

Édouard Baldus

(French, born Germany, 1813-1889)

Pont du Gard

circa 1861

Albumen silver print

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Kingman Douglass, 1992.6.1

Édouard Baldus

(French, born Germany, 1813-1889)

Théâtre Romain à Arles

(Roman Theater at Arles)

1860 or earlier

Albumen silver print

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Kingman Douglass, 1992.6.2

Édouard Baldus

(French, born Germany, 1813-1889)

Arles, Amphithéâtre (Arles, Amphitheater)

1860 or earlier

Albumen silver print

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Kingman Douglass, 1992.6.3

Édouard Baldus

(French, born Germany, 1813-1889)

Arc de Triomphe du Carrousel

1860

Albumen silver print

Gift of Mrs. Kingman Douglass, 1998.80.11

Félix Bonfils (French, 1831-1885)
or Maison Bonfils (French, active 1867-1939)

Corinthian Columns, Greece
circa 1860s

Albumen silver print

Gift of Michael G. and Jane Wilson, 1991.176.71

Delmaet & Durandelle (French, active 1862-1890)

*Cheneau de la grande coupole de la
salle [Spout of the large cupola in the
auditorium]*

circa 1866-1875

Albumen silver print

Gift of Jane and Michael G. Wilson, 1995.46.2.32

Delmaet & Durandelle (French, active 1862-1890)

Chéneau de la lanterne de la salle
[Spout of the lantern in the auditorium]

circa 1866-1875

Albumen silver print

Gift of Jane and Michael G. Wilson, 1995.46.2.34

Delmaet & Durandelle (French, active 1862-1890)

Masques des consoles. Baies de la loggia (façade principale)

[Masks of the consoles. Bays of the loggia (main facade)]

circa 1866-1875

Albumen silver print

Gift of Jane and Michael G. Wilson, 1995.46.2.37

Delmaet & Durandelle (French, active 1862-1890)

Masques du vestibule du contrôle
[Masks in the security room]

circa 1866-1875

Albumen silver print

Gift of Jane and Michael G. Wilson, 1995.46.2.38

Robert MacPherson (Scottish, 1811-1872)

Ruin of Temple of Minerva Medica, Rome
circa 1860

Albumen silver print

Gift of Margaret W. Weston, 2004.42.4

Giorgio Sommer (Italian, born Germany, 1834-1914)

Ercolano. Casa di Argo

[Herculaneum. House of Argos]

1875-1880

Albumen silver print

Gift of Michael G. and Jane Wilson, 1991.176.90

Giorgio Sommer (Italian, born Germany, 1834-1914)

Tempio di Nettuno, Pesto

[Temple of Neptune, Paestum]

circa 1860

Albumen silver print

Museum purchase with funds provided by Friends of
Photographic Art, 1997.3.28

Giorgio Sommer (Italian, born Germany, 1834-1914)

Aci Castello, Scogli dei Ciclopi
[Aci Castello, Rocks of the Cyclops]
circa 1880s

Albumen silver print

Museum purchase with funds provided by Friends of
Photographic Art, 1999.45.1

Giorgio Sommer (Italian, born Germany, 1834-1914)

Roman Forum

circa 1880s

Albumen silver print

Gift of Margaret W. Weston, 2004.42.55

Giorgio Sommer (Italian, born Germany, 1834-1914)

Siracusa, Museo Giove

[Bust of Jupiter in a Museum in

Syracuse, Sicily]

circa 1880s

Albumen silver print

Gift of Margaret W. Weston, 2004.42.57

Archaistic female head

Late 1st century BCE

Roman

Marble

Gift of Wright S. Ludington, 1973.72

Archaic male head

550-500 BCE

Cypriot

Limestone

Gift of Wright S. Ludington, 1978.4.1

Janiform herm with two satyrs

1st century CE

Roman

Marble

Bequest of Wright S. Ludington, 1993.1.105

Unknown Photographer

Roman Amphitheater, Nîmes

1865

Albumen silver print

Gift of Mrs. Kingman Douglass, 1997.91.9

Fratelli Alinari (Italian, founded 1852)

Roma - Il Foro Romano coi nuovi scavi
[Rome, Roman Forum with recent
excavations]

circa 1900

Albumen silver print

Gift of Pirkle Jones, 2005.83.26

Born in Prussia (now Germany), the aspiring painter Édouard Baldus moved to Paris just before the invention of photography was announced in Paris in 1839. Seizing on the new medium's artistic and commercial possibilities, he became one of Europe's most successful photographic practitioners. Hired by the French government, Baldus expertly captured scenes of urban and rural France, including evidence of France's Roman past as seen here. Of note in these four ingeniously composed photographs is the mesmerizing vision of a Roman bridge (the Pont du Gard) reflected in water as if in a dream. Another is the view of a triumphal arch in Paris that could almost be an opera set. Created under Napoleon Bonaparte in the early 19th century, the Arc de Triomphe du Carrousel mimicked the grandeur of ancient Roman arches to create a propagandistic aura of timeless legitimacy to Napoleon's imperialist campaigns and goals for even greater power.

