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The Pygmalion Impulse in Historic
Preservation: The Dresden Zwinger

Christiane Hertel

The Pygmalion Impulse in Historic Preservation: The Dresden Zwinger*

Christiane Hertel

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1. Angelo Walther, *Bernardo Bellotto, genannt Canaletto* (Westermann and Verlag der Kunst: Zwickau, 1995), p. 12, pp. 26–27; Johann Gottfried Herder, in his *Adastrea* of 1802, quoted in Fritz Löffler, *Das alte Dresden* (Weidlich: Frankfurt, 1966), p. 107.

2. Götz Bergander, *Dresden im Luftkrieg: Vorgeschichte, Zerstörung, Folgen* (Böhlau: Cologne, 1994); Walter Hentschel, 'Zum Wiederaufbau Dresdens: Aufgaben und Leistungen der Denkmalpflege', *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Denkmalpflege*, vol. 5, 1951, pp. 89–98; *Wiederaufbau und Dogma: Dresden in den fünfziger Jahren, Dresdner Hefte: Beiträge zur Kulturgeschichte*, vol. 28, no. 4, 1991; Wolfgang Jäger and C.A. Brebbia, eds, *The Revival of Dresden* (WIT Press: Southhampton, UK, 2000).

3. On 'Wahrzeichen', see Johann Heinrich Zedler, *Grosses Vollständiges Universal-Lexicon aller Wissenschaften und Künste* (Zedler: Halle and Leipzig, 1732–1750), vol. 49, col. 1116 and vol. 51, col. 1064; Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, *Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache* (S. Hirzel: Leipzig, 1922), Vol. 13, cols. 1016–30.

4. Johann Gottfried Herder, *Sculpture, Some Observations on Shape and Form from Pygmalion's Creative Dream*, ed. and trans. Jason Gaiger (Chicago University Press: Chicago and London, 2002); Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Letter to D'Alembert and Writings for the Theater. The Collected Writings of Rousseau*, ed. and trans. Allan Bloom, Charles Butterworth and Christopher Kelly (University

Johann Gottfried Herder famously called the city of Dresden the 'German Florence', a name that ever since has been associated with the so-called 'Canaletto-View', which refers to *Dresden seen from the right Bank of the Elbe*, of 1751 (Fig. 1), one in a series of fourteen views Bernardo Bellotto (1721–1780) painted for King August III.¹

Bellotto's painting celebrates Dresden's Italian and Italianate baroque architectural monuments and this view painting more than any other image has come to identify Dresden as a serene and exceptionally beautiful city. This ideal has been the driving force behind the reconstruction and rebuilding of Dresden's baroque centre after its destruction on 13 and 14 February 1945.² Efforts at reconstruction began immediately after the war and were intensified in unprecedented ways and at astounding speed after German reunification in 1990. These two rebuilding phases, one immediately after the war and the other immediately after German reunification, comprise several architectural monuments in the city's historic centre, among them Dresden's most famous eighteenth-century landmarks or 'Wahrzeichen' – literally signs of memory, realization, and perception, the Zwinger and the Frauenkirche (Figs 2 and 3).³ When in 1803 Herder named Dresden the most beautiful of German cities, he knew that its beauty owed itself to its cityscape, collections, and architectural monuments as well as to an unusual, even ubiquitous presence of sculpture. Earlier, in 1778, Herder had published his book, begun in 1769, *Sculpture, Observations on Shape and Form from Pygmalion's Creative Dream*.⁴ The title refers to an important paradigm in eighteenth-century discourses on art and especially on sculpture, often in response to Rousseau's *Pygmalion, A lyrical scene* of 1762 published in 1770.⁵ Herder argues that different arts and artistic media address different senses and that sculpture presupposes and evokes the sense of touch, not only in the artist but also in its audience. No longer children and thus refraining from touching works of sculpture, this viewing audience will nevertheless perceive sculpture through the sense of touch. Just like the mythic king Pygmalion, who fell in love with his own sculptural creation and to whom Venus granted his wish that his sculpture come alive, so the beholder's tactile seeing creates the living soul in a sculpture and thereby the beholder becomes fully and pleasurable self-aware. Herder's emphasis on the reciprocity of sculpture and artist as well as sculpture and beholder assumes a Pygmalion impulse endowed with the ethical capacity for 'naked truth'.⁶ In Herder's view, sculpture, in its full presence, at once demands complete understanding and offers deep sensual, emotional, and intellectual pleasure. Of course, Herder was saying all this about classical sculpture, decidedly *not* about works of art of his own century, yet his praise of Dresden as the German Florence suggests highest achievements in the art of sculpture. I will use his notion of



Fig. 2. Matthäus Daniel Pöppelmann and Balthasar Permoser, Zwinger courtyard with Nymphenbad to the upper right. 1709–1728. Walter Hahn. View in 1943. Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Deutsche Fotothek, Dresden. (Photo: Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Deutsche Fotothek, Inv. Nr. 313013.)



Fig. 1. Lorenzo Bellotto, *Dresden Seen from the right Bank of the Elbe*. 1748. Dresden, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen. (Photo: Art Resource, New York.)



