, this pedagogical potency of taking an unconventional comparative approach in art history classrooms will be explored. Renderings of the theoretical exhibition space will be presented in order to emphasize the potential impact of such unexpected pairings, highlighting how the story of ancient Greek sculpture will be conveyed unobtrusively yet effectively throughout the viewing experience.

Sofie Koutroulis

CYA - Scripps College

Art Conservation

Unearthing Authenticity: The Impact of Modern Art on Early Cycladic Art and its Unintended Consequences

The validation of Early Cycladic art in the modern art world has led to complex outcomes, inadvertently fostering illicit excavations and forgeries despite the movement's intentions. In the past, Cycladic sculptures have been marginalized within the field of archaeology, often reduced to mere "figurines." However, modern artists of the last century have drawn inspiration from Early Cycladic sculptures, affirming the status of these ancient Greek anthropomorphic artworks as genuine expressions of art rather than "primitive" creations. The heightened interest in Cycladic anthropomorphic sculptures during the modernist movement of the 1960s spurred museums and collectors to swiftly acquire them, sometimes without adequate documentation, in efforts to expand their collections or maximize profits. However, this pursuit of profit has compromised cultural heritage and impeded scholarly advancement by stripping away essential contextual information. Ironically, modern art, with its call for a break from traditional techniques in pursuit of new forms of expression, inadvertently facilitated the reproduction of Cycladic sculptures, directly contradicting the ethos of the movement. Moreover, the commercialization of Cycladic art has led to the proliferation of forgeries, diluting the authenticity of genuine pieces and disrespecting both prehistoric and modern art.

Chloe Mae Revier

CYA - St. Olaf College

English, Film and Media Studies

The Sculpted Body through the Photographer's Eyes: Nelly's

Throughout her time as a photographer (1924-1966), Elli Sougioultzoglou-Seraidari, professionally known as Nelly's, photographed many ancient sculptures throughout Greece. These photographs are widely recognized in Greece and are still reproduced and sold to this day. While these photographs are emblematic of Classical Greece, her style of photography differs from traditional archaeological photography. While traditional archaeological photography typically aims for a comprehensive view of an artifact, Nelly's focuses on specific details of the sculpted body. Her unique style of framing and lighting in her sculpture photographs creates an image and story that stands out from other photographic representations of antiquities. Through my research for this paper, I see her photographs as a way of Nelly's trying to capture the emotional state of longing within these sculptures - the feeling she experiences herself by wanting to belong somewhere and be connected through history. In this paper, I will contextualize her experiences and how they shaped her photography career, explore how her specific photography techniques were innovative within the field, and ask for a reassessment of Nelly's works as pieces celebrating the human form and reengaging with the past.

Bilal Razzak

CYA - Davidson College

Economics

Modernity Meets Mythology: Jeff Koons' Apollo at DESTE Hydra, 2022

Jeff Koons' "Apollo Exhibition" at DESTE Foundation's Hydra Slaughterhouse in Greece, 2022, merges contemporary art with ancient mythology, creating a unique dialogue between the past and present. This analysis explores Koons' interpretation of Apollo, the Greek god of the arts and knowledge, within this distinct artistic setting. The exhibition, set against a backdrop of the historical slaughterhouse, uses Koons' reflective artworks to delve into themes of beauty, creativity, and human aspiration. Focusing on the intersection between the venue's rich history and the artworks, this presentation examines how Koons navigates the narratives of myth and contemporary society. By highlighting key pieces and the exhibition's curatorial approach, it underscores Koons' ability to engage with historical and modern-day reflections, making the "Apollo Exhibition" a significant point of discussion in the contemporary art world.

