Montagny Album: scholars’ workspace

The Montagny album is an in folio, bound in velum, of 89 leaves, on which Élie-Honoré Montagny, a French artist from the beginning of the 19th century, has pasted more than 400 drawings from different sketchbooks. All these drawings are showing antiquities and were copied by the artist during his voyage in Italy, especially in Rome and Naples, from 1804 until 1815. An inscription on the first page gives its title to the album: “Recueil d’antiquités dessinées d’après des peintures trouvées à Herculaneum, Stabia et Pompeïa” (DIA) (collection of antiquities drawn from paintings found in Herculaneum, Stabia and Pompei), which let us think that Montagny intended in the first place to show in his album only drawings of the ancient paintings that he was able to copy in the Portici Museum near Naples.

Who is Montagny?

Élie Honoré Montagny was born in Paris in 1782. He was the son of Fleury Montagny, a medalist that worked for the king of France. The young Montagny studied in David’s workshop and was then admitted in the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris at the age of twelve. In his early twenty, he made copies of ancient sculptures at the Louvre that were published in the illustrated catalogue of the museum entitled Galerie Napoléon and published between 1802 and 1815 (DIA). It is probably at this occasion that he met Ennio Quirino Visconti, the antiquirian, who sent him to Italy in order to copy antiquities for the Iconographie antique. This book, on which Visconti was then working, intended to present famous men from the Antiquity, but the main purpose of its publication was to glorify Napoleon (DIA).

Montagny left for Italy and went to Rome and Naples. Montagny then requested the authorization to go to Palermo, and while waiting for the reply, he decided to copy the ancient paintings from Herculaneum and Pompei that were on display in the museum in Portici.

Montagny was one of the first artist outside of Naples to have access to the collection of ancient paintings: in fact, before him, nobody was allowed to copy or even to take notes in front of the paintings, as the king of Naples wanted to keep the exclusivity on the publication on the discoveries. But in 1804, when Montagny was in Naples, the king of Naples had run away from the French army, and the French in Naples were so powerful that nobody dared to reject their request.
The copies of paintings that Montagny made are presented in the album on the recto of the pages, right in the center. They bear annotations indicating the original colors of the painting. The disposition of the drawings, the title on the first page on the album and the presence of annotations let us think that the album might have been a model for a publication of the paintings in color. For unknown reasons (political reasons? lack of funding?) the project was never achieved and Montagny re-used the album as a collection of models from the antique that he could use in his creations: he cut and paste on the album drawings that he made from the antique in Rome and Naples, sorting them approximately by theme. He also paste on the album tracings from antiquarian engravings from the 17th century, most of them taken from books by the artist and antiquarian Pietro Santi Bartoli.

The Montagny album gives us today information on the taste of the antique at the beginning of the 19th century, but also on the Italian collections before their dispersal, on the state of conservation of the works at a certain time. It gives us an image, a piece of time, froze in the first decade of the 19th c.

The album allows us to have information about objects that are now lost, or damaged: (DIA) Here is the example of that painting from Herculaneum, now in the Louvre that Montagny drew when he was in Naples. An accident occurred and the painting was over-painted so that it seemed to be a forgery. Finding a copy of the painting in the album allowed me to understand that the painting was genuine.

Workspace

The structure of the workspace has been build considering the structure and the history of the Montagny album. Every drawing has been isolated and a record has been created for each one of them (DIA 32r_2).

Core-records

The information is classified in two major blocks: the first block giving information related to the drawing itself (title, dimension, materials, position in the album, etc.), the second is related to the object represented on the drawing when it has been
identified (type of object, location in museum, date, former collections, bibliography…).

The workspace is still in development, but all the records have been created, and nearly a half of the objects has been identified. Helene Dufresne, PhD student as the INHA worked with me in creating and filling the records and on the identification of objects. While filling the records, we thought about new functionalities for the workspace. It appeared for instance that links to other website related to the study of antiquities could be very useful, like the website of the German Institute in Rome, (DAI), arachne (DIA 84r_5). Bartoli’s book, in which Montagny traced some of the drawings, have been digitized and a link to the books can be made.

(DIA 15r_1) In the case of the tracings, if identifying the source was quite easy, the identification of the object is more difficult: the book in which the drawing has been traced gives us information about the location at the object in the 17th century and it is sometimes hard to trace it until now. But in that case, we were lucky and were able to find the object in the British Museum database. I would like to draw your attention on the fact that digital sources were of a great help in retracing the objects in modern collections.

