

CLASSICAL SCULPTURE

Lesson 4: Beyond classical sculpture

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1. CREATE YOUR OWN MUSEUM

Instructions

You are going to work in groups of four students. Your local authorities are interested in creating a new classical sculpture museum and are gathering proposals for this museum. Each group has to prepare one proposal of 10 artworks for the new museum and make a public presentation in the classroom, justifying their choice and explaining the masterpieces. For the first and last time in your life money is not a problem.

Tasks

In order to achieve a successful outcome it is essential to pay attention to the following steps:

1. Individually, look over the following web pages and make your own choice about criteria and artworks.
2. In group decide what criteria you are going to use in order to choose the 10 masterpieces.
3. Apply your criteria and make your group choice of ten classical sculptures for the new museum.
4. Prepare a power point presentation explaining the criteria and the 10 artworks that you have chosen. Further information such as a plan of the exhibition room and the order of display is accepted.
5. Share the presentation and each member must have a role to develop, for instance: student a) global presentation including the criteria, student b) cataloguing the 10 masterpieces, students c) and d) each one describes one of the artworks using the patterns for description below.

WEB PAGES

<http://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/sculpture/styles/default.htm>

http://eekman.com/virtual_gallery/sculptures.shtml

<http://www.britishmuseum.org/default.aspx>

<http://www.metmuseum.org/>

<http://www.louvre.fr/llv/commun/home.jsp?bmLocale=en>

<http://www.christusrex.org/>

http://www.grisel.net/acropolis_museum.htm

<http://www.arthist.umn.edu/aict/html/ancient.html>

<http://witcombe.sbc.edu/ARTHgreece.html>

<http://www.historyforkids.org/learn/greeks/art/sculpture/greeksculpture.htm>

PATTERNS FOR DESCRIPTION

A) CATALOGUING:

- The title of ...
- It was carved by ... in ... and it is placed...

B) FORMAL DESCRIPTION:

- The composition is ...
- The representation of the human body is... as we can see ...
- In this sculpture the movement ... as we can see ...
- Emotion and expressivity...

C) INTERPRETATION:

- Iconography explains /depicts ...
- This sculpture is a symbol of ...

D) CONCLUSION :

- In conclusion I think that ...

2A. THE PARTHENON MARBLES DEBATE

ELGIN MARBLES

The **Elgin Marbles** also called the **Parthenon Marbles** are a collection of marble sculptures that originally decorated the Parthenon and other buildings on the Acropolis of Athens. Thomas Bruce 7th Earl of Elgin, the British ambassador to the Ottoman Empire from 1799 to 1803, obtained permission from the Ottoman authorities to remove sculptures from the Acropolis. From 1801 to 1812 Elgin's agents removed about half of the surviving sculptures of the Parthenon. The Marbles were transported to Britain, and were purchased by the British Government in 1816 after public debate in Parliament. They were placed on display in the British Museum where they are now on view in the purpose-built Duveen Gallery. The Greek government claims that the marbles should be returned to Athens.

2.1. Look up information in the following web pages and individually point out arguments in favour of each position:

WEB PAGES

<http://www.parthenonuk.com/index.php>

http://www.britishmuseum.org/the_museum/news_and_debate/debate/parthenon_sculptures.aspx

<http://www.marblesreunited.org.uk/>

<http://www.xtec.es/~sgiralt/labyrinthus/internet/marbres.pdf>

<http://www.museum-security.org/97/july28.html#10>

http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/spanish/science/newsid_3561000/3561533.stm

<http://www.greece.org/parthenon/marbles/>

<http://www.flickr.com/groups/parthenonmarbles/>

<http://odysseus.culture.gr/a/1/12/ea120.html>



<http://www.hammerwood.mistral.co.uk/elgin.htm>

About Parthenon Marbles

The group is about the Parthenon Marbles (known also as Elgin Marbles).

The biggest part of the sculpture decoration of the Parthenon is today at the Acropolis Museum, Athens and at the British Museum, London.

The following institutions hold also sculpture from the Parthenon: Vatican Museums; Musee du Louvre, Paris; Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna; National Museum, Copenhagen; Glyptothek, Munich; University Museum, Würzburg; Museo Nazionale, Palermo.

The University Museum of Heidelberg returned a small fragment to Greece.

In just a few months the New Museum of Acropolis will open at the southern base of the Acropolis. Because of that we want the restitution of the Parthenon Marbles to Athens.

