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The paper outlines the history of the anti-aircraft bunker located in the Friedrichshain park near the historic center of Berlin in the months and years following the end of World War II. This bunker was one of the central locations in which the Berlin State Museums and other institutions held their art treasures safe from the Allied air strikes from 1941 onward. The history of the bunker includes two fires, the destruction of hundreds of famous paintings from the Berlin Gemäldegalerie, investigations and excavations after these fires by the Soviet occupation authorities, and the transfer of hundreds of other works of art to the Soviet Union. Some of these art treasures were returned from the Soviet Union to the GDR in the late 1950s, while others are dislocated until now.

Introduction

The history of art is partly also the history of robbery and destruction, of plunder and losses. Robbery and destruction reached terrible dimensions in the period when the National Socialists ruled. From the beginning of their dictatorship, they persecuted the Jewish population in the so-called Altreich, the German social democrats, communists, trade unionists, freemasons and all other opponents. After the beginning of World War II, National Socialists directed this persecution against the Jews and all other “enemies” in the annexed, occupied territories, in Eastern as well as Western Europe. In the context of this persecution thousands of paintings, drawings, sculptures were robbed, collections of art disappeared, archives and libraries were translocated². Before and months after the unconditional capitulation of Hitler-Germany began not only the search of the Nazi-looted art, libraries and archives³. Especially from museums, libraries and archives in East Germany objects of arts, book collections and other cultural items were dislocated, officially as war booty.

At the same time, the German civil population, displaced persons and members of the allied troops privately searched for “useful” things and “souvenirs”. Wooden furniture and sculptures were used as firewood, drawings or prints for lighting the way in cellars or bunkers⁴. Castles and manor houses, often storage places for valuable public or private collections, caught fire, whether accidentally or wantonly. This happened in different places in East and West Germany and affected different objects. So, after a fire in the salt mine Grasleben several objects from the Egyptian collection of the August Kestner Museum, Hannover,

evacuated to the mine were partly vandalised and stolen⁵; countless film material from the equally evacuated Reichsfilmarchiv was, probably, destroyed. Facts of fire and destruction are also reported in different documents of the Soviet Trophy Brigades.

It is no coincidence that Margarita Rudomino, Director of the Library of Foreign Literature in Moscow – and, from 6 May 1945, member of a trophy brigade of the Cultural Committee (Committee on Cultural and Educational Institutions of the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic) – mentioned as early as March 1945 in a letter to the Soviet army leadership that there were books in German and other languages in the cities and manor houses captured by the Soviet Army which were not well guarded and in some cases were not handled adequately. She suggested a corresponding military order prohibiting the destruction of books and their improper treatment⁶. This is the main background of the events described on the following pages.

The anti-aircraft (or flak, for *Fliegerabwehrkanone*) bunker located in the Friedrichshain park was, like the other one at the Zoologischer Garten, one of the central locations in which the Berlin State Museums and other institutions held their art treasures safe from the Allied air strikes from 1941 onwards⁷. Each of the three large flak bunkers in Berlin – the third one was located in the Humboldthain park – consisted of a pair of towers, one with the gun machines, the other with the command, called respectively the G-Tower (*Geschützturm*, fig. 1) and L-Tower (*Leitturm*, fig. 2). While at the Zoologischer Garten, the artworks were kept in the G-Tower; in Friedrichshain instead, they were primarily stored in the other tower, the L-Tower. A map preserved in the Zentralarchiv of the Berlin State Museums depicts the disposition of the latter (fig. 3). The numbers entered in blue ink and green pencil show that on the first floor of the L-Tower there were works from the Skulpturenabteilung (no. 5) and the Gemäldegalerie (no. 6), part of the latter in direct vicinity of the Nationalgalerie (no. 25). Additional sculptures were stored on the third floor. The Aegyptische Abteilung had found space on the second floor of the L-Tower (no. 2). In addition, the Islamische Abteilung (no. 4), the Afrikanische Abteilung (no. 26), Kupferstichkabinett and the Schloss-Museum (nos 7 and 18), the Administration for Castles and Gardens (no. 51) as well as – far removed from the museum world – objects of the Navy Ministry, the Propaganda Ministry and the Speer General Building Inspectors (Baustab) (nos 35, 36 and 41) were stored at Friedrichshain too.

It is difficult to specify the exact area occupied by artworks in the Friedrichshain flak bunker towards the end of the war, since artworks were being relocated even in the last few weeks of the war. Between 11 March and 7 April 1945, at Hitler's

orders, a major portion of the artworks stored in the flak bunkers, including Friedrichshain, was evacuated from Berlin and taken to the salt mines Hattorf near Philippsthal, Kaiseroda near Merkers (Thuringia), Schönebeck (Saxony-Anhalt), and Grasleben near Helmstedt (Lower Saxony)⁸. The works from the first two salt mines were brought to Frankfurt (Main) on 17 April 1945 by the US allied forces, which had already occupied Merkers on 4 April. On 14 May, crates from Grasleben, which the Americans had captured on 12 April, arrived there as well. These works reached the Central Collecting Point Wiesbaden as of 20 August 1945. The history of these works of art is another topic, which should nonetheless always be considered in every research on the further destiny of specific pieces stored for safekeeping at Friedrichshain⁹.

Let us return to the issue of storage space at disposal at Friedrichshain. The surface area of the L-Tower was approximately 23 x 50 meters, or 1,150 square meters for each floor¹⁰. A document dated 2 September 1941 sets out how much space was available for each collection:

Allotment for L-Tower II at Friedrichshain:

Gemäldegalerie	306 m ²
Schloßmuseum	120 m ²
Skulpturenabteilung	97 m ²
Islamische Abteilung	35 m ²
Ostasiatische Abteilung	535 m ²
Kupferstichkabinett	23 m ²
Antikenabteilung	10 m ²¹¹

One sees the large diversity of works of art in terms of material, temporal classification and geographic origin, housed in a space of at least 600 square meters, divided into three stories in a building that the Allies had to perceive as a solely military building. These were the circumstances at the outset, in terms of discussing the events at Friedrichshain.

What I will describe below can only be presented in a shortened and summarized form. I will first briefly introduce the German post-war records pertaining to the occurrences at Friedrichshain. This will then be supplemented by information from the files of the Soviet Trophy Brigades of the Committee of Art Affairs. As a third step, I will seek to trace the fate of individual artworks more concretely.

1. German Post-War Records

According to the *Report on the Protective Measures Taken by the State Museums against Combat Damage* addressed on 11 November 1945 by Dr. Otto Kümmel

(1874-1952), General Director of the Berlin Museums until May 1945, to Christopher Norris, Education Branch, I.A. U.O. Division, Zonal Executive Offices, Control Commission for Germany (British Element), the situation at Friedrichshain on 7 May 1945 appeared as follows:

We were able to visit the flak tower [...] on 7 May. We discovered the tower unguarded, accessible to any German or Russian searching for loot, and as it appeared to us very frequented by them, completely dark and still warm. The bottom section of the tower, which had suffered little during combat operations, had been gutted by fire a short time before, several days after the transfer; whether by explosion or arson remained unknown¹².

