
CONTENT AREA 2

Ancient Mediterranean

3500 B.C.E.–300 C.E.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 2-1. *Artistic traditions of the ancient Near East and dynastic Egypt focused on representing royal figures and divinities and on the function of funerary and palatial complexes within their cultural contexts. Works of art illustrate the active exchange of ideas and reception of artistic styles among the Mediterranean cultures and the subsequent influence on the classical world.*

- ▶ **Essential Knowledge 2-1a.** The art of the ancient Near East (present-day Iraq, Syria, Iran, Turkey, Lebanon, Israel, Palestine, Jordan, and Cyprus, from 3500 to 330 B.C.E.) is associated with successive city-states and cultural powers: Sumerian, Akkadian, Neo-Sumerian and Babylonian, Assyrian, Neo-Babylonian, and Persian. The art of dynastic Egypt (present-day Egypt and Sudan, from 3000 to 30 B.C.E.) generally includes coverage of predynastic Egypt and Old, Middle, and New Kingdoms. The Amarna period (New Kingdom) was also important because of its cultural reform and stylistic revolution.
- ▶ **Essential Knowledge 2-1b.** The study of artistic innovations and conventions developed in the ancient Near East and dynastic Egypt (facilitated by recorded information from the time) provides a foundation for comparative understanding of subsequent artistic traditions within the region and beyond.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 2-2. *Religion plays a significant role in the art and architecture of the ancient Near East, with cosmology guiding representation of deities and kings who themselves assume divine attributes.*

- ▶ **Essential Knowledge 2-2a.** Artists created fully developed, formal types, including sculptures of human figures interacting with gods and stylistic conventions representing the human form with a combined profile and three-quarter view. In these combinations, important figures are set apart using a hierarchical scale or by dividing the compositions into horizontal sections or registers, which provide significant early examples of historical narratives.
- ▶ **Essential Knowledge 2-2b.** Architectural representations include towering ziggurats that provide monumental settings for the worship of many deities, as well as heavily fortified palaces that increased in opulence over the centuries, proclaiming the power and authority of rulers.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 2-3. *The art of dynastic Egypt embodies a sense of permanence. It was created for eternity in the service of a culture that focused on preserving a cycle of rebirth.*

- ▶ **Essential Knowledge 2-3a.** The culture of dynastic Egypt represents an elaborate funerary sect whose devotees created numerous *ka* statues (to house the *ka*, or spirit, after death), artifacts, decorations, and furnishings for tombs. Egyptian art incorporates mythological and religious symbolism, often centered on the cult of the sun. Development of monumental stone architecture culminated with the pyramids and with innovative designs for rock-cut tombs and pylon (massive sloped gateway) temples, each demonstrating the importance of the pharaoh — a god-king with absolute power, descended directly from the sun god. The Egyptian architectural construction of the clerestory is particularly important for the history of architecture.
- ▶ **Essential Knowledge 2-3b.** Representations of humans make clear distinctions between the deified pharaoh and people in lower classes, using representational and stylistic cues such as hierarchical proportion and idealization versus naturalism. Approaches to portraiture depend on a figure's rank in society. The artistic canon of dynastic Egypt, with strict conventions of representation, use of materials, and treatment of forms, was followed for many centuries with only short-lived periods of experimentation and deviation. Innovations in art and architecture tended to occur within the basic and established scheme.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 2-4. *The art of Ancient Greece and Rome is grounded in civic ideals and polytheism. Etruscan and Roman artists and architects accumulated and creatively adapted Greek objects and forms to create buildings and artworks that appealed to their tastes for eclecticism and historicism.*