Other functionalities

Bibliography: a bibliography has been made, with tags that help finding the references;

Search engine: allows us to navigate very easily on the workspace, in order to find a drawing, a bibliographical reference, a drawing…

Interactive Pdf

Mini-essays
Digital Montagny
Voici le texte gravé dans le manuscrit:

Voulez-vous que je vous parle de la vie de César depuis son enfance jusqu'au temps où il est devenu un grand homme?

Parce que déjà depuis 1904 à l'an 1805.

Par M. Montaigne d'entre autres historiens.

Leurs d'Antiquité.

S'exprime d'appréciation des peintres trouvés de Herculanum, Stabia, et Pompeii,
qui sont maintenant au Musée de Naples à quatre miles de Naples.
Statue de Mars. Dessiné par Montaignier.
HOMMES D'ÉTAT ET DE GUERRE SOUS LA RÉPUBLIQUE.

Lucius Junius Brutus

M. Brutus, L. Brutus, L. Brutus, Servius Tullius, L. Postumus Aquillanus,

Sextus Fulvius

L. Domitius Ahenobarbus.
Description of Montagny’s drawing

**Image Id:** montagny_32r_2  
**Location on page:** Leaf 32r, top (center) of the page  
**Page orientation:** Vertical  
**Drawing title:** Wall painting - Priest  
**Inscription:**  
Peinture Antique trouvée à Herculaneum fond clair, draperie laqueuse  
[ink] musée de Portici  
**Creator:** Elie-Honoré Montagny (1762-1854)  
**Material/Paper:** White paper  
**Material/Ink & style:** Pencil, chiaroscuro

Description of the related work of art

**Object type:** Wall painting  
**Title:** Prêtre descendant un escalier  
**Material:** Plaster  
**Pigments**  
**Current location:** Paris, Musée du Louvre  
**Current Inventory no.:** AGER, P14

**Bibliography reference:**  
Tran Tam Tinh  
Fields from Martine and Peter (keep these fields?)

**Object technique:** Roman fresco - mounted on a piece of slate  
**Object dimensions:** 58 x 51,3 cm  
**Archaeological findspot:** Herculaneum, Neptun and Amphitrite’s villa  
**19th-century museum/collection:** Portici museum (until 1825) then Louvre  
**Antiquarian book reference:** RPGR
Description of Montagny's drawing

**Image Id:** montagny_84r_5  
**Location on page:** Leaf 84r, bottom of the page  
**Page orientation:** Horizontal, turn book clockwise  
**Drawing title:** Wall painting - Caricature of Aeneas escape  
**Inscription:**  
[pencil] Peinture Antiquâ trouvée à Pompeii  
[fond noir 1. Banc 2. rouge]  
[terrain vert]  
[ink] Grotesque  
Antique  
[ink] Du Musée de Portici  
**Creator:** Elie-Honord Montagny (1782-1864)  
**Material/Paper:** Blue paper  
**Material/Ink & style:** Pencil, chiaroscuro

Description of the related work of art

**Object type:** Wall painting  
**Material:** Plaster  
**Pigments**  
**Current location:** Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale  
**Current inventory no.:** Inv. 9099

Fields from Martine and Peter (keep these fields?)

**Object technique:** Roman fresco  
**Object dimensions:** 22 x 24 cm  
**Mythological person:** Aeneas  
**Antique context:** 1st c. AD  
**Archaeological findspot:** Pompeii, Italy  
**19th-century museum/collection:** Portici museum

Comments

**Bibliography**


edit   reply

**Arachne file**

Bibliography: A. Maiuri, La Perodia di Enea, BSA 35, 1950, 108-112 Fig. 1-2;  
See Arachne http://arachne.uni-koeln.de/item/object/600865
General Information on the object

Presently located:
Neapel, Italien, IT, Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli
Location information is Aufbewahrungsart.

Provenience:
Italien, Pompeji

Category/Cultural Era/Function:
Flächenkunst; private Ausstattung
Cultural era: römisch
Ancient landscape: Kampanien
Ancient Roman province: Italia

Preservation:
stark besoßen; fragmentiert
Oberfläche teilweise stark abgegraben.
Reworking: nicht ergänzt

Technique:
Technique: Flächenkunst, Wandmalerei

Measurements / Material:
W 24 cm
H 22 cm

Bibliography:
A. Maiuri, La Perodia di Enea, BdA 35, 1950, 108-112 Fig. 1-2;
Description of Montagny's drawing

**Image id:** montagny_15r_1  
**Location on page:** Leaf 15r, top left of the page  
**Page orientation:** Vertical  
**Drawing title:** Lamp, Jupiter Custos  
**Inscription:** Jupiter Custos, d'una Lucerna Antica  
**Creator:** Elie-Honoré Montagny (1782-1864)  
**Material/Paper:** Transparent paper  
**Material/Ink & style:** Ink, line drawing  
**Tracing source:** Bartoli, Antiche Lucerne, II, pl. 1