An account translated into English, devoted explicitly to the events at Friedrichshain and probably also intended for the English occupation authority, was based on statements by Dr. Gerda Bruns (1905-1970), a scientific staff member then curator of the Antikenabteilung, administrative staff member Max Kiau, Museum für Völkerkunde, and assistant custodian Eichhorn, and recounts the following sequence of events:

- In the night from 1 May to 2 May, Guard Protz is the last museum guard to leave the L-Tower with the garrison in the direction of the G-Tower¹³.
- On the morning of 2 May, the G-Tower is surrounded by the Red Army; museum staff is not bothered and permitted to go home.
- On 4 May, guard Eichhorn returns to the L-Tower, finding museum rooms in order and locked; this is confirmed by museum staff member Kiau.
- On 5 May, Kiau also finds the rooms on the 1st and 2nd floor to be locked. The room on the third floor has been forced open. Kiau sees plundering civilians as well as Russian soldiers, who chase him and the other civilians away.
- On 6 May, Kiau and his wife detect a great amount of heat in the tower; the rooms on the 1st floor have burnt down, all of the wooden framing destroyed. Kiau cannot reach the upper floors.
- On 7 May, Professor Kümmel, Dr. Bruns, Ms. Behrsing and «the Russian Major Lipskerow (?)»¹⁴ visit the tower; the room on the 1st floor has been burned out, the layer of debris still hot; the room on the 2nd floor still stands.
- On 14 May, Kiau and Eichhorn return once more and do not find any further destruction.
- On 18 May, restorer Teichler sen. and worker Fuchs report that the 2nd and 3rd floors have burned as well. They see civilians carrying out smaller objects of art.¹⁵

As far as the German sources are concerned, they leave no doubt that between 5 and 6 May there must have been a first fire, followed by a second one between 14 and 18 May.

2. *The Records of the Committee for Art Affairs of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR*

It is necessary at this stage to confront these accounts with the records of the Committee for Art Affairs of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR about the events in the district of Friedrichshain in May 1945 and subsequent months¹⁶.

A report dating back to the end of May 1945, signed by Lt. Gen. Nikolai Antipenko (1901-1988), Chief Rearward Service of the 1st Belarus Front, Andrei Konstantinov, Assistant Director of the Art Committee of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR, Victor Lazarev (1897-1976), professor of art history at Moscow University and corresponding member of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, as well as Andrei Belokopytov (1906-?), Head of a Brigade of the Committee of Art Affairs, specifies that: «The fire in the flak bunker in Friedrichshain destroyed many first-class artworks (works by Signorelli, Fra Angelico, Daumier, Menzel, a collection of ancient glass, ceramics and bronzes. Sculptures by Arnolfo di Cambio, Giovanni Pisano, Donatello and others)»¹⁷.

Another report, signed by Belokopytov alone and dated July 1945 is more precise about the causes of the fire: «[...] the tower in Friedrichshain suffered a lot of damage due to the fire. There is reason to believe that the Germans set the fire. Of all the rooms in the tower, oddly enough precisely those three rooms were on fire, which contained the museum treasures»¹⁸.

In mid-July 1945, the Soviets commenced a careful investigation of the scene of the fire¹⁹.

It was probably Professor Vladimir Blavatzky (1899-1980), art historian, archeologist, and professor at Moscow University, who in mid-July 1945 gave an account of his initial investigation. In his report he stated that the crates at Friedrichshain had been set on fire using thermite²⁰, and mentioned molten glass and metal objects, cracked ceramics, marble and limestone sculptures changed into plaster, a collapsed ceiling, as well as his first trial excavation:

These initial efforts, which concerned a small area (no more than 40 m²) [...] containing small ancient sculptural works and [ancient] works of decorative art, uncovered nearly 2,000 objects, wholly preserved, as well as fragments (bronze statuettes, Greek and Cyprian vases, terracotta statuettes, architectural terracotta, utensils, etc.). These also included several first-class works of art: the bronze statuette of *Apollo of Naxos* (6th century BC), that of a *Spinner* (5th century BC), a bronze *Satyr* from Pergamon²¹.

Another passage in Blavatzky's account is crucial to understanding what the Soviets could expect and/or hope for after this initial random examination in the bunker at Friedrichshain:

The number of those working in the bunker is only sufficient to recover the ancient relics. However, relics of Western European Art (sculptures, medals, porcelain, and others) take up a larger portion of the site of the fire. To carry out this [recovered] work, at least two specialists (museum curators for Western European art) are absolutely necessary. [And] a specialist for the Art of the Ancient Orient²².

Two additional documents substantiate what Professor Blavatzky, but also Mikhail Ivanov-Churonov (1907-1984), in his civilian life a restorer at Tretyakov State Gallery in Moscow, found during their investigations at Friedrichshain²³. They were guided by information that Carl Weickert (1885-1975)²⁴ had provided them.

Based on the information received from Prof. Weickert, and on the investigation conducted, it is clear that the collections of the Schloßmuseum, paintings, stone and wood sculptures of the modern era, porcelains, tapestries, prints and drawings and the Hall of Antiquities were located on the first floor²⁵.

It appears likely that at that point – i.e., in the second half of July 1945 – the Soviet side had received not only verbal information from Carl Weickert, but also some of the repository plans of the Berlin Museums, if one is to compare a sketch by Ivanov-Churonov with one of the last blueprints of the L-Tower, dated around or after 22 April 1945 (fig. 4). On both plans, «Ancient glass / various» and «Ancient bronzes» are noted. The «K.K.» for Kupferstichkabinett is shown as «graphic prints» («гравюры») by Ivanov-Churonov. «Ancient TC [terracottas] / glasses» as well as «Caffarelli Sarcophagus» appear in another place. And again «Crates ancient / glass / TC [terracottas] / misc.» are mentioned in the drawing by the Soviet specialist almost more legibly than on the German plan. In the latter, the paintings and sculptures are relatively well differentiated as «Paintings», «Frames», «Nationalgalerie paintings», «Paintings G.G. [Gemäldegalerie, i.e., the Painting Gallery] tapestries», «Stone and Wood sculptures»; however, in the Soviet Trophy Brigades plan they appear quite simply as «Pictures» and «New Sculpture» (i.e. not antique sculpture). It almost seems as if Ivanov-Churonov had especially followed the professional interests of Blavatzky in his drawing, simplifying the German distinctions.

The above-mentioned trial excavation conducted by Professor Blavatzky in July 1945 covered two areas, described by Blavatzky as «first – the room to the right of the upper flight of stairs and second – the same aisle (meaning wing of the building) near the second stairway». At the end of his memorandum on the examination at Friedrichshain, Blavatzky insisted that besides the «nearly 1,500 objects (40 crates)», which he recovered from the debris, «it was imperative that the Caffarelli Sarcophagus no. 843-a, standing in the bunker, be taken to the

Soviet Union²⁶.» The last sentence indicates that, besides the general situation, some specific cases were of particular interest for the Soviet side.