Fig. 3. George Bähr, Frauenkirche. 1726–1743. View pre-1945. Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Deutsche Fotothek, Dresden. (Photo: Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Deutsche Fotothek, Inv. Nr. 98921.)

the Pygmalion impulse in this examination of historical preservation and the Zwinger because in my research on Dresden I have been struck by the role sculpture and a sculptural concept of architecture there have come to play.

To the best of my knowledge, the place of the Pygmalion impulse in the context of the historic preservation of sculpture in the public realm has yet to be explored. In part this may be a consequence of the necessary shift from private, individualized viewing of the largely autonomous sculptural object, which is the primary domain of the Pygmalion paradigm in art critical and theoretical discourse, to public viewing of sculpture in public spaces. If it considers it beyond the eighteenth century and into modernism at all, recent scholarship on the Pygmalion paradigm or the Pygmalion effect tends to consider sculpture in the public realm as mediated by film, both internally and externally, its internal audience thus becoming aligned with the film's audience. Kenneth Gross begins his book *The Dream of the Moving Statue*, with the opening scene of Charlie Chaplin's *City Lights* (1931) where the tramp is discovered sleeping on an outdoor sculpture as it is being unveiled in a public dedication ceremony.⁷ A mythological model of unveiling and spying upon a desired sleeper (Diana and Endymion, Amor and Psyche) is used here to juxtapose the private and public spheres. However, both the sculpture and the tramp seem to have slept and abruptly woken, and now frantically

Press of New England: Hanover and London, 1990), vol. 10, pp. 230–6.

5. Heinrich Dörrie, *Pygmalion: Ein Impuls Ovids und seine Wirkungen bis in die Gegenwart*, ed. Rheinisch-Westfälische Akademie der Wissenschaften (Westdeutscher Verlag: Opladen, 1974); Oskar Bätschmann, 'Pygmalion als Betrachter', in Wolfgang Kemp (ed.), *Der Betrachter ist im Bild: Kunstwissenschaft und Rezeptionsästhetik* (DuMont: Cologne, 1985), pp. 183–224; Andreas Blühm, *Pygmalion: Die Ikonographie eines Künstlermythos zwischen 1500 und 1900* (Peter Lang: Frankfurt am Main and Bern, 1988); Mathias Mayer and Gerhard Neumann (eds), *Pygmalion: Die Geschichte des Mythos in der abendländischen Kultur* (Rombach: Freiburg im Breisgau, 1997); Roland Kanz and Hans Körner (eds), *Pygmalions Aufklärung: Europäische Skulptur im 18. Jahrhundert* (Deutscher Kunstverlag: Munich and Berlin, 2006).