- ▶ **Essential Knowledge 2-4a.** Ancient Greek art was produced in Europe and western Asia, primarily in the region of present-day Greece, Turkey, and southern Italy, from 600 B.C.E. to 100 C.E. Etruscan art (c. 700–100 B.C.E., from the region of Etruria in central Italy) and ancient Roman art was produced in Europe and western Asia from c. 753 B.C.E. to 337 C.E. The arts of these early western artistic cultures are generally studied chronologically. Additionally, archaeological models and stylistic analysis have identified periods based on stylistic changes. Artworks are assigned to periods according to styles (e.g., archaic Greek), governments, or dynasties (e.g., the Roman Republic).
- ▶ **Essential Knowledge 2-4b.** Art considered Ancient Greek includes works from the archaic, classical, and Hellenistic periods, as defined according to artistic style, not by political units such as governments or dynasties. Etruscan art is typically considered as a single cultural unit even though Etruria was comprised of separate city-states. Roman art includes works from the republican, early imperial, late imperial, and late antique periods, as defined using governmental structures and dynasties rather than stylistic characteristics. Many Hellenistic works are in fact Roman in origin, which favors presenting these traditions at the same time.

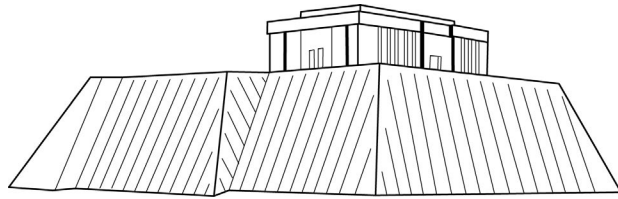
- ▶ **Essential Knowledge 2-4c.** Ancient Greek, Etruscan, and Roman artists and architects were influenced by earlier Mediterranean cultures. Ancient Greek religious and civic architecture and figural representation are characterized by idealized proportions and spatial relationships, expressing societal values of harmony and order. Art from the Etruscan and Roman periods is typified by stylistic and iconographical eclecticism and portraiture. Etruscan and ancient Roman art express republican and imperial values, power, and preference for conspicuous display. Etruscan and Roman architecture are characterized by investment in public structures. Roman architecture is also characterized by borrowing from its immediate predecessors (Greek and Etruscan) and by technical innovation.
- ▶ **Essential Knowledge 2-4d.** Ancient Greek and Roman art provides the foundation for the later development of European and Mediterranean artistic traditions. From the 18th century onward, European and American observers admired ancient Greek and Roman ethical and governmental systems, which contributed to prioritizing art and architecture that could be associated with political elites and cultural capitals (e.g., Rome). More recently, art historians have examined art produced by contemporary subjects or “provincial” populations.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 2-5. *Contextual information for ancient Greek and Roman art can be derived from contemporary literary, political, legal, and economic records as well as from archaeological excavations conducted from the mid-18th century onward. Etruscan art, by contrast, is illuminated primarily by modern archaeological record and by descriptions of contemporary external observers.*

- ▶ **Essential Knowledge 2-5a.** Some of the earliest written statements about artists and art making survive from the ancient Greek and Roman worlds. Little survives of the rich Etruscan literary tradition that is documented in Roman sources.
- ▶ **Essential Knowledge 2-5b.** The Greek, Etruscan, and Roman cultures shared a rich tradition of epic storytelling (first orally transmitted, later written) that glorified the exploits of gods, goddesses, and heroes. The texts recorded a highly developed rhetorical tradition that prized public oratory and poetry. Religious rituals and prognostications were guided by oral tradition, not texts.