3. Specific Examples

a. Relics of Antiquity

The actual removal of the so-called *Caffarelli Sarcophagus* (inv. SK 843a, fig. 5), a Roman garland sarcophagus from the first century CE, which Blavatzky mentioned twice in his reports and notes, is not documented in any of the Trophy Brigades' transport, transfer and distribution lists which the German Russian Museum Dialogue has been able to work on so far. However, repository information of the Antikenabteilung leaves no doubt that the sarcophagus was stored in Friedrichshain²⁷. The repatriation records in the Central Archive of the Berlin State Museums confirm indirectly its "journey" in 1945-1946 to Leningrad, and explicitly its return to Berlin in 1958. The *Spinner* from the fifth century BCE also mentioned in Blavatzky's July 1945 report and the «bronze Satyr from Pergamon» had a very similar fate. The first is the early classical statuette of a *Girl in Peplum as Spinner* (inv. 30082; fig. 6), stored in crate A5 in Friedrichshain [«however the pedestal is at the Pushkin Museum in Moscow. The lead inlay of the pedestal, inv. 30082a, went according to the repository list to the Reichsmünze in crate WS 18.»²⁸]. The other bronze discussed is the Hellenistic statuette or appliqué of a *Young Satyr with Pan Flute* (inv. Misc. 7466, fig. 7). According to the repository lists of the Antikenabteilung, this statuette was stored in crate A6 at the Reichsmünze (Mint) and not at Friedrichshain. However, it must have been brought there later, probably following the damages at the Reichsmünze caused by extinguishing water in March 1943, which led to numerous relocations. That both works were indeed stored at Friedrichshain is supported by the fact that, according to the restorers, both show fire patina.

The history around the *Apollo from Naxos* or – according to the newer designation – *Apollo with Pomegranate* (inv. Misc. 7383, fig. 8), also mentioned by Blavatzky, took a different turn. This piece was also not explicitly mentioned in the relocated works in the files available to the German Russian Museum Dialogue. But it was noted – as additional outstanding work – in the general reports. Nonetheless, there is no doubt about its transfer into the Soviet Union after the war, in this instance probably to Moscow. This sculpture was in fact included in the 2005 exhibition catalogue dedicated to the *Archeology of War*, along with works considered lost forever²⁹.

Taking into account the inventory number of the *Satyr* and the *Apollo*, both beginning with «Misc.» (for miscellaneous) one can – cautiously – speculate based on the April 1945 repository plan that the works may have been situated prior to the excavation between «Frames [and] pictures of the Nationalgalerie» on the one side, and «Coptic Textiles [and] Frames» on the other. The repository plan shows all these objects, «Rahmen», «Bilder Nat. Gal», «Misc», «Kopt. Stoffe», in the immediate vicinity (see fig. 4).

b. Coptic Textiles

From December 2010 to March 2011, the Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts in Moscow presented the exhibition *The Woven World of Egyptian Christians*; a detailed catalogue in Russian also accompanied this exhibition³⁰. The exhibition website contained the following information:

In this exhibition [...] works from the collection of Coptic textiles that reached the Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts in 1946 from post-war Germany will be shown for the first time. They were previously kept in the collections of the Berlin State Museums and the Museum of Decorative Art in Leipzig³¹.

A large number of Coptic textiles had returned to Berlin from Leningrad in 1958 as part of the major repatriation initiative. One document dated 10 October 1958 and entitled *Re.: Transferred Works of Art from the Early Christian and Byzantine Collections* states:

The Early Christian and Byzantine Collection so far (until now) got 29 crates from the collection. Of those, 16 crates contained 1,127 Hellenistic and Coptic textiles & textile fragments, wall hangings, picture mounts, articles of clothing, etc³².

In the 2010 Moscow catalogue, an additional 164 textiles and textile fragments from Berlin and 88 textiles from the Grassi Museum für Angewandte Kunst were described. An initial random check in the catalogue showed that numbers 59 (fig. 9) and 170 are actually recorded in the Art Committee's transport lists (their historic Berlin inventory numbers were 4643 and 4644)³³. According to these lists, they were unpacked on 2 October 1946 in the Pushkin Museum from crate TK 5, which had probably already arrived in Moscow in March 1946³⁴. Crate TK 5 contained a total of 13 objects (including a Coptic textile consisting of 18 fragments and recorded without inventory number). Besides both mentioned objects, an additional eight of these 13 objects were shown at the Moscow exhibition (historic Berlin inventory numbers 2829, 4653, 6986, 9073, 9201, 9204, 9207 and 9714). This of course raises the question as to the whereabouts

of the remaining three objects (Berlin inventory numbers 9404, 9799, plus the fragmented textile with no inventory number). Cécilia Fluck's answer to my enquiry was that the first two works, listed as a «Russian Icon» and as a «Woven Byzantine Hat» are classified as war losses of the Byzantine Museum of the Berlin Museums. This news gives hope to see them resurface one day in Moscow.

It is not certain, however, that those works had really been transferred from the Friedrichshain bunker to the USSR. As indicated in a document in the Central Archive of the Berlin State Museums with the subject *Sculpture Collection. Early Christian, Byzantine and Medieval Italian sculptures seized by the Soviet military authorities from the repository rooms [Bergungsräume] in the museums*³⁵. "Museums" in this document means the Museum Island in the centre of Berlin. Page 2 describes «unpacked objects», including 16 «Early Christian Textiles under glass». Looking at the inventory numbers indicated in front of these textiles, 10 of those 16 textiles were exhibited in 2010 in Moscow. The note makes clear that they have been transferred before the end of the war from Friedrichshain to the Museum Island, where they were found by the Red Army and sent to the USSR. This is why they escaped the fire.

c. Pictures of the Nationalgalerie

The Nationalgalerie was among the collections that stored works in the flak bunkers at the Zoologischer Garten as well as at Friedrichshain. Thanks to a report on salvage measures of this collection by Paul Ortwin Rave (1893-1962), Director of the Nationalgalerie from 1937 onward, and to his thorough object-related repository documentation, we know precisely where the works from the collection were located at the end of the war³⁶. With a view to the events at Friedrichshain, it was at first promising that the files of the Trophy Brigades included a painting by Johann Barckhan, *Portrait of Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock* (inv. A II 954, fig. 10), which was returned to the GDR in 1958, and was originally stored at Friedrichshain. Further research evidenced that two works by Oskar Kokoschka apparently had also travelled from Friedrichshain to the Soviet Union and – fortunately – from there back to East Berlin. We are referring to *Pariser Platz in Berlin* (inv. A III 465), and *Vienna, Liebhartstag* (inv. A II 447).

This was reason to hope for the resurfacing of six additional works for which Rave's list stated Friedrichshain as repository location. The following works are missing to this day: the *Portrait of Friedrich Geselschap* by Rudolf Eichstaedt (inv. A II 847); the *Portrait of Mrs. Amalie Wichmann* by August Ferdinand Hopfgarten (inv. A II 344); *Jesus Heals a Sick Child* by Gabriel von Max (inv. A I 355);

as well as – probably – the *Portrait of Aloys Hirt* by Paul Mila (inv. A II 881); and the *Portrait of Ernst von Wildenbruch* by Leopold von Kalkreuth (inv. A II 355). These paintings are all identified in the lists of the Trophy Brigades and were transported away in crates with the note «брак», meaning “rejects” or, less harshly, “flawed”, “defective”. During the transfer, these paintings were mixed in with works of the Märkisches Museum, as well as with some from the Nationalgalerie that had been stored at the Zoo bunker.