6. Herder on sculpture, touch, and truth, see *Sculpture*, pp. 37, 38, 45, p. 53 ('naked truth').

7. Kenneth Gross, *The Dream of the Moving Statue* (Cornell University Press: Ithaca and London: 1992), pp. 3–7.
8. Victor I. Stoichita, *The Pygmalion Effect: From Ovid to Hitchcock*, trans. Alison Anderson (Chicago University Press: Chicago, 2008), pp. 181–202.
9. Alex Potts, *The Sculptural Imagination: Figurative, Modernist, Minimalist* (Yale University Press: New Haven and London, 2000).
10. For accounts of these, see Potts, *Sculptural Imagination*, ch. 1; Stoichita, *The Pygmalion Effect*, ch. 5, and Jacqueline Lichtenstein, *The Blind Spot: An Essay on the Relations between Painting and Sculpture in the Modern Age*, trans. Chris Miller (Getty Research Institute: Los Angeles, 2008), ch. 2.
11. Potts, *Sculptural Imagination*, 'Introduction', pp. 18–23.
12. On this distinction between rubble and ruin, see Helmut Puff, 'Ruins as Models', in Julia Hell and Andreas Schönle (eds), *Ruins of Modernity* (Duke University Press: Durham and London, 2010), pp. 253–69.
13. Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Thomas Burger (MIT Press: Cambridge, MA, 1989); see also the sceptical assessment by Harold Mah, 'Phantasies of the Public Sphere: Rethinking the Habermas of Historians', *The Journal of Modern History*, vol. 72, no. 1, 2000, pp. 153–82.
14. On the role of the *tableau vivant* in civic identity formation, see Christiane Hertel, 'Centennials, Sculptures, and *Tableaux Vivants* in the Nineteenth-Century Schiller Cult', *Yearbook of German-American Studies*, vol. 38, 2003, pp. 155–204, and the comprehensive study by Birgit Jooss, *Lebende Bilder: Körperliche Nachahmung in der Goethezeit* (Dietrich Reimer: Berlin, 1999).
15. Richard Peter, *Dresden. Eine Kamera klagt an* (1st edn 1949, Fliegenkopf Verlag: Halle/Saale, n.d., reprint). The photograph has also appeared in the American popular press. See, for example, its enlarged reproduction to illustrate Vicki Goldberg, 'Gleams of Creativity Through a Political Wall', *The New York Times*, Sunday, 7 February 1999, p. 34. The subject of cold war rhetoric has recently been raised again by George Packer, 'Letter from Dresden: Embers: Will a Proudful City Finally Confront Its Past?', *The New Yorker*, 1 February 2010, pp. 32–39. It reads like a late coda to Jane Kramer's provocative 'Letter from Europe: The Politics of Memory', *The New Yorker*, 14 August 1995. On this subject as well as Peter's photo-book, see Christiane Hertel, 'Dis/Continuities in Dresden's Dances of Death', interact before an appalled audience. The comic effect stems from the unexpected compatibility between the incompatible components of this event. Victor Stoichita ends his *The Pygmalion Effect: From Ovid to Hitchcock* with Alfred Hitchcock's *Vertigo* (1958).⁸ With George Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion* (1916) in its background, the film figures the Pygmalion myth through a man's passionate, deluded, and relentless effort to force a woman into a desired form and identity, which requires her complicit acting and self-transformation. This happens in public indoor and outdoor spaces such as the museum, a Spanish mission's park, a parking lot, and an apartment building corridor, depending as it does on her studied gait, gestures, and general comportment, which are always on display and consciously performative, never unguarded. In his *The Sculptural Imagination* from Winckelmann and Canova to Merleau-Ponty and Hesse, Alex Potts has gone beyond this scholarly attention to film, where the shift from private to public remains largely ancillary to the authors' interpretative concerns.⁹ Potts examines several loosely aligned developments in the sculptural imagination and in the viewing of sculpture from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries: from the autonomous sculptural object to the sculpted environment or 'installation-oriented sculpture'; from the private, individual encounter and contemplation of sculpture to a public or publicised individual viewing of publicly displayed and contextualised sculpture; from sculpture's 'mythic status as an art of stable embodiment' inviting and sustaining aesthetic contemplation of its 'affective and conceptual power' to its permeation by an 'increasingly pervasive and unrestricted process of commodification, consumption and capital accumulation'. Rather than harbouring nostalgia for Winckelmann's, Herder's or Diderot's encounters with sculpture,¹⁰ Potts is concerned about what he calls the 'constant erosion of any fixed mediation between the individual and the public arena'.¹¹ We may well ask whether halting such erosion is not only one of the goals of historic preservation but also integral to its ethical dimension. If so, the Pygmalion impulse in historic preservation may be expected not solely to will and force disintegrating or damaged and incomplete works back into their former completeness and perfected form, but to provide a model of self-assertion from the practice of viewing sculpture, especially where, as was the case in Dresden, a vast area of urban rubble had to be elevated to the dignified status of cultural ruin to transform the task of reconstruction into one of preservation, in short, to make it imaginable, worthwhile, and feasible.¹² It seems as if such an elevation even had to be exemplified by sculpture in the public realm, as if the human survivors of Dresden's destruction had been too damaged to do so or as if only sculptures retained some of the virtues of Jürgen Habermas' vision of the public sphere that had evolved in the Age of Enlightenment.¹³ Certainly, after World War II, but already in early twentieth-century Dresden, faith in sculpture's capacity to manifest such values was visible in photographs of sculptures, as if these were really *tableaux vivants* or *attitudes* of paradigmatic human actions, affects, concepts, thus functioning as these salon diversions did in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.¹⁴
- With these thoughts in mind, let us look at the famous photograph of a sculpture atop the tower of Dresden's city hall which Richard Peter (1895–1977) took for his important photo-book of 1949, titled *Dresden: Eine Kamera klagt an* (*Dresden: A Camera Accuses*) (Fig. 4).¹⁵ In this image, Peter Pöppelmann's 1910 sculpture of 'Benevolence' gestures towards the destroyed city. Her gesture seems both gentle and mournful and only in this

sense an accusation. However, it was as an accusation that the photograph came to be used on dust jackets of both West and East German books about the bombing of Dresden, such as Axel Rodenberger's *Der Tod von Dresden* of 1951. Soon the image was updated, showing the result of what since has been called the 'second destruction of Dresden', the unnecessary levelling of ruins and damaged buildings, following the Second Party Congress of the SED, the Socialist Unity Part of Germany, in 1958, which declared an end to the post-war period in East Germany (Fig. 5).¹⁶ Yet, another updated version shows the building boom following German reunification in 1990. There, juxtaposed with so much glitz, the sculpture looks helpless and shabby, having lost a hand, and lost touch with the city.

The juxtaposition of 'before and after' images is a contrasting frame that can be exploited with great rhetorical and emotional effect on its audience. On a simple level, we can compare Bellotto's painting with today's tourist image of the Elbe panorama, which now once again includes the reconstructed Frauenkirche, or Church of Our Lady (Fig. 6), often referred to metonymically by its dome's approximate sculptural shape, the so-called 'steinerne Glocke', or 'stone bell'.¹⁷ The Lutheran Frauenkirche was designed and built by the carpenter-architect George Bähr between 1726 and 1743. The church actually withstood the bombing on 13 and 14 February 1945, and collapsed the next day as a result of a fire inside. Its so-called 'archaeological reconstruction', which took place between 1994 and 2005, drew much national and international attention and itself became a major tourist attraction.¹⁸