Lila Odile Pepples

CYA - Vassar College

Art History Major, Greek and Roman Studies Minor

A Chronological Metamorphosis of Medusa: From Apotropaic to Idol

The following research interprets the chronological, contextual evolution of Medusa's sculptural presentation concerning constructions of gender, belonging, and demonization in ancient Greco-Roman culture. It begins with a foundational, concise mythological recounting of Medusa curated to complement further commentary and critique. The paper then provides an overview of the sculptural depictions of Medusa in different eras tracing the historical, cultural, and artistic contexts, citing visual evidence, such as architectural pediments, Gorgoneion, friezes, sculpture in the round, and more sculptural forms. Sequentially, Archaic depictions of Medusa are analyzed emphasizing the stylized, inhuman features that constructed a monstrous apotropaic symbol, propagating cultural propaganda by stigmatizing the Other. Discussion of this period will critique the contriving of the Other disclosed through the depictions of Medusa. Subsequent analysis of Medusa's presentation in ancient art from the Classical period through the Greek-inspired Roman works will examine the aesthetic modifications to Medusa as she is beautified in connection with cultural shifts in these societies. The paper will conclude with discussions of contemporary appropriation of Medusa as a popular cultural symbol. I will reflect on the contemporary metamorphosis in the appearance of Medusa, honored for what she survived rather than villainized for non consensual acts for which she was condemned.

Sasha Kusher

CYA - Skidmore College

Psychology and Gender Studies

Sculpting Sensuality: Unveiling the Evolution from Modesty to Nudity of the Sculpted Female Form

Imagine you are an unfamiliar tourist wandering through the National Archaeological Museum. From first look, it is evident that classical Greek sculptors were highly skilled in creating near perfect and shockingly realistic renditions of the human figure. Yet with further examination, you may become curious about the presentation of nudity in depictions of females in sculptures and the use of clothing and garments for modesty, or lack thereof. Throughout the historical evolution of classical antiquity, there was a clear shift in the presentation of the female form. Throughout early classical antiquity sculpture work, women were presented completely or very modestly clothed. However, a historical shift in the 4th century BCE demonstrated the growing presence of nudity, both full frontal and with slight coverings that often drew attention and curiosity to the nudity that was present. This paper works to deconstruct, analyze, and contrast the artistic presentation and evolution of the Aphrodite and Athena figures while focusing specifically on two questions: 1) How does the developing presence of nudity in sculpture help us understand the perception of women and their bodies in ancient Greece? And 2) Was nudity used as a form of appreciation or sexualization, and how have western beliefs shifted our understanding of the purpose of these figures?

Paige Closser

CYA - Indiana University

Classical Studies and Computer Science

The Trojan War Reflected Through Sculpture: The Myth and Why it's Important to the Greeks

In ancient times, the stories of Greek heroics were depicted in art across the Greek world to show the glory of the Greeks. One of these triumphant stories was the Trojan War. This epic, which started as an oral tradition, was portrayed in art over and over throughout the Greek world. Becoming the inspiration for many other tales, it remains one of the most known to come from ancient Greece to this day.

But there are two sides to every war. The victim and the victor. In this paper, I re-examine the story of the Trojan War and explore the timeline and locations of its portrayal through Greek and Roman sculpture. Then I plan to discuss the use of sculptures as propaganda. I will finally relate this to the Greek sensibility at the time by analyzing a number of the sculptures to shed light on how they viewed themselves and the changes in their views over time.

Nikki Ghaemi

CYA - George Washington University

Art History and Journalism

Perceptions Through Time: Persians and Greeks in Sculpture

In my paper, I aim to answer the question: What does ancient sculpture tell us about the real, nuanced relationship between the Greeks and Persians?

It is widely accepted that Greeks and Persians had a strained relationship, but their perceptions of one another were more complicated than simple hatred. In my research, I use the words of Greek historians and playwrights in tandem with art created by both groups to gain a comprehensive understanding of their relationship. The sculpted body is a reflection of the sculptor's perception of that individual, regardless of its accuracy. Analyzing the way in which Athenians sculpted themselves and Persians, as well as how Persians sculpted themselves offers windows into a multi-faceted relationship between the two groups. I focus heavily on two main case studies—the Apadana at Persepolis and the Parthenon frieze—to explore cultural similarities, such as the political leveraging of ceremonial processions, and to see how Athenians used the Parthenon frieze as a form of propaganda to uplift the Athenian state. I further argue that these perceptions continue to permeate the western world's views of these ancient peoples by exploring 21st century recreations of ancient sculpture that highly exaggerate certain visual elements.



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