After additional studying of the This paintings are all files, however, the hope that paintings stored in Friedrichshain had escaped the fire had to be put back into perspective. Rave describes the removal situation for the Nationalgalerie as follows:

The paintings still located in the Zoo flak tower, as well as the «inventory» of hand-drawings were brought east by Russian troops in the summer of 1945, as were some one hundred paintings from the G-tower (Geschützturm) [bolded by the author] in Friedrichshain³⁷.

In a letter dated 16 February 1946 to the General Directorate of the Berlin Museums, Rave writes again: «This is a list of 109 paintings brought to the flak tower Friedrichshain in the fall of 1944 (not L-tower)»³⁸.

He was probably referring to the section of his June 1945 report in which he mentioned that certain rooms in the Zoo flak bunker had to be cleared in the fall of 1944 at the request of the district administration (*Gauleitung*) for defense purposes.

Thus, some of the paintings from the Nationalgalerie had to be transported from the Zoo flak tower to the L-tower at Friedrichshain. A short while earlier, more than a hundred second and third-class paintings had already been transported from the basement depot of the Nationalgalerie to the second neighbouring tower at Friedrichshain³⁹.

We must therefore assume that the paintings that bear the markings «Frdh» or also «Flakt. Frdh» (for Friedrichshain) in the Rave lists were not or at least not exclusively stored in the L-tower, but to a large extent in the G-tower. In that case, they should have survived the fires, which were limited to the L-Tower.

d. Works of the Skulpturenabteilung and Gemäldegalerie

The return from the Soviet Union in 1958 of paintings of the Nationalgalerie previously stored in Friedrichshain does not prove that every work from the Nationalgalerie stored there has survived the fires in the bunker. Two pieces of the Gemäldegalerie will show that the situation here was similar.

As early as 1946, Aelbrecht Bouts' painting representing *St John the Baptist and St. Augustine* (cat. 540; fig. 11) resurfaced on the art market⁴⁰. In 2012, the same happened with a *Madonna and Child* attributed to Giovanni Antonio Boltraffio (cat. 207 B, fig. 12). The owner's father, who had been stationed in post-war Berlin, had apparently purchased it here; like the Bouts earlier, the painting was returned to the Gemäldegalerie⁴¹. In both instances, the works were of small format and could easily have been carried away. There is no doubt, according to the German post-war records quoted above, that such plundering did occur. This suggests that both paintings must have been taken prior to the fires in Friedrichshain.

The subject of the Gemäldegalerie and Skulpturenabteilung is too vast to be fully addressed here. I will only return once more to Belokopytov's accountability report from late May 1945. We may remember that it referred to «Signorelli, Fra Angelico, [...] sculptures by Arnolfo di Cambio, Giovanni Pisano, Donatello and others.» The paintings by Signorelli and Fra Angelico have not resurfaced so far – as the 2015 exhibition *The Lost Museum* impressively demonstrated⁴². In 1958 Arnolfo di Cambio's *Dormitio Virginis* (inv. 2827, fig. 13) returned from the Soviet Union to Berlin, along with many other also badly damaged works of the Skulpturenabteilung⁴³. The sculptures by Giovanni Pisano and Donatello were also missing until very recently – a situation that fortunately has now changed⁴⁴.

Conclusion

We do know what happened in the bunker of Friedrichshain in May 1945: an irretrievable destruction of numerous works of art due to the fire(s). There are many "grey areas", however: removals by individuals, by whomever, before, between, or after the fires. Some of these removals by individuals were returned to the original collections in the post-war decades. One can still hope that more will be returned in the future. There were excavations and recoveries, removal and repatriation of works from Friedrichshain with a "stopover" in the Soviet Union and at the Central Collecting Point Wiesbaden⁴⁵. And there were removals without repatriation. At the opening of his exhibition *The Lost Museum*, Julien Chapuis asked me whether there was any hope to find the Gemäldegalerie's paintings. At that time, I denied. After intensive research, I am not so sure anymore. Therefore, I would like to conclude with a quotation from the catalogue of the lost works from the Skulpturensammlung that nicely summarizes the need for future research:

To this day it is impossible to make any conclusive statement regarding which works of art were actually destroyed during the two fires in the L-tower⁴⁶.

More than ever, it is important to continue searching for the hundreds of objects which in the last days of the Second World War were located in the L-Tower Friedrichshain. Maybe not all of them are gone forever.

- 1 To write about what occurred in the Friedrichshain flak bunker in May of 1945 is a major challenge, which could be newly address in autumn 2015 for the following reasons. First of all, thanks to Konstantin Akinscha and Grigori Koslow numerous copies of documents regarding the activities of the Soviet Trophy Brigades of the Committee of Art Affairs have been made available at the Deutsches Kunstarhiv since the mid-1990s (see K. Akinscha, G. Koslow, C. Toussaint, *Russische Dokumente zur Beutekunst. Bemerkungen zum Aktenfonds Akinscha / Koslow im Archiv des Germanischen Nationalmuseums*, in: «Anzeiger des Germanischen Nationalmuseums», 1997, pp. 137-154). More recently, in the fall of 2014, Anna Aponasenko's edition regarding translocated art of the period appeared in the Hermitage (see *The State Hermitage Museum. The Displaced Art. 1945–1958: Archival documents*, ed. by A. Aponasenko, St. Petersburg, 2014). Ursula Kästner and Cäcilia Fluck, staff members of the Antikensammlung and the Museum für Byzantinische Kunst of the Berlin State Museums, generously shared information and knowledge with me. Furthermore, the Zentralarchiv of the Berlin State Museums contains extensive documents on the removal, losses and repatriation of the collections of the Berlin Museums, some of which is fortunately accessible and micro-filmed in detailed finding aids (*Findbücher*). Last but not least, an analysis of the records of the above-mentioned Trophy Brigades of the Committee of Art Affairs has been undertaken since 2012 under the umbrella of the German-Russian Museum Dialogue (DRMD), a project in which I have taken part from 2008 to 2017. In addition, shortly before and in the years after the symposium *Donatello and the Lost Museum. Research, Memories and Rediscoveries* which took place at the Bode-Museum on 17-18 September 2015, some new papers were published which also dealt with the fires in Friedrichshain. See N. Rowley, *Donatello Forgotten and Rediscovered. On Five Works of Art Formerly in the Berlin Museums*, in «Jahrbuch Preußischer Kulturbesitz», 51, 2015, pp. 141-163; V. Rastorguev, *From a Russian Perspective. Notes on the History of the Italian Sculptures from the Berlin Museums in the Custody of the Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow, 1945-2015*, *ivi*, pp. 165-187; and, especially, U. Peltz, “entfärbte Bronzen [...] zeugten von der großen Hitze”. *Berlins antike Bronzen aus dem Friedrichshainer Leitturm und die Bedingungen in den Bunkern und der Reichsmünze von 1939 bis 1945*, in «Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen», 56, 2014, pp. 151-172.
- 2 After the Washington Conference on Holocaust Era Assets, held in Washington, D.C., United States, on 3 December 1998 and the release of the Washington Principles on Nazi-Confiscated Art a process of intensive investigation in public museums and libraries began in many countries. Provenance researchers, art historians, historians and librarians are searching for objects robbed, plundered, dislocated by the Nazis. The first groundbreaking books on the topic were published in the 1990s by Lynn Nicholas, Hector Feliciano, and Jonathan Petropoulos. For a first impression see, for example, R. Dehnel, *Perpetrators, victims, and art. The National Socialists' campaign of pillage*: <https://www.zeitschrift-osteuropa.de/site/assets/files/4064/2007-09-26-dehnel-en.pdf> (last accessed on 21 October 2020). Concerning Russian losses, see C. Kuhr-Korolev, U. Schmiegelt-Rietig, E. Zubkova, *Raub und Rettung. Russische Museen im Zweiten Weltkrieg*, Köln, 2019.