Description of the related work of art

**Object type:** Lamp  
**Current inventory no.:** British Museum : Bronze 2519 - Lamp Q3778

**Object technique:** cast  
**Object dimensions:** Length: 14.5 centimetres Width: 16.4 centimetres Height: 16.1 centimetres (ornament)  
**Mythological person:** Jupiter as "Jovis custos"  
**Antique context:** 3rdC-4thC  
**19th-century museum/collection:** Townley (bought on the 18 april 1785)  
Acquired by the British Museum in 1814

**Antiquarian book reference:** From an original drawing in the dal Pozzo albums  
Liceti, De Lucernis, 1652
Description
Brass lamp with a rounded bowl body and two flat-topped voluted nozzles with blunt ends surrounded by rims. The flat top of the body is decorated in high relief with a reclining hound. There are two suspension-lugs in the nozzle-channels, with chains attached to a ring, to which is attached another chain terminating in a hook and split-pin, inserted into the handle-ornament. The raised base-ring has external bands of grooving and internal 'lathe-turned' mouldings. At the rear is a handle-ornament in the form of Jupiter within a shrine, holding a thunderbolt and sceptre.

Dimensions
Length: 14.5 centimetres
Width: 16.4 centimetres
Height: 16.1 centimetres (ornament)
Research Tools

Montagny Album Drawings  List of Drawings  Bibliography

Add a bibliographic entry  Click on an entry to edit, or to leave comments.

To select more than one filter term, hold down Ctrl (PC) or Apple (Mac) key.

Filter by category:

- Catalogues and references
- French artists in Italy, 1800-1815
- French travelers to Italy, 1800-1815
- Literature about albums and sketchbooks
- Pompeii and Herculaneum rediscovered, ca. 19th century
- Montagny biography
- Works published by Montagny

Bibliographic reference


Herm
1805 -
montagny_04v_1
Leaf 4v, top of the page
Comments: 1
Current inventory no.: Cagiano de Azevedo n° 280

Herm
1805 -
montagny_04v_2
Leaf 4v, center of the page
Comments: 1
Current inventory no.: Cagiano de Azevedo, n. 280

Herm
1805 -
montagny_04v_3
Leaf 4v, bottom of the page
Comments: none
Current inventory no.: Rome, villa Medici, herma n° 53

Herm
1805 -
montagny_05v_1
Leaf 5v, top of the page
Comments: none

Hermaphrodite
1804 - 1805
montagny_06r_4
Leaf 6r, center of the page
Comments: 1

Herm
1805 -
montagny_06r_5
Search

Enter your keywords:  

Search

Advanced search

Search results

Woman holding a basket
... Bibliography Helbig 1802 RPGR 233, 7 ...
  Montanay Core Record · dburlet · 01/29/2013 · 05:27 · 1 comment · 0 attachments

Wall painting - Priest
... Antiquarian book reference: RPGR ...
  Montanay Core Record · dburlet · 11/21/2012 · 07:30 · 0 comments · 0 attachments

Wall painting - woman with a tray
... IV, p. 93 Bibliography RPGR 136,15 Helbig WG 185B on the same mount as 87r_2 State of ...
  Montanay Core Record · dburlet · 01/29/2013 · 04:18 · 3 comments · 0 attachments

Wall painting, Sphinx
... 30 Bibliography Reinach RPGR 34B, 10 Helbig 1777 ...
  Montanay Core Record · dburlet · 02/28/2013 · 12:49 · 1 comment · 0 attachments

Wall painting - Bacchus
... Bibliography Helbig WG 387 RPGR 108, 1 State of conservation The engraving in the PdE shows a ...
  Montanay Core Record · dburlet · 01/29/2013 · 05:55 · 2 comments · 0 attachments

Wall painting - Fortune
... 31, p. 189 Bibliography RPGR 351, 3 Helbig 944 ...
  Montanay Core Record · dburlet · 01/29/2013 · 05:54 · 1 comment · 0 attachments

Wall painting - griffin pulling a chariot
... Bibliography Helbig WG 1530 RPGR 347, 7 ...

Log out
Mini-essays

1. Museums and collections in Rome, 1800-1815
2. The museum in Portici and the Palazzo degli Studi in Naples
3. The discovery of Pompei and Herculaneum
4. Montagny’s biography
5. Technical study of the Album
6. General Presentation of the Album
7. The Album : Composition and Chronology
8. French painters in Italy and drawing after the antique in the beg. of the 19th c.
10. Antiquarian books, 18th and 19th c.