<http://www.flickr.com/groups/parthenonmarbles/>

The Parthenon in Athens is a building with a long and complex history. By 1800 only 50% of the original sculptural decoration remained. Between 1801 and 1805 Lord Elgin removed about half of the remaining sculptures from the fallen ruins and from the building itself, and brought them back to Britain. Since 1816 the sculptures have all been on display to the public in the British Museum, free of entry charge. The British Museum's Trustees argue that the Parthenon sculptures are integral to the Museum's purpose as a world museum telling the story of human cultural achievement.

http://www.britishmuseum.org/the_museum/news_and_debate/debate/parthenon_sculptures.aspx



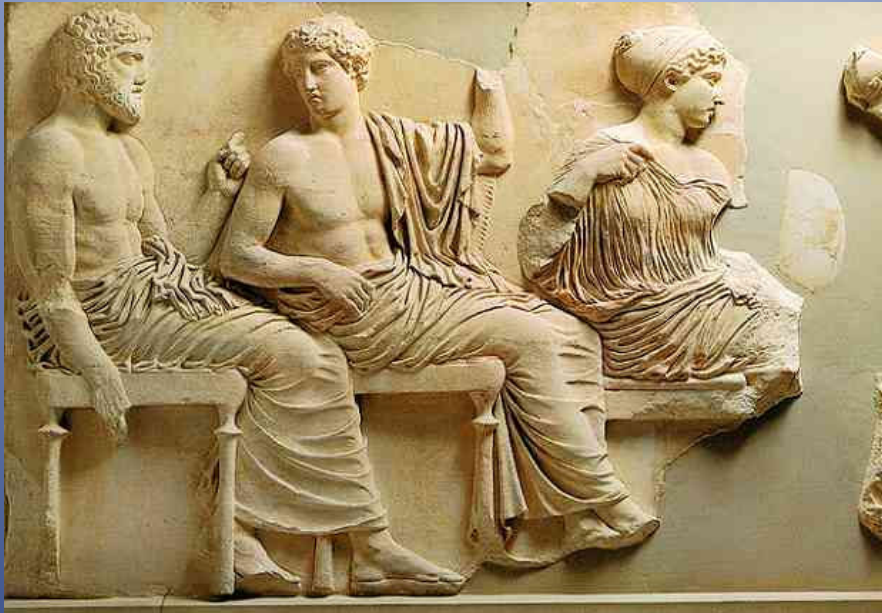
http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/highlights/highlight_objects/gr/h/horsemen_from_the_west_frieze.aspx



http://www.grisel.net/acropolis_museum.htm



<http://www.khm.at/homeE3.html>



<http://www.hammerwood.mistral.co.uk/elgin.htm>



http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/highlights/highlight_image.aspx?image=ps312816.jpg&retpage=18044

http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/highlights/highlight_image.aspx?image=ps269910.jpg&retpage=18384





Plaster casts of part of the west frieze of the Parthenon
Cast Nos. A079, and A080a-d. Ashmolean Museum, Cast Gallery

<http://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/Sculpture/ashmolean/ParthenonFrieze.htm>



<http://www.flickr.com/groups/parthenonmarbles/>

<http://artandmale.blogspot.com/> (Video: New Acropolis Museum)

2B. DEBATE: CONTEMPORARY ART VERSUS CLASSICAL ART?

Look at these images and do the following exercises:



Alison Lapper (1965) is an English artist who was born without arms. She is also the subject of the sculpture *Alison Lapper Pregnant*, carved by Marc Quinn, which was on display in Trafalgar Square (London) until late 2007.



a) Look up the following web pages for further information about Alison Lapper and the sculptor Marc Quinn.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alison_Lapper

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/magazine/3515560.stm

<http://www.artbook.com/3865212409.html>

<http://litmed.med.nyu.edu/Annotation?action=view&annid=10408>

b) Explain some formal similarities and differences between the statues above.

c) Do you think that an ancient Greek sculptor would like this statue? Why?

d) Look up the following and previous web pages, read the text below, and explain the iconography and symbols of this artwork.

<http://www.alisonlapper.com/statue/>

http://www.fourthplinth.org.uk/marc_quinn.htm

Two statues in Trafalgar Square: Nelson on top of his column has lost an arm but he is the classical image of a hero. Therefore Alison's statue could represent a new model of female heroism.



e) The piece and its original position in Trafalgar Square generated controversy. Write your point of view about the exhibition of this artwork in a public place like Trafalgar Square.

4. ASKING AND ANSWERING QUESTIONS (5 Ws)

Using the following 5 Ws prepare two questions for asking classmates:

- WHAT
- WHO
- WHEN
- WHERE
- WHY