Image Set

12. White Temple and its ziggurat. Uruk (modern Warka, Iraq). Sumerian. c. 3500–3000 B.C.E. Mud brick. (2 images)



White Temple and ziggurat (reconstruction drawing)

White Temple

© Richard Ashworth/Robert Harding World Imagery

13. Palette of King Narmer. Predynastic Egypt. c. 3000–2920 B.C.E. Greywacke. (2 images)



Palette of King Narmer, back

© Werner Forman/Art Resource, NY



Palette of King Narmer, front

© Werner Forman/Art Resource, NY

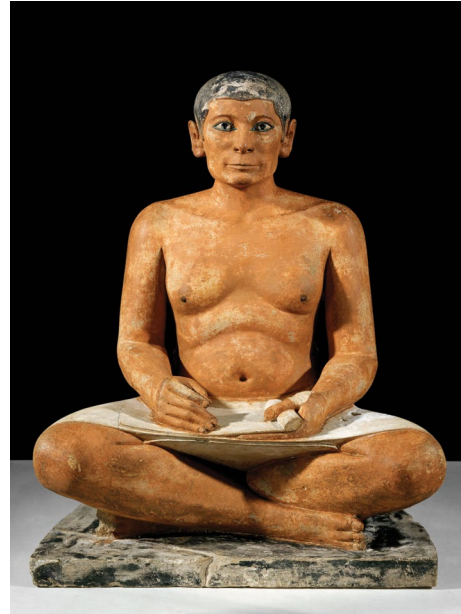
14. Statues of votive figures, from the Square Temple at Eshnunna (modern Tell Asmar, Iraq). Sumerian. c. 2700 B.C.E. Gypsum inlaid with shell and black limestone.



Statues of votive figures

© Erich Lessing/Art Resource, NY

15. Seated scribe. Saqqara, Egypt. Old Kingdom, Fourth Dynasty. c. 2620–2500 B.C.E. Painted limestone.



Seated scribe

© Erich Lessing/Art Resource, NY

16. Standard of Ur from the Royal Tombs at Ur (modern Tell el-Muqayyar, Iraq). Sumerian. c. 2600–2400 B.C.E. Wood inlaid with shell, lapis lazuli, and red limestone. (2 images)



Standard of Ur, Peace

© Erich Lessing/Art Resource, NY



Standard of Ur, War

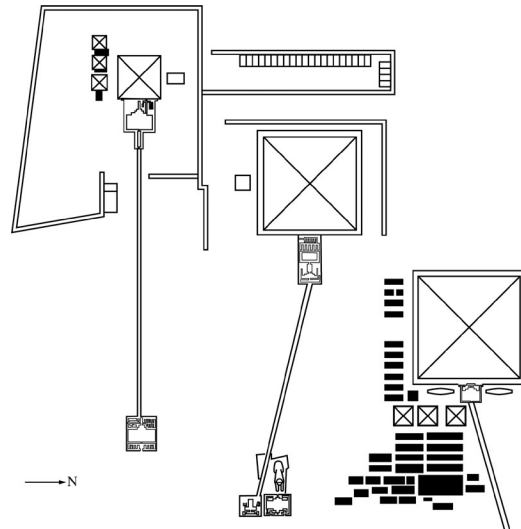
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17. Great Pyramids (Menkaura, Khafre, Khufu) and Great Sphinx. Giza, Egypt. Old Kingdom, Fourth Dynasty. c. 2550–2490 B.C.E. Cut limestone. (2 images)