- 3 On this topic, see the activities of the Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives Program, now so-called Monuments Men: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monuments,_Fine_Arts,_and_Archives_program; <https://www.monumentsmenfoundation.org/> (last accessed on 26 October 2020).
- 4 See, for example, the fate of East Asian sculptures from the famous collector von der Heydt. Stored in Glambeck in the Northeast of Berlin in 1939-1940 and transferred to the Berlin Museum Island in 1947 by Kurt Reutti, some of the sculptures «lost» their arms, nimbus, pedestals probably for this reason. Another example: Victor Baldin, captain of the Red Army, finding himself in summer 1945 in the castle of Karnzow, in the Northwest of Berlin, the later so-called «Baldin-collection», «saw a strange scene: moving in the dark, soldiers lit their way with burning papers they had picked up from the floor». And he recognized these «papers» as drawings from famous artists: Dürer, Van Gogh, etc. See: *Eduard von der Heydt. Kunstsammler, Bankier, Mäzen*, ed. by E. Illner, München, 2013, p. 187; A. Korolev, *Captain Baldin's Collection and Restitution Problems*, in «Ria Novosti», 8 December 2005 (<https://archive.vn/TvgwQ>, last accessed on 1 August 2021); K. Akinsha, *Why Can't Private Art «Trophies» Go Home from the War? The Baldin-Bremen Kunsthalle Case: A Cause-Célèbre of German-Russian Restitution Politics*, in «International Journal of Cultural Property», 17, 2010, pp. 257-290.
- 5 See: C.E. Loeben, *Die Ägypten-Sammlung des Museum August Kestner und ihre (Kriegs-) Verluste*, Rahden, 2011, esp. pp. 153-161. The fire in Graslleben was mentioned earlier by I. Kühnel-Kunze, *Bergung – Evakuierung – Rückführung. Die Berliner Museen in den Jahren 1939-1959*, West Berlin, 1984 («Jahrbuch Preußischer Kulturbesitz», Sonderband 2), pp. 55-56. Actually it is the focus of the exhibition *Brandspuren – Filmplakate aus dem Salzstock*, organized by the Deutsche Kinemathek: <https://www.deutsche-kinemathek.de/en/visit/exhibitions/burn-marks-film-posters-salt-dome> (last accessed on 21 October 2020).
- 6 М.И. Рудомино заместителю начальника ГлавПУРКА [Главное политическое управление Рабоче-Крестьянской Красной Армии], Генерал-лейтенанту Шикину [M.I. Rudomino to Deputy Chief of the Main Political Department of the Red Workers and Peasants Army, Lieutenant General Schikin, 16 March 1945], in: М.И. Рудомино: Моя библиотека. Москва 2000 [M.I. Rudomino, *My Library*, Moscow, 2000], p. 190.
- 7 Regarding the history of the Berlin flak bunkers, see the explanations on the website of Berliner Unterwelten: <<http://www.berliner-unterwelten.de/verein/forschungsthema-untergrund/bunker-und-ls-anlagen/flaktuerme.html>> (last accessed on 21 May 2020). The construction at Zoologischer Garten continued from September 1940 to March 1941, those at Friedrichshain from April to October 1941. A transfer of the Berlin State Museums artifacts to the Friedrichshain bunker in a «clean and dust-free state» was possible by 24 November 1941. See Zentralarchiv of the Berlin State Museums (henceforth, SMB-ZA), I/GV 2221, letter from Weickert to the Reichsminister für Bewaffnung und Munition, Ausbauleitung Flakturm II, 19 November 1941. The evacuation of the objects began in January 1942. See SMB-ZA, I/GV 2224, letter from Weickert to Dr. Ing. H. Moser, Preußische Staatsmünze, 13 January 1942.
- 8 See *Einführung*, in *Staatliche Museen zu Berlin. Dokumentation der Verluste. Skulpturensammlung, 7. Skulpturen, Möbel*, ed. by L. Lambacher, Berlin, 2006, pp. 11-18, p. 11.
- 9 See Kühnel-Kunze, *Bergung*, cit.; and *Staatliche Museen zu Berlin. Dokumentation der Verluste, 4. Museum für Vor- und Frühgeschichte*, ed. by K. Goldmann, C. Reich, Berlin, 1996, pp. 18-21.