The extensive presence of sophisticated Roman buildings in France testifies to the importance of Gaul to the ancient Roman Empire. Here an unknown photographer captured in a nearly abstract way the well-known features of the Roman amphitheater in Nîmes. A distinct kind of multi-use public venue, the greatest example of this type of building is the Colosseum in Rome. However, the amphitheater became one of the identifying structures of Roman colonies, the ruins of which are found to this day throughout the Roman Empire's geographic span.

Like Baldus, Félix Bonfils created a highly successful business out of the art and commerce of the new medium of photography, involving his family in all aspects of photographic practice, marketing, and sales. Bonfils, his wife, and his son traveled extensively throughout Europe and the Middle East to register historic landscapes and legendary architecture. In this restrained photograph, Corinthian capitals — the floral-like decorative elements seen in the columns' top section — establish this building's origin in the Greco-Roman architectural tradition, but its exact location could be found anywhere in countless places across the Mediterranean world.

The French photography firm of Delmaet and Durandelle was commissioned to create a visual record of the building of the Palais Garnier in Paris. This grand opera house, begun in 1861 and finished in 1875, was a major part of Napoleon III's vast reimagining of the city of Paris. Using the camera as a documentary tool, the photographers captured in a uniquely modern way the intriguing characteristics of masks intended for places that an average visitor would never see. The artists who created these masks were clearly aware of sculptural heads from antiquity, such as those seen in the center of this gallery. However, they added idiosyncratic symbols and expressions that make these fascinating faces a vivid fusion of the ancient and the modern.

Born in Scotland, Robert MacPherson made a career in Rome photographing its great monuments and selling these views to the Eternal City's ever-growing tourist trade. Evidence of the market for such works, MacPherson's portfolios acted as both souvenirs and armchair travel aides. Here MacPherson composed a view of an ancient structure seemingly being taken over by vegetation in a Romantic vision of picturesque ruin. Today this structure stands amidst busy traffic, making MacPherson's photograph important as a record of how antiquity appeared in the recent as well as distant past.

Born in Frankfurt, Germany, Giorgio Sommer established a photographic career in northern Europe before moving to Naples in 1856. With a business partner and on his own, Sommer created a huge number of photographs of southern Italy, including Pompeii, the Amalfi Coast and Sicily, that unmistakably combined the documentary with the aesthetic. One such photograph is the view of the rocks of the Cyclops in southeastern Sicily. Legend says that the blinded one-eyed monster, Polyphemus the Cyclops, threw these huge rocks at Odysseus and his men as they craftily fled imprisonment from his cave. Such a fantastic melding of material fact, ancient myth, and real place can be found throughout the landscapes of the Greco-Roman world.

Since its founding in the 1850s, the firm of Fratelli Alinari has been synonymous with photographs of works of art in Italy that served as study guides for generations of art historians, students, and the interested public. Alinari also created numerous images of monuments, cities, and landscapes that transcend the didactic. Here a view of the Roman Forum in all its 19th-century disarray provides ample evidence for a distant viewer, one who might never get to Rome, to reconstruct these lost and partial buildings in their mind's eye.

This female head was most likely the top of a herm in its original state. Herms were sacred boundary markers comprised of an upright shaft of stone crowned by a sculpted head, commonly found at road-crossings or in the vicinity of important buildings like temples. It is termed “Archaistic” because it employs formal characteristics of earlier Greek art from the 7th through the 4th centuries BCE.

This head was originally part of an over life-sized votive statue common in ancient Cyprus in religious sanctuaries. This mature male wears a celebratory laurel wreath and has had his hair and beard stylishly groomed. These elements, as well as his eyes, would have been painted in bright colors. With its almond-shaped eyes, upturned mouth, and snail-curl ringlets of hair, this Cypriot head appears like it could have been produced in Greece, evidence of the rich cultural syntheses that marked the island of Cyprus in antiquity.

Like the female head in this gallery, this sculpture with two faces gazing in opposite directions was placed at the top of a herm. “Janiform” refers to Janus, the god responsible for beginnings, doorways, bridges, and passageways, who is always depicted with two faces on opposite sides of the same head. Here the faces belong to two satyrs, one young and the other old. Identified by their pointed ears and playfully mischievous expressions, these kinds of ancient sculptural heads most certainly provided inspiration for some of the masks created for the Palais Garnier.