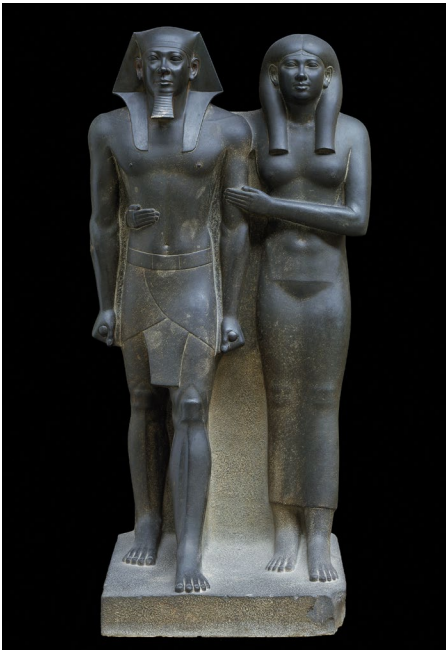
Great Pyramids with Sphinx

© Roger Wood/Corbis



Great Pyramids plan

18. King Menkaura and queen. Old Kingdom, Fourth Dynasty. c. 2490–2472 B.C.E. Greywacke.



King Menkaura and queen

Photograph © 2013 Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

19. The Code of Hammurabi. Babylon (modern Iran). Susian. c. 1792–1750 B.C.E. Basalt.



The Code of Hammurabi

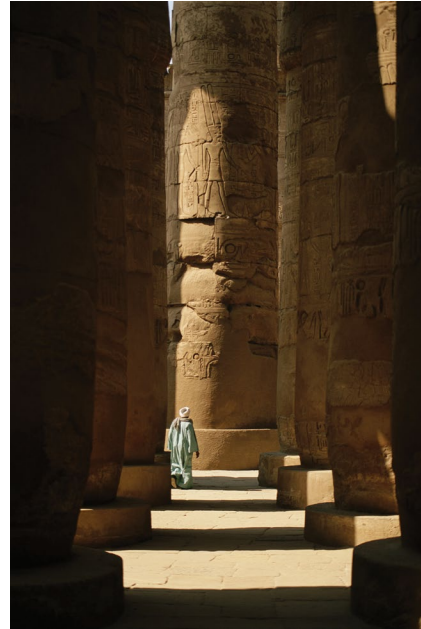
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20. Temple of Amun-Re and Hypostyle Hall. Karnak, near Luxor, Egypt. New Kingdom, 18th and 19th Dynasties. Temple: c. 1550 B.C.E.; hall: c. 1250 B.C.E. Cut sandstone and mud brick. (3 images)



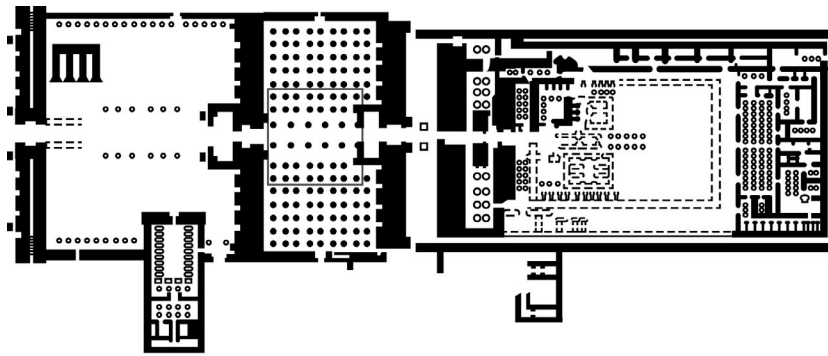
Temple of Amun-Re

© Yann Arthus-Bertrand/Corbis



Hypostyle Hall

© Jochem D. Wijnands/Getty Images



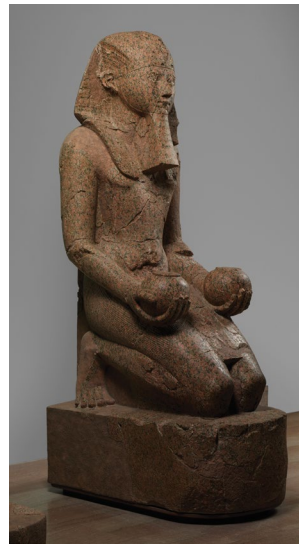
Temple of Amun-Re plan

21. Mortuary temple of Hatshepsut. Near Luxor, Egypt. New Kingdom, 18th Dynasty. c. 1473–1458 B.C.E. Sandstone, partially carved into a rock cliff, and red granite. (2 images)