- 10 The measurements are taken from the Berliner Unterwelten website. One should bear in mind that the meter-thick outer walls significantly reduced the interior surface.
- 11 SMB-ZA, I/NG 1356, p. 120, letter from The General Director der Staatlichen Museen [to the departments of the State Museums], 2 September 1941.
- 12 Reprinted in: *Staatliche Museen zu Berlin. Dokumentation der Verluste, 5,1. Antikensammlung: Skulpturen, Vasen, Elfenbein und Knochen, Goldschmuck, Gemmen und Kameen*, ed by M. Miller, Berlin, 2005, pp. 11-19.
- 13 The L-tower and G-tower, which were about 300 meters apart, were connected by an underground tunnel containing electricity, water and heating cables and ducts (see the Berliner Unterwelten website, as in note 7). The flak garrison did not, however, use this tunnel to retreat from the L- into the G-Tower. Weickert specifies that: «During combat operations, the garrison had cleared the L-tower upon the Russians' approach, and gone to the nearby G-Tower, taking the museum guard with them». See SMB-ZA, V/Sammlung zu Kriegsverlusten der SMB, GA-Dok, no. 376: *Bericht über die Bergungsmaßnahmen der Antikenabteilungen und weiterhin über diejenigen der Gesamtheit der Staatlichen Museen vom 1. Oktober 1945* (C. Weickert), 1 October 1945.
- 14 To date it has been impossible to determine the identity of this major. It remains open, for now, whether there is any connection to the Moscow photo reporter Georgi Lipskerov (1896-1977), who fought near Moscow and Stalingrad, filmed the battle in the Kursk Bulge and reached Berlin in 1945.
- 15 SMB-ZA, I/GV 2224, *Statements concerning the destruction of the Friedrichshain repository*. Also contained in SMB-ZA, V/Sammlung zu Kriegsverlusten der SMB, GA-Dok, no. 361. In the index to GA-Dok designated as «Statements Concerning the Destruction of the Friedrichshain Repository» (v. E. Kühnel), GStAPK, 3 folios. See SMB-ZA, V/Sammlung zu Kriegsverlusten der SMB, GA-Dok, no. 366. Designated in the index as «Bericht von Fräulein Dr. Bruns über den Flakturm Friedrichshain», not dated, signed. W(eickert). GStAPK, 3 folio.
- 16 These records are held in the Russian State Archive for Literature and Art, and belong to Inventory 962, register 6 [= РГАЛИ, фонд № 962, опись 6]. Some of these records are available as copies as «Record Set Akinsha/Kozlov» at the Deutsche Kunsthochschule der Germanische Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg (cited in note 1).
- 17 РГАЛИ, фонд № 962, опись 6, ед. хр. 1357, 258–260: Отчет комиссии Комитета по делам искусств в Берлине об осмотре музеев Берлина [«Report of the Commission of the Committee of Art Affairs in Berlin on the inspection of the museums in Berlin»]. Published by Aponasenko, *The State Hermitage Museum*, cit., doc. no. 13, pp. 149-150, here p. 149. This and following translations from Russian are by the Author, unless otherwise indicated.
- 18 РГАЛИ, фонд № 962, опись 6, ед. хр. 1357, 263–268: Докладная записка А. Белокопытова о работе группы Комитета по делам искусств по обследованию дворцов Потсдама, шахт Саксонии и Тюрингии, бункеров Берлина [«Memo of A. Belokopytov on the work of a working group of the Committee of Art Affairs on the survey of the palaces of Potsdam, the mines of Saxony and Thuringia, the bunkers of Berlin»]. Published by Aponasenko, *The State Hermitage Museum*, cit., doc. no. 14, pp. 151-155, here p. 154.
- 19 For dating see РГАЛИ, фонд № 962, опись 6, ед. хр. 1357, 59: Справка об осмотре представителями Комитета по делам искусства музейных коллекции в бункере противовоздушной обороны во Фридрихсхайне (Берлин) [«Information about the inspection by the representatives of the Committee of Art Affairs of museum collections

- in the air defense bunker in Friedrichshain (Berlin)». Published by Aponasenko, *The State Hermitage Museum*, cit., doc. no. 18, p. 166.
- 20 In spring 2017 specialists of the Institute for Applied Fire Safety Research (IFAB) stated that even if thermite had been used, no traces would have been left after the fire. So, when Boguslavsky mentioned the use of thermite there arose the question, how and from where he could know this. This could indicate that the fire was deliberately started by the Soviet side and not, as the Soviet side claims, by the Germans.
- 21 РГАЛИ, фонд № 962, опись 6, ед. хр. 1357, pp. 25-26: Записка о состоянии музейных ценностей, хранившихся в бункере Фридрихсхайн (Берлин) [«Note on the state of museum valuables stored in the Friedrichshain bunker (Berlin)»]. Published in Aponasenko, *The State Hermitage Museum*, cit., doc. no. 17, pp. 164-165, here p. 164. Corresponding translations of excerpts from this document are also found in Akinscha, Koslow, Toussaint, *Russische Dokumente*, cit., p. 145.
- 22 *Ibidem*. The historiographic term «Древний Восток» meaning «Ancient East» more correctly «Ancient Orient» encompasses a broad spectrum of early, pre-Hellenic and pre-Christian cultures, including the advanced civilizations of the Sumerians, Babylonians, Assyrians, Hittites and Persians. In the Ancient Orient Collection of the Hermitage existed after the Second World War several sub-collections, including for example a sub-collection for weapons.
- 23 See Aponasenko, *The State Hermitage Museum*, cit., doc. no. 18 as well as РГАЛИ, фонд № 962, опись 6, ед. хр. 1357, pp. 84-85: Записка В.Д. Блавацкого об обследовании бункера Фридрихсхайн [«Note of V.D. Blavatsky on the inspection of the Friedrichshain bunker»]. Copies of the note can be found also in РГАЛИ, фонд № 962, опись 6, ед. хр. 1357, pp. 296-303. Published in Aponasenko, *The State Hermitage Museum*, cit., doc. no. 19, p. 168.
- 24 Carl Weickert, Director of the Antikenabteilung, was responsible for the artworks stored at Friedrichshain; Wilhelm Unverzagt (1892–1971), Director of the Museum für Vor- und Frühgeschichte, was his counterpart for the Zoo bunker.
- 25 See Aponasenko, *The State Hermitage Museum*, cit., doc. no. 19, p. 168.
- 26 *Ibidem*.
- 27 See here also SMB-ZA, I/ANT 117, folio 1 and SMB-ZA, I/ANT 118.
- 28 For the detailed information about the two works confirmed and mentioned here are thanks are due to Ursula Kästner, curator in the Collection for Classical Antiquities of the Berlin State Museums (written communication, 3 September 2015; oral communication, 4 September 2015).
- 29 Акимова, Л.И.: *Археология войны. Возвращение из небытия. Реставрация и восстановление античных памятников, перемещенных в результате Великой Отечественной войны*. Москва, Художник и книга, 2005 [L. Akimova, *Archeology of war. Return from nowhere. Restoration and reconstruction of antique monuments displaced as a result of World War II*, Moscow, 2005]. On this work, see also the online catalogue Шедевры античного искусства из собрания Государственного музея изобразительных искусств имени А.С. Пушкина [*Masterpieces of ancient art from the collection of the State Museum of Fine Arts A.S. Pushkin*]: <www.antic-art.ru/data/greece_archaic/31_apollon/index.php> (last accessed on 21 May 2020) as well as the internet database «Collection of Antiquities Berlin: Antique Bronzes Berlin» (<<http://emp-web-24.zetcom.ch/eMuseumPlus>>, last accessed