The primary landmark in Dresden's history, however, is the Zwinger, which Matthäus Daniel Pöppelmann (1662–1736) designed in 1709 and built between 1711 and 1728 (Fig. 7). Its elaborate programme of both decorative, or engaged, and free-standing sculptures as well as fountains was designed by Balthasar Permoser (1651–1732) and executed by himself, his workshop, and his three assistants in this project, the master sculptors Christian Kirchner (1691–1732), Paul Heermann (1673–1735), and Benjamin Thomae (1682–1751), Paul Egell (1691–1752) – then temporarily in residence, and numerous sculptors of later generations.¹⁹ By one account, there are 850 sculptural elements in the Zwinger, among them about 300 free-standing mythological or allegorical figures and vases, although estimates vary. The Zwinger served as the orangery, pleasure palace and festival arena of the Dresden Court during the successive reigns of the two electors of Saxony, Friedrich August I and his son Friedrich August II, who from 1697 were also kings of Poland and better known by their royal names, August II, 'the Strong' (1697–1733), and August III (1734–63). The Zwinger's supreme moment of court representation came in 1719, when, three quarters finished, one quarter simulated in temporary wooden festival architecture, it served as a frame for festivities related to August III's marriage with the Habsburg crown princess Maria Josepha. On this occasion, the Zwinger was to represent and support Saxony's ambitious hope for the Imperial crown. As Thomas daCosta Kaufmann observed about this apogee of Saxon royal power and imperial ambition: 'The nymphs and satyrs by Permoser and his assistants that decorated its façades seem the perfect spectators for events that occurred within'.²⁰ Put differently, the marriage celebration of 1719 was an instance in which the Pygmalion impulse realised itself. These sculptures were imaginary spectators, under whose gaze the carefully choreographed court festivals took place. Accordingly, Johann Michael von Loën wrote in 1718 of life at the Zwinger: 'Everyone plays, one



Fig. 4. Richard Peter, Peter Pöppelmann's 'Benevolence' atop Dresden's city hall (1910). From *Dresden: Eine Kamera klagt an*. 1949. (Photo: David Sullivan. Bryn Mawr College.)



Fig. 5. Walter Hahn, Identical view to Richard Peter's (Fig. 4). 1960. Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Deutsche Fotothek, Dresden. (Photo: Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Deutsche Fotothek, Inv. Nr. 313820.)

The Art Bulletin, vol. 82, no. 1 (2000), pp. 83–116.

16. Jürgen Paul, 'Dresden: Suche nach der verlorenen Mitte', in Klaus von Beyme et al. (eds), *Neue Städte aus Ruinen. Deutscher Städtebau der Nachkriegszeit* (Prestel: München, 1992), pp. 313–33; Matthias Lerm, "'In Erfüllung des seinerzeitigen Bombardements' – Die Sprengung der Barockhäuser der großen Meißner Straße im Juni 1950', *Dresdner Hefte*, vol. 28, no. 4, 1991, pp. 16–22, and M. Lerm, *Abschied vom Alten Dresden: Verluste historischer Bausubstanz nach 1945* (Dresden, 1993); Heinrich Magirius and Elisabeth Hütter, 'Zum Verständnis der Denkmalpflege in der DDR', in Wilfried Lipp (ed.), *Denkmal – Werte – Gesellschaft* (Campus: Frankfurt am Main and New York, 1993), pp. 292–314.

17. Wilhelm Pinder coined the metaphor in 1924. See Heinrich Magirius, 'Ikonographie und Ikonologie der Dresdner Frauenkirche', *Die Dresdner Frauenkirche, Jahrbuch*, vol. 1, 1995,



Fig. 6. George Bähr, Frauenkirche. 1726–1743. Reconstruction 2005. Dresden. (Photo: Eleanor Moseman.)



Fig. 7. Matthäus Daniel Pöppelmann, Balthasar Permoser, Christian Kirchner, Paul Heermann, Benjamin Thomae and Paul Egell, Zwinger courtyard and sculptures toward 'Glockenspielpavillon'. 1711–1728. Möbius. View in 1937. Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Deutsche Fotothek, Dresden. (Photo: Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Deutsche Fotothek, Inv. Nr. 54798.)

pp. 111–30, p. 128. It has been repeated in much scholarly and popular literature, e.g. Otto Walcha's novel, *Die steinerne Glocke* (Paul List: Leipzig, 1955).

18. Still foundational: Jean-Louis Sponcel, *Die Frauenkirche zu Dresden. Geschichte ihrer Entstehung von George Bährs frühesten Entwürfen an bis zur Vollendung nach dem Tode des Erbauers* (Wilhelm Baensch: Dresden, 1893). The term 'archaeological reconstruction' signified the archaeological excavation of the site and then the use of original materials and historical building techniques, resulting in the incorporation of excavated stones in their exact original place on the building's façade. Heinrich Magirius, 'Der archäologische Wiederaufbau der Dresdner Frauenkirche. Eine Wissenschaftliche Grundlegung', in *Die Dresdner Frauenkirche, Jahrbuch*, vol. 1, 1995, pp. 81–4; *Die Dresdner Frauenkirche. Geschichte – Zerstörung – Rekonstruktion, Dresdner Hefte: Beiträge zur Kulturgeschichte*, vol. 32, no. 4, 1992, passim; Christiane Hertel, 'Beyond In/ Authenticity: The Case of Dresden's Frauenkirche', in Joan Ockman (ed.), *Architourism: Architecture as a Destination for Tourism* (Prestel: New York and Munich, 2005), pp. 42–9.