Mortuary temple of Hatshepsut

© Erich Lessing/Art Resource, NY



Kneeling statue of Hatshepsut

Image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art/
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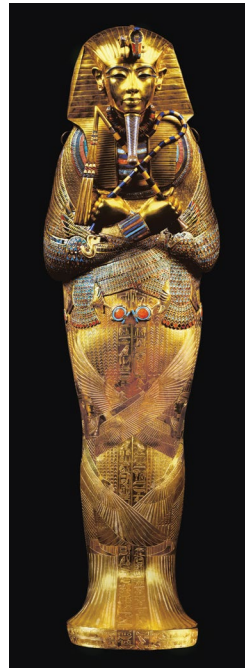
22. Akhenaton, Nefertiti, and three daughters. New Kingdom (Amarna), 18th Dynasty. c. 1353–1335 B.C.E. Limestone.



Akhenaton, Nefertiti, and three daughters

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23. Tutankhamun's tomb, innermost coffin. New Kingdom, 18th Dynasty. c. 1323 B.C.E. Gold with inlay of enamel and semiprecious stones.



Tutankhamun's innermost coffin

© Sandra Vannini/Corbis

- 24. Last judgment of Hu-Nefer, from his tomb (page from the *Book of the Dead*). New Kingdom, 19th Dynasty. c. 1275 B.C.E. Painted papyrus scroll.**



Last judgment of Hu-Nefer

© The Trustees of the British Museum/Art Resource, NY

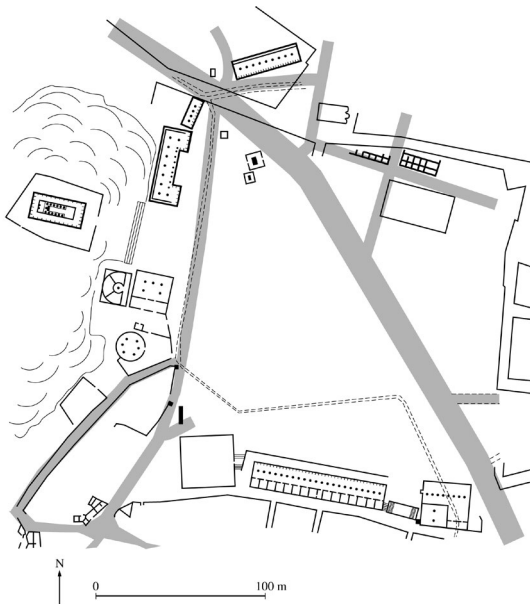
- 25. Lamassu from the citadel of Sargon II, Dur Sharrukin (modern Khorsabad, Iraq). Neo-Assyrian. c. 720–705 B.C.E. Alabaster.**



Lamassu

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- 26. Athenian agora. Archaic through Hellenistic Greek. 600 B.C.E.–150 C.E. Plan.**



Athenian agora site plan

- 27. Anavysos Kouros. Archaic Greek. c. 530 B.C.E. Marble with remnants of paint.**



Anavysos Kouros

© Scala/Art Resource, NY

28. Peplos Kore from the Acropolis.
Archaic Greek. c. 530 B.C.E. Marble, painted details.



Peplos Kore

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29. Sarcophagus of the Spouses.
Etruscan. c. 520 B.C.E. Terra cotta.



Sarcophagus of the Spouses

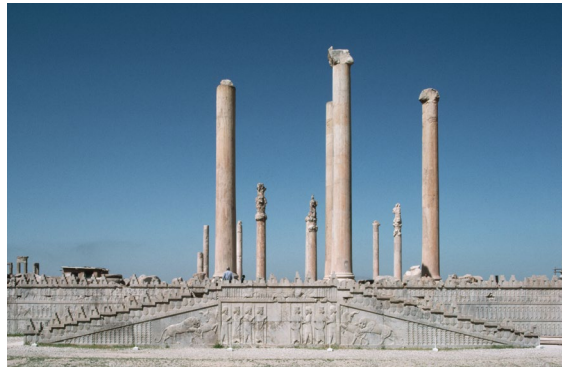
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30. Audience Hall (*apadana*) of Darius and Xerxes. Persepolis, Iran. Persian. c. 520–465 B.C.E. Limestone. (2 images)