- 18 October 2021) under no. Misc. 7383. Concerning the fate of the ancient bronzes see in detail: Peltz, "entfärbte Bronzen", cit.
- 30 Лечицкая О.В.: Коптские ткани. ГМИИ им. А.С. Пушкина. Каталог коллекции. М., 2010 [O. Lečickaja, *Coptic Textiles*, Moscow, 2010].
- 31 Сотканый мир египетских христиан. Коптские ткани III–XII веков [*Woven world of Egyptian Christians. Coptic textiles of the III–XII centuries*]. See <<http://www.arts-museum.ru/events/archive/2010/12/tkan/>> (last accessed on 21 May 2020).
- 32 SMB-ZA, I/FBS 0019, p. 2.
- 33 See Lečickaja, *Coptic Textiles*, cit., pp. 138–139, 318–320 as well as pp. 412, 415.
- 34 See РГАЛИ, фонд № 962, опись 6, ед. хр. 1354, p. 55: Act, dated 2 October 1946 as well as РГАЛИ, фонд № 962, опись 6, ед. хр. 1292, p. 80: Накладная на машину МФ 44-90 [«Waybill for the car MF 44-90»], dated 21 March 1946.
- 35 See SMB-ZA, I/FBS 0016, *Skulpturensammlung. Von der Sowjetischen Militärbehörde aus den Bergungsräumen in den Museen beschlagnahmte Frühchristl., byzant. und mittelalterl. italienische Bildwerke*, p. 2. Cited here: 6811, 9228, 9695, 9620, 9073, 4653, 9714, 4644, 6986, 9201, 9204, 9207, 4643, 9165, 9715, 9230.
- 36 See SMB-ZA, V/Sammlung zu Kriegsverlusten der SMB, GA-Dok 4.3.1, no. 358. Identified in index as P.O. Rave, *Bergungsmaßnahmen*, from Total Manuscript dated June 1945. Re: NG, GStAPK, 5 folio. Except for last paragraph published in: *Staatliche Museen zu Berlin. Dokumentation der Verluste. 2, Nationalgalerie*, ed. by L. Brauner, B. Maaz, R. Strohschein, Berlin, 2001, pp. 12–14. See the so-called Rave lists, SMB-ZA, VA 14063, VA 14064 as well as VA 14065, which originally were A5 index cards on which Rave documented for each work the relocation site as well as some intermediate sites (Celle, Wiesbaden and others).
- 37 *Staatliche Museen zu Berlin. Dokumentation der Verluste. 2*, cit., p. 13.
- 38 *Ivi*, p. 14.
- 39 *Ivi*, p. 13.
- 40 See P. Winter, «*Zwillingsmuseen*» im geteilten Berlin. *Zur Nachkriegsgeschichte der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin 1945 bis 1958*, Berlin, 2008 («Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen», 50, Beiheft), pp. 43–45.
- 41 For this work see the press release dated 9 February 2012 at <<http://www.preussischer-kulturbesitz.de/pressemitteilung/news/2012/02/09/ein-seit-kriegsende-als-vermisst-geltendes-italienisches-madonnenbildnis-kehrte-gestern-in-die-gemael.html>> (last accessed on 10 October 2017).
- 42 For the large altarpiece with the *Last Judgement* (cat. 57), now given to Zanobi Strozzi, and for Luca Signorelli's *Realm of Pan* (cat. 76A), see: *Das verschwundene Museum. Die Verluste der Berliner Gemälde- und Skulpturensammlungen 70 Jahre nach Kriegsende*, exhibition catalogue (Berlin, Bode-Museum, 19 March – 27 September 2015), ed. by J. Chapuis, S. Kemperdick, Petersberg, 2015, pp. 48, 58–59.
- 43 See, for example, E. Fründt, *Der Putto von Duquesnoy – ein gerettetes Marmorbildwerk des Barock*, in «Forschungen und Berichte», 28, 1990, pp. 237–240; about the same *Bow carving cupid* of François Duquesnoy (Inv. 540): *Das verschwundene Museum*, cit., pp. 98–99.
- 44 For this topic, see Rowley, *Donatello Forgotten*, cit.; and Rastorguev, *From a Russian Perspective*, cit.; as well as the contributions in the present volume, partly taken from the

symposium *Donatello and the Lost Museum. Research, Memories and Rediscoveries* organized at the Bode-Museum on 17-18 September 2015.

- 45 «[...] nine – no longer originally packed crates containing fire damaged inventories of the Berlin Museums, including some of the Sculpture Collection [reached] the 'Central Art Collecting Point' in Wiesbaden through the British art protection organizations.» They arrived there on 9 September 1946. See *Einführung*, cit., p. 12, 15 note 19. The history of these crates is presently investigated by Paul Hofmann, head of the Conservation Department of the Berlin Skulpturensammlung. On this topic, one should mention the material kept in the National Archives and Records Administration (henceforth, NARA) and now available online. See, for example: NARA M1947: Records Concerning the Central Collecting Points («Ardelia Hall Collection»): Wiesbaden Central Collecting Point, 1945-1952, Roll 0066 and NARA M1949: Records of the Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives (MFAA) Section of the Preparations and Restitution Branch, OMGUS, 1945-1951, Roll 0006.
- 46 *Einführung*, cit., p. 12.

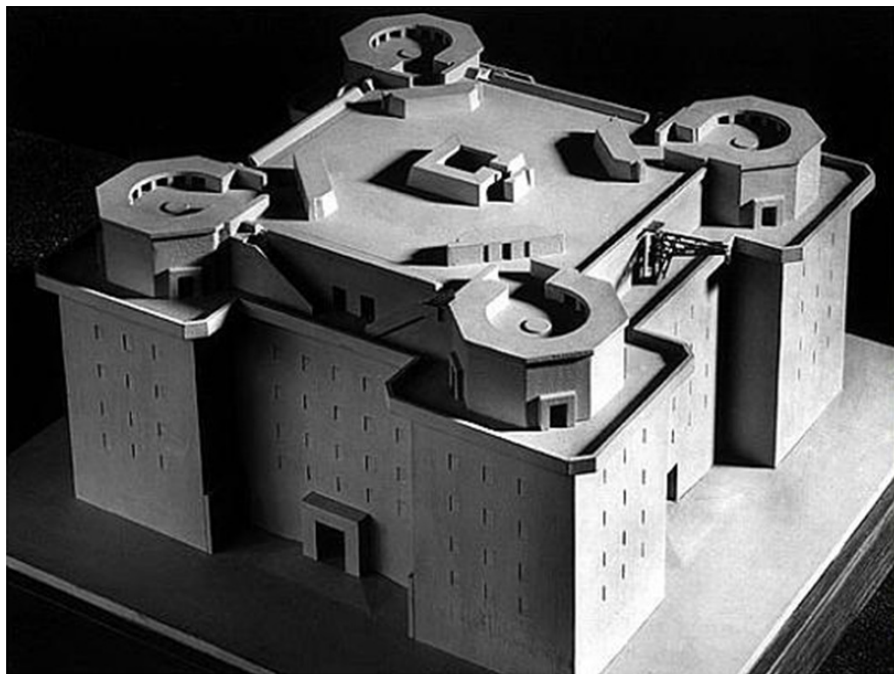


Fig. 1: Model for the Geschützturm of the Flakbunker Friedrichshain.
Photo: © Berliner Unterwelten e. V.