19. On the Zwinger's sculptural programme and the sculptors specifically, see Sigfried Asche, *Balthasar Permoser und die Barockskulptur des Dresdner Zwingers* (Weidlich: Frankfurt am Main, 1966); Sigfried Asche, *Balthasar Permoser: Leben und Werk* (Deutscher Verlag für Kunstwissenschaft: Berlin, 1978); *Balthasar Permoser hat's gemacht. Der Hofbildhauer in Sachsen* (Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Skulpturensammlung, Dresden, 2001); Klaus Lankheit, *Der kurpfälzische Hofbildhauer Paul Egell 1691–1752*, 2 vols (Hirmer: Munich, 1988).

watches, one plays along, one is being played. Ludendo ludimur'; that is, 'Playing one is being played. Acting one is being acted'.²¹ Other instances where the Pygmalion impulse can be projected in the Zwinger are in the process of historic preservation.

Ruined, but only partially destroyed, the Zwinger was rebuilt immediately after World War II in the first decades of the German Democratic Republic, a process largely completed by 1963. Thereafter, it served as a favourite public recreation area and as museum space, a function its four pavilions had always had, while being admired in its own right as a great work of art. Before I turn to how we might think of the Pygmalion impulse as being at play in its restoration during two successive moments in its history, the decades before World War II and the decades following it, an account of its early building history is in order. Upon Peter the Great's victory over the Swedes on 8 July 1709, August the Strong resumed his title as King of Poland, decided to cast his military advisors' concerns to the wind, and to have his own design, the 'Zwinger-garten', built right on top of Dresden's ramparts to the West of the city. One can still see this unusual grafting (Fig. 8).²² The king commissioned Pöppelmann for the project and also sent him to Prague, Vienna, and Rome to study modern and ancient court architecture. Twenty years later, in 1729, Pöppelmann published the finished Zwinger in an elaborate and large print portfolio (64.8 × 44.4 cm) containing plates of the floor plan, gates, galleries, fountains, and the designs for the North side, which in 1728 was provisionally closed with a temporary wooden structure. The title page shows among other elements the ambitious plan supplementing the Zwinger with a new palace, and also Hercules delivering one of the orange trees for the 'Zwinger-garten'. Hundreds of orange trees were housed in the Zwinger's semi-circular galleries during the winter, and inhabited the courtyard along with its sculptural programme during the summer (Fig. 9). Pöppelmann also included, in French and in

German, a dedication to the king and an explanation, according to which the Zwinger and its sculptural programme served three purposes. First, it represented the king's triple power and responsibility as imperial elector, king of Poland, and imperial vicar after Emperor Joseph I's death. It did this literally through emblems, coat of arms, and insignia, most notably the giant blue and gold Polish crown atop the crown gate, and also numerous Polish eagles and Imperial double eagles and references to royal orders. Secondly, the Zwinger represented August the Strong's power allegorically in a programme that celebrated the king as Hercules Saxonicus completing the labour of obtaining the golden fruit of the Hesperides, hence the Zwinger's guise as the Garden of the Hesperides. It is inhabited by numerous mythological beings from all registers of Greco-Roman mythology, some of them Olympian gods, but most nature divinities, such as nymphs, satyrs (Fig. 10), and fauns, in an environment full of fountains and galleries, gates, and pavilions done in stalactite rustication. As later commentators have observed, in this way the Zwinger engaged the senses of sight and touch, but also smell (orange trees), and hearing (water).²³ Thirdly, the Zwinger represented August the Strong's commitment to the arts and to court culture in emulation of the ancient Roman emperors who built arenas and theatres, fountains and baths, gardens and grottoes, all of which Pöppelmann trusted that he had successfully and felicitously combined in the Zwinger, albeit in a contemporary style ('die heutige Bauarth').²⁴ He considered the sculptures' primary function rhetorical: 'Thus the building's external stylistic appearance consists entirely of decoration with, as it were, speaking creations.'²⁵

That is to say, their task was to enunciate and represent the aforementioned three functions of the Zwinger: political representation of power, allegorical praise of ruler and dominion, and worthy modern imitation of the ancients. However, as Pöppelmann's own publication suggests, this may well be what he says in the introduction, but that is not *all* that he intended. The engravings show a remarkably playful mingling of numerous staffage figures with the sculptural programme; the figures are smaller than the sculptures but cohabit comfortably with them. Pleasure and play here seem to illustrate Loën's coinage, 'ludendo ludimur'. Moreover, Pöppelmann was well aware of the inventive and serious play between the Zwinger's three functions, as for example, in the sculptural enactment of the Judgment of Paris atop the Wallpavillon ('Rampart Pavilion'), where a very young August the Strong, in the guise of Paris, is about to hand not the golden apple, but the Polish crown to Venus. We can give two accounts of this group (Fig. 11). Either we can see the figure of Paris as a portrait of August the Strong, in short, 'Paris-Augustus',²⁶ or we might think of it as fictionalising the Pygmalion impulse, for the young Elector of Saxony and King of Poland here begins his reign as he enters and emulates an iconography that was very familiar in Saxony from Lukas Cranach's many depictions of the Judgement of Paris. However, Paris-Augustus' substitute prize in this beauty contest, the Polish crown, is truly an object of exchange. Here, Venus promises Paris not the love of a woman, but rather the love of a vastly enlarged dominion now encompassing Saxony, Poland, and Lithuania, as if, by way of August the Strong's own Pygmalion impulse and sheer hubris, he could and would mould them into his own creation. Thus Pöppelmann and Permoser play with the eighteenth-century 'Zankapfel', the apple of contention, namely natural resource-rich Silesia, just as their patron had decided to play with and on the ramparts of Dresden. Like Homer's Paris, little did any of them anticipate the many wars to come.



Fig. 8. Matthäus Daniel Pöppelmann, Zwinger, Long Gallery with 'Mathematical-Physical Salon' pavilion and Crown Gate. Thonig. View in 1967. Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Deutsche Fotothek, Dresden. (Photo: Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Deutsche Fotothek, Inv. Nr. 168360.)



Fig. 9. Balthasar Permoser and assistants, Alternating satyrs and satyr masks at Zwinger 'Wall Pavillon' and Curved Gallery. 1709–1728. Möbius. View in 1930. Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Deutsche Fotothek, Dresden. (Photo: Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Deutsche Fotothek, Inv. Nr. 8082.)

20. Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann, *Court, Cloister & City: The Art and Culture of Central Europe 1450–1800* (Chicago University Press: Chicago, 1995), p. 325. On choreography and sculptural gesture, see Roland Kanz, 'Körpergebärde und Statuarik in der Skulptur des 18. Jahrhunderts', in Kanz and Körner (eds), *Pygmalions Aufklärung*, pp. 239–67.

21. Jean-Louis Sponcel, *Der Zwinger. Die Hoffeste und die Schloßpläne zu Dresden*, 2 vols (Wilhelm Baensch: Dresden, 1924), vol. 1, p. 97.

22. Sponcel is still foundational on the Zwinger; see also Eberhard Hempel, *Der Dresdener Zwinger: ein Denkmal festlicher Kultur in der sächsischen Residenz* (Koehler und Ameland: Leipzig, 1965); Hermann Heckmann, *Matthäus Daniel Pöppelmann* (Deutsche Verlagsanstalt: Stuttgart, 1986); Harald Marx (ed.), *Matthäus Daniel Pöppelmann, der Architekt des Dresdner Zwingers* (VEB E. A. Seemann: Leipzig, 1989). English-language sources on Dresden's eighteenth-century court culture include exh. cat. *The Glory of Baroque Dresden: The State Art Collections Dresden*



Fig. 10. Balthasar Permoser, Satyr at Zwinger, Curved Gallery. Circa 1717. Seifert. View in 1926. Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Deutsche Fotothek, Dresden. (Photo: Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Deutsche Fotothek, Inv. Nr. 253541.)

(Mississippi Arts Pavilion, Jackson, Mississippi, 2004); Helen Watanabe-O’Kelly, *Court Culture in Dresden: From Renaissance to Baroque* (Palgrave: New York, 2002), pp. 193–237, and Kaufmann, *Court, Cloister & City*, pp. 324–33.

23. Sponsel, *Der Zwinger*, p. 259. Some speak of a ‘Zwingerstil’ especially at the Nymphenbad. Others consider its last stage ‘Borrominesque’. See Heinrich Gerhard Franz, ‘Der Zwinger in Dresden: Die künstlerische Genese des barocken Bauwerks’, in *57e congrès international d’histoire de l’Art. Strasbourg, 1–7 Septembre 1989. Actes.* (Strasbourg, 1992), pp. 145–63, p. 162.

24. Sponsel, *Der Zwinger*, p. 30.

Such an insertion of Pygmalion into an account of the Zwinger’s allegorical meanings, of course, belongs to its rhetorical functions; as such, it would seem to be the opposite of Herder’s ideas about Pygmalion as a paradigm for self-realisation and assertion of self in relation to other. This paradigm seemed to manifest itself solely in the creative relationship between sculptor and sculpture or the recreative encounter of viewer and sculpture. In short, it is predicated upon individuation and aims at truthful identification. How, then, can the Pygmalion impulse be said to operate in the context of ‘Bauplastik’ or monumental sculpture? My earlier examples, the sculpture called *Benevolence* atop Dresden’s city hall and the *Frauenkirche* perceived as a bell of stone, treat monumental sculpture rhetorically – the one synecdochically, the other metonymically – such that in the first instance



Fig. 11. Balthasar Permoser. 'Mathematical-Physical Salon' and 'Wallpavillon'. Paul Heermann. *Judgment of Paris*. Circa 1717. View before 1945. Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Deutsche Fotothek, Dresden. (Photo: Sächsische Landesbibliothek. Deutsche Fotothek, Inv. Nr. 112789.)

one single monumental sculpture and in the second instance the perception of a building as a single sculptural object come to stand for the entire monument and its civic and religious functions. These examples thus do not include the plurality of sculptural presence found in the Zwinger. However, an iconographic tradition of representing and understanding the Pygmalion impulse, which demonstrates this step from single, or autonomous, sculpture to multiple and monumental sculpture, emerged in the work of the printmaker Johann Wilhelm Baur (1600 or 1607–1640 or 1642). Baur made an immensely influential series of 151 etchings of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, first published in Augsburg in 1639, which was reissued several times in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.²⁷ In Baur's *Pygmalion* (Fig. 12), the protagonist(s) have several doubles or echoes elsewhere in the image, which has a wide horizontal format. On the left is a large palace courtyard with decorative sculptures atop the building and a fountain with a Rape of Proserpina or other such sculpture group in the manner of Bernini. Out there Pygmalion is a kneeling supplicant praying to Venus on her dove-drawn chariot high in the sky. Courting peacocks next to the fountain contrast with its struggling sculpted couple and further suggest either sinful pride or the soul's immortality. On the right is a studio looking much like an open stage set. And there Pygmalion is at work on his statue's left shin while also looking up to her face turned towards him as if in mutual recognition as the sculpture is coming to life. Further back is a bedroom scene in which the lovers passionately embrace. This print attracted the attention of the Bavarian sculptor Ignaz Günther (1725–1775), who in his own etching of 1769 (Fig. 13) refers to Ovid filtered through modern theatrical versions of the Pygmalion myth, including, possibly, Rousseau's, and who edits Baur's version by omitting the bedroom scene and replacing the indoor studio by an outdoor studio.²⁸ Günther's *Pygmalion* works in an open colonnade whose

25. So ist auch die aeusserliche bau-art mit lauter gleichsam redenden Bildungen ausgezieret.

26. Fritz Löffler, *Der Zwinger zu Dresden* (Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden: Dresden, 1981), p. 10.

27. Baur sources, Blühm, *Pygmalion, Die Ikonographie*, 113–124, with further references.

28. On this print in the context of his own oeuvre, see Christiane Hertel, *Pygmalion in Bavaria: The Sculptor Ignaz Günther (1725–1775) and Eighteenth-Century Aesthetic Art Theory*. (Pennsylvania State University Press: University Park, 2011), chapter 2, passim. For a monographic treatment of Günther, see Peter Volk, *Ignaz Günther: Völlendung des Rokoko* (Friedrich Pustet: Regensburg, 1991). On the reception of Rousseau's *Pygmalion*, the history of stage performances, adaptations for opera and ballet, the philosophical debate on whether movement and gesture prefigure or illustrate musical parts, and on the complex success of the monodrama as such especially at Austrian and German courts throughout the eighteenth century, see Bettine Brandl-Risi, 'Der Pygmalion-Mythos im Musiktheater – Verzeichnis der Werke', in *Pygmalion: Die Geschichte des Mythos in der abendländischen Kultur*, ed. Mathias Mayer and Gerhard Neumann (Rombach Verlag: Freiburg im Breisgau, 1997), pp. 665–733. Bruce Alan Brown, *Gluck and the French Theatre in Vienna* (Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1991).



Fig. 12. Johann Wilhelm Baur, *Pygmalion*. 1639. No. 96 in Baur, *P. Ovidii N. Metamorphosen*. 1641. Vienna. Reprint Jeremias Wolff: Augsburg, ca. 1700. University Library, Special Collections, University of Virginia, Charlottesville. (Photo: Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library, University of Virginia Library.)



Fig. 13. Ignaz Günther, *Pygmalion*. 1769. Etching. Münchner Stadtmuseum, Munich. (Photo: Art Resource, New York. Credit line: Art Resource, New York.)

29. This is a section in Herder's 'Zum Sinn des Gefühls', in Johann Gottfried Herder, *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. Bernhard Suphan (Weidmannsche Buchhandlung: Berlin, 1892), vol. 8, 88–115.

backdrop now is the palace courtyard. His statue corresponds to the multitude of monumental sculpture placed atop the palace. It is as if this Pygmalion were a maker of such sculpture and as if his Venus statue could easily join the others silhouetted up there against the sky, were this mingling not against Ovid's plot. Günther's sculptor does not yet seem to have understood his role in it, as it were, whereas his statue, in looking out at the print's viewer, seems to be ahead of him in the story. But Günther also expands upon Baur's image, adding in the foreground a Sphinx serving as fountain and, sitting in its shadow, a small monkey. Its presence here introduces the topos of artistic imitation as mindless aping of nature (*ars simia naturae*). At first such ridicule of imitation as aping completely contrasts with the ideas Winckelmann and Lessing held about imitation as emulation and also with Herder's understanding of the viewing subject's Pygmalion attraction and response to sculpture. Yet Günther pairs the monkey with the omniscient Sphinx, whose presence, in turn, would seem to warn against any rash conclusions about the art of sculpture. By 1769 Günther had reached the height of his fame as sculptor of altars and pulpits in Bavarian Rococo churches, works in which he infuses the genre's expected multitude of sculptures representing divine, angelic and saintly figures with remarkable psychological depth and individuation. Thus Günther's Pygmalion print may be seen to reflect his interest in the mediation between monumental or decorative sculptural programme and single, autonomous sculpture, in both practical and aesthetic terms. His print appeared in François Cuvilliers the Younger's *Architecture Bavaroise* of 1773, which the elder Cuvilliers had begun in 1755, a connection reminding us that Günther also designed park sculpture representing Greek gods and goddesses for the Wittelsbachs' Nymphenburg Palace garden.

To situate Baur's and Günther's prints, which envision Pygmalion in the context of monumental sculpture production, in their larger cultural contexts of court culture and courtly sculpture commissions, we should remember the many connections between Munich's and Dresden's courts in the eighteenth century. They include intermarriage and subsequently the Saxon crown prince's and his family's exile in Munich during the Seven Years War. They also include a shared pride in the Bavarian sculptor Balthasar Permoser, among whose best collaborators on the Zwinger's monumental sculpture was Paul Egell, with whom Günther trained briefly in Mannheim in 1752, before moving on to the art academy in Vienna. And it is again useful to recall Herder's praise of Dresden as the Florence on the Elbe. The subtitle of his *Sculpture, Some Observations on Shape and Form from Pygmalion's Creative Dream* indicates Herder's argument for tactile seeing: sculpture is a sensual art to be touched by the beholder. In the preliminary sketches Herder wrote in Paris in 1769, one of them subtitled 'Thoughts from the Garden of Versailles', he emphasises that touch and the sensation of touch have essential epistemological meaning, more so than vision.²⁹ That the multitude of garden sculpture at Versailles should have inspired these ideas to him allows the inference that Dresden's 'Zwinger-garten' would have sustained them as well.

On the basis of numerous travel accounts, city guides, letters, and journal entries, we can state that the strictly rhetorical reading suggested early in the century by Pöppelmann's text was rare. There were times when the sculptures were ignored or, beginning in the 1780s, critically rejected as overly ornate, but whenever they were attentively viewed, they were regarded with lively, sensual engagement and often with an appreciation of

their humour, wit, and, always, their unsurpassed quality as secular sculpture in the German lands. Permoser's success in Saxony especially in terms of the playful and transgressive aspects of his sculptures was deeply indebted to his Bavarian origins and the beginnings there of ecclesiastic Bavarian Rococo sculpture.³⁰ Permoser clearly demonstrated this connection in his expressive religious sculptures in Dresden, both for the Catholic court's church interiors and private devotion.

Among the various voices acknowledging a likely difference between the Zwinger's first intentions and its modern interpretation, I should like to quote Mary Endell's guide to Dresden of 1908. An American married to Fritz Endell (1773–1955), who like his more famous brother August Endell was a Jugendstil artist living in the USA between 1914 and 1920, she was keenly aware of what one might call a natural life, or even a 'cult of nature', which she associated with a Nietzschean freedom.³¹ Her account of the Zwinger merits quotation at some length:

Probably no building in Dresden may so well as the Zwinger serve to link us twentieth-century mortals with a more graceful age. Conceived at a time . . . when measured formality was in France and neighboring countries yielding to natural ease, the Zwinger stands to us for a fine freedom, for rich invention, for enchanting gaiety. And yet in its heightened charm, the architecture of Pöppelmann has lost no whit of the balanced proportions of a preceding period. The windows are somewhat larger, – obliging the lovers of light and open air – but through the medium of ornament, they are so knitted together with the roof . . . that a harmonious ensemble is secured.

Of the sculptures she writes:

The details of sculpture on the Zwinger, particularly on the court facades, are a study in themselves. Roguish fauns laughingly or with mock seriousness support the stone weight above them . . . elfish beauties peep at us from festooned cornices. If . . . we ascend the steps of the "Wallpavillon" (Fig. 14), – thus scaling the old ramparts – and from there descend at length into the "Nymphenbad" (Fig. 15), we shall sense how these eighteenth-century court-folk – though they were panting for more air and movement and light – remained to the core creatures of the salon: the salon has merely been enlarged, and burdensome etiquette has been lightened. Through the open doors, through the friendly windows, one could spring into the outer salon of stone and verdure, where dolphin fountains play. Where water nymphs guard the bath, where the stamp of stage order underlies all exuberance. This is not nature, – only as nature has draped art: surely it was never so natural – never so beautiful as now that time has softened it.³²

Among the elements that literally softened the Zwinger's appearance in 1908 was a Romantic interpretation of the Zwinger-garten that had led to filling in the moat and turning the outer ramparts into an English Garden. And the long neglect of the Nymphenbad had turned it into a picturesque ruin but which Endell imagined as a lively outdoor salon (Figs 16 and 17). By then Gottfried Semper's massive Gemäldegalerie of 1847–1854 enhanced the sense of a fragile, miniaturized, and enchanting Zwinger from another world (Fig. 7). Only Jean-Louis Sponcel, in his classic monograph of 1924, observed that the Zwinger's gracefulness was no longer baroque.³³ Most authors hesitate or even vehemently reject the idea of calling the Zwinger early Rococo. It is in the context of describing it in such terms that Mary Endell also acknowledged that war and violence had affected the Zwinger. She praises the Wallpavillon as 'the most exquisite of the entire Zwinger chain. This twelve-sided jewel is more finished than its vis-à-vis of similar outlines. It has, too, been less

30. Again, see Asche, *Balthasar Permoser und die Barockskulptur des Dresdner Zwingers* and Balthasar Permoser *hats gemacht*; and further, Roland Kanz, 'Balthasar Permoser's Christus an der Geisselsäule', in Bärbel Hamacher and Christl Karnehm (eds), *pinxit/sculpsit/fecit: Kunsthistorische Studien. Festschrift für Bruno Bushart* (Deutscher Kunstverlag: Munich, 1994), pp. 226–41. On Dresden's complex religious culture, see Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly, 'Religion and the Consort: Two Electresses of Saxony and Queens of Poland (1697–1757)', in Clarissa Campbell Orr (ed.), *Queenship in