Apadana

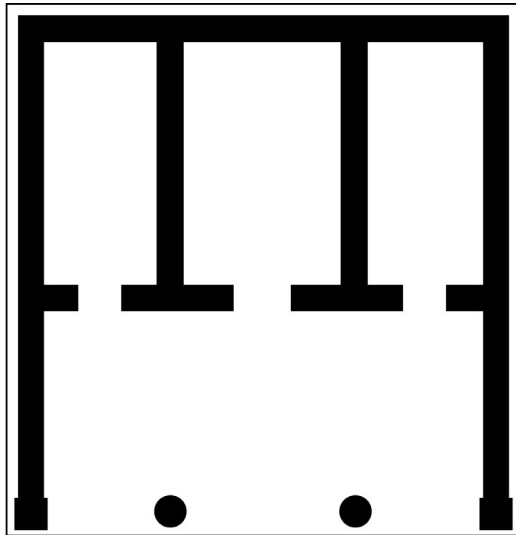
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Apadana stairway

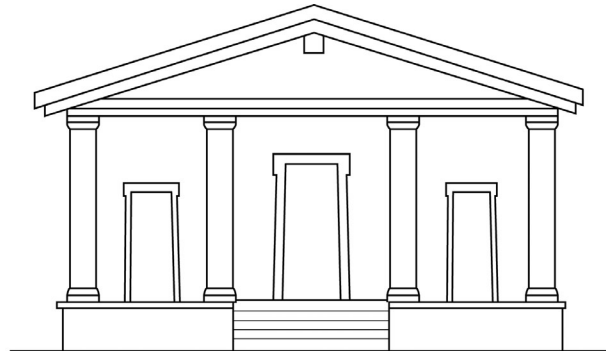
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31. Temple of Minerva (Veii, near Rome, Italy) and sculpture of Apollo. Master sculptor Vulca. c. 510–500 B.C.E. Original temple of wood, mud brick, or tufa (volcanic rock); terra cotta sculpture. (3 images)



0 10 m

Temple of Minerva plan



0 10 m

Temple of Minerva elevation



Apollo

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32. Tomb of the Triclinium. Tarquinia, Italy.
Etruscan. c. 480–470 B.C.E. Tufa and fresco.



Tomb of the Triclinium

© Nimatallah/Art Resource, NY

33. Niobides Krater. Anonymous vase painter of Classical Greece known as the
Niobid Painter. c. 460–450 B.C.E. Clay, red-figure technique (white highlights). (2 images)



Niobides Krater

© RMN-Grand Palais/Art Resource, NY



Niobides Krater

© RMN-Grand Palais/Art Resource, NY

34. *Doryphoros (Spear Bearer).*

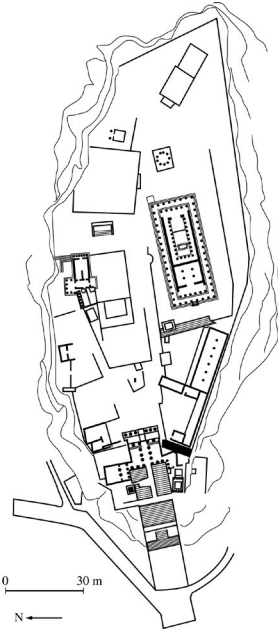
Polykleitos. Original 450–440 B.C.E.
Roman copy (marble) of Greek original
(bronze).



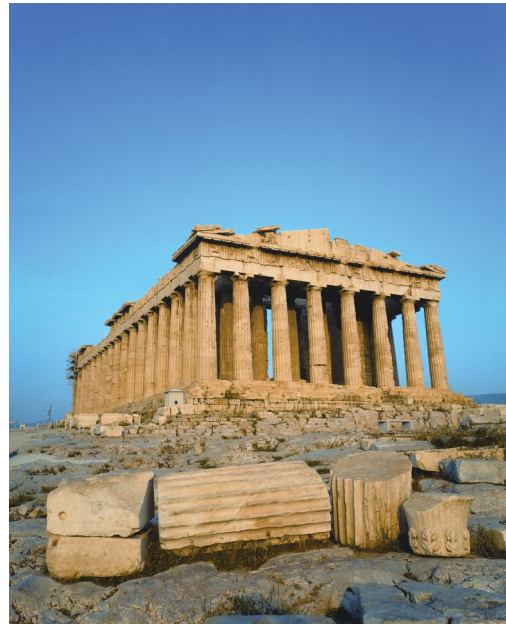
Doryphoros

© Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Naples, Italy/
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35. *Acropolis.* Athens, Greece. Iktinos and Kallikrates. c. 447–410 B.C.E. Marble. (6 images)



Acropolis plan



Parthenon

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Acropolis, *continued*



Helios, horses, and Dionysus (Heracles?)

© The Trustees of the British Museum



Temple of Athena Nike

© Gianni Dagli Orti/The Art Archive at Art Resource, NY



Victory adjusting her sandal

© Nimatallah/Art Resource, NY



Plaque of the Ergastines

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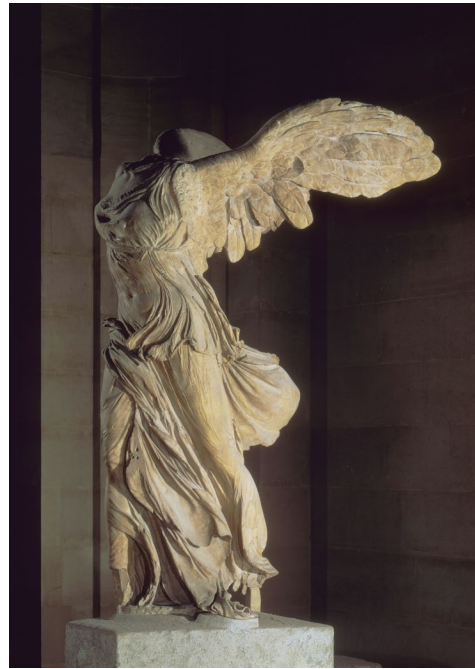
36. Grave stele of Hegeso. Attributed to Kallimachos. c. 410 B.C.E. Marble and paint.



Grave stele of Hegeso

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37. Winged Victory of Samothrace. Hellenistic Greek. c. 190 B.C.E. Marble.



Winged Victory of Samothrace

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38. Great Altar of Zeus and Athena at Pergamon. Asia Minor (present-day Turkey). Hellenistic Greek. c. 175 B.C.E. Marble (architecture and sculpture). (3 images)



Great Altar of Zeus and Athena

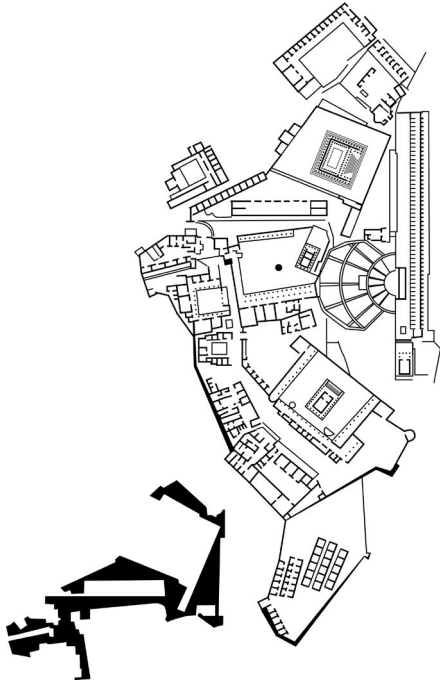
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Athena

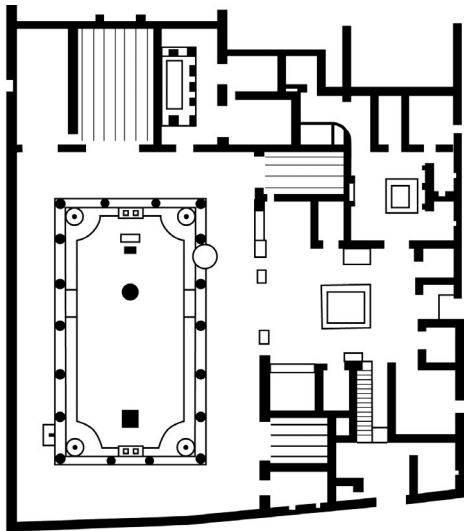
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Great Altar of Zeus and Athena at Pergamon, *continued*



Great Altar of Zeus and Athena plan

39. House of the Vettii. Pompeii, Italy. Imperial Roman. c. second century B.C.E.; rebuilt c. 62–79 C.E. Cut stone and fresco. (3 images)



0 10 m

House of the Vettii plan



Atrium

Photo © Henri Stierlin, Genève

House of the Vettii, continued



Frescoes

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40. Alexander Mosaic from the House of Faun, Pompeii. Republican Roman. c. 100 B.C.E. Mosaic.



Alexander Mosaic

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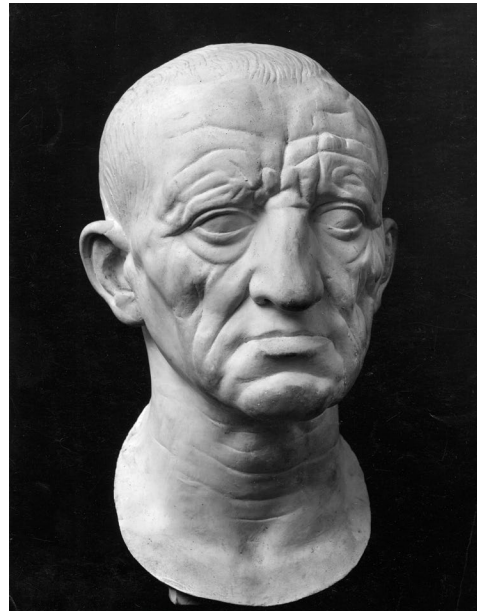
41. Seated boxer. Hellenistic Greek. c. 100 B.C.E. Bronze.



Seated boxer

© Vanni Archive/Art Resource, NY

42. Head of a Roman patrician. Republican Roman. c. 75–50 B.C.E. Marble.



Head of a Roman patrician

© Alinari/Art Resource, NY

43. Augustus of Prima Porta. Imperial Roman. Early first century C.E. Marble.



Augustus of Prima Porta

© Erin Babnik/Alamy

44. Colosseum (Flavian Amphitheater). Rome, Italy. Imperial Roman. 70–80 C.E. Stone and concrete. (2 images)



Colosseum

© Patrick Durand/Sygma/Corbis



Colosseum

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45. Forum of Trajan. Rome, Italy. Apollodorus of Damascus. Forum and markets: 106–112 C.E.; column completed 113 C.E. Brick and concrete (architecture); marble (column). (4 images)



Forum of Trajan (reconstruction drawing)

© John Burge and James Packer



Basilica Ulpia (reconstruction drawing)

© Gilbert Gorski and James Packer



Trajan markets

© Franz-Marc Frei/Corbis



Column of Trajan

© Vittoriano Rastelli/Corbis

46. Pantheon. Imperial Roman. 118–125 C.E. Concrete with stone facing. (2 images)



Pantheon

© Scala/Art Resource, NY



Pantheon

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47. Ludovisi Battle Sarcophagus. Late Imperial Roman. c. 250 C.E. Marble.



Ludovisi Battle Sarcophagus

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