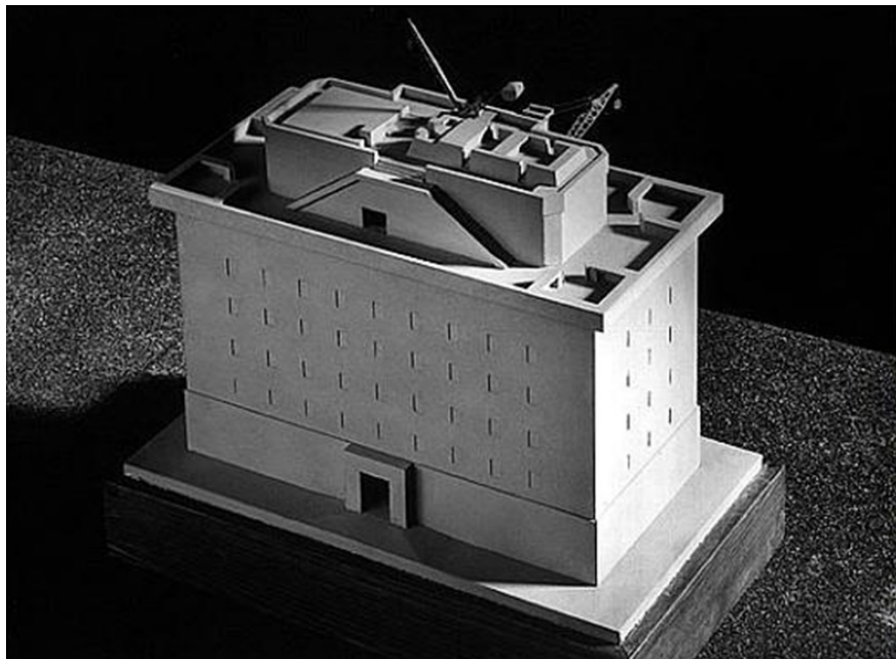


Fig. 2: Model for the Leitturm of the Flakbunker Friedrichshain.
Photo: © Berliner Unterwelten e. V.

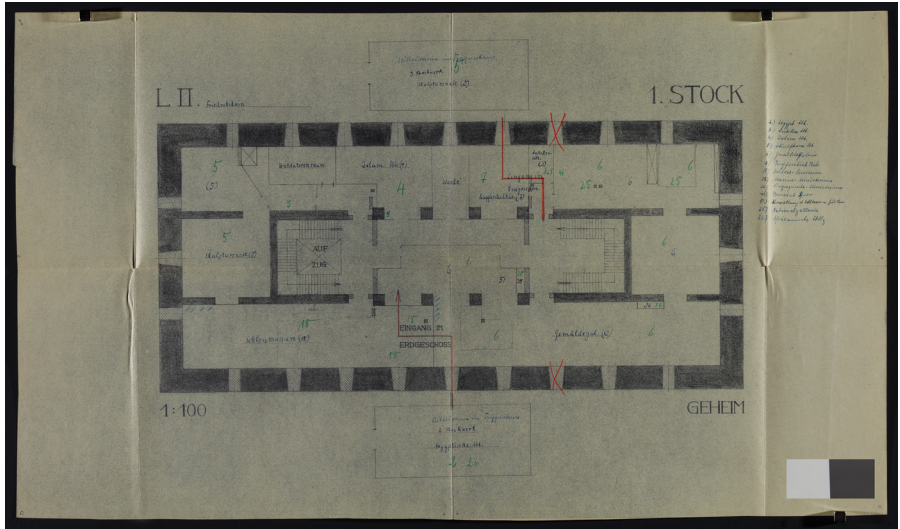


Fig. 3: Plant of the Leitturm, SMB-ZA, I/GV 2214.
Photo: © Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Zentralarchiv.

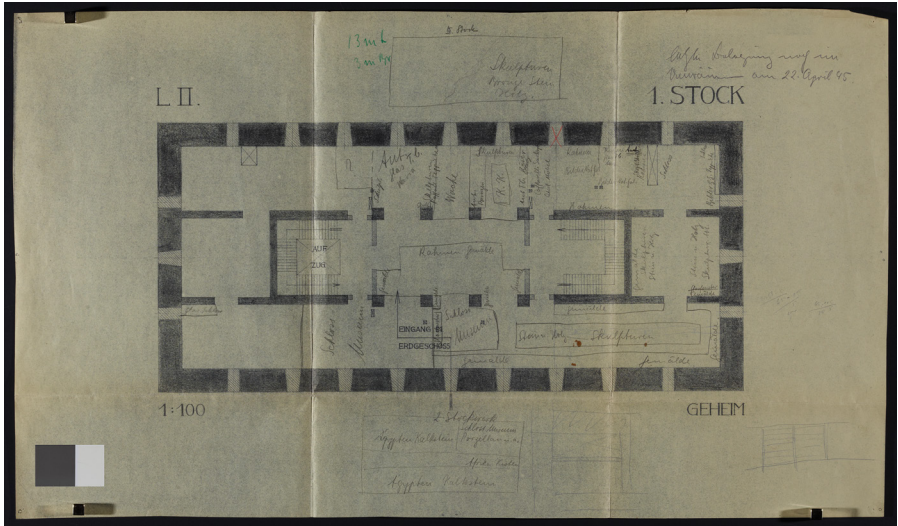


Fig. 4: Plant of the Leitturm, 22 April 1945, SMB-ZA, I/GV 2214.
Photo: © Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Zentralarchiv.



Fig. 5: Roman sarcophagus (so-called Caffarelli Sarcophagus),
marble, second quarter of first century, 110 x 245 x 104 cm, inv. no. SK 843 a.
Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Antikensammlung.
Photo: © bpk / Antikensammlung, SMB / Johannes Laurentius



Fig. 6: Girl in Peplum as Spinner, bronze, Early Classical Period, inv no. 30082.

Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Antikensammlung.

Photo: © bpk / Antikensammlung, SMB / Johannes Laurentius



Fig. 7: Young Satyr with Pan Flute,
bronze, Late Hellenistic Period, 15 cm, inv. no. Misc. 7466.
Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Antikensammlung.
Photo: © bpk / Antikensammlung, SMB / Johannes Laurentius



Fig. 8: Apollo with Pomegranate, bronze, inv. no. Misc. 7383.
Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Antikensammlung.
Photo: © Antikensammlung, SMB



Fig. 9: Fragments of a square knitting with plant motifs, Egypt, Achmim, sixth-seventh century, 21.5 x 21.5 cm (today's assembly), inv. no. 4643. Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Skulpturensammlung und Museum für Byzantinische Kunst. Photo: O. Lečickaja, *Coptic Textiles*, Moscow, 2010, p.



Fig. 10: Johann Barckhan, *Portrait of Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock*,
oil on canvas, 1807, 76,5 x 63 cm, inv.no. A II 954.
Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Nationalgalerie.
Photo: © bpk / Nationalgalerie, SMB / Klaus Gökén



Fig. 11: Aelbrecht Bouts, *St. John the Baptist and St. Augustine*, oil on oak wood, undated (c. 1500), 63 x 46,2 cm, inv. no. 540.

Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Gemäldegalerie.

Photo: © bpk / Gemäldegalerie, SMB / Christoph Schmidt



Fig. 12: Giovanni Antonio Boltraffio, *Madonna and Child*, oil on poplar wood, undated (end fifteenth / beginning sixteenth century) 42 x 31 cm, inv. no. 207 B. Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Gemäldegalerie.
Photo: © bpk / Gemäldegalerie, SMB



Fig. 13: Arnolfo di Cambio, *Dormitio Virginis*,
marble, around 1300, 60 x 177 cm, inv. no. 2827. Staatliche Museen zu Berlin,
Skulpturensammlung und Museum für Byzantinische Kunst.
Photo: © bpk / Skulpturensammlung und Museum für Byzantinische Kunst, SMB / Antje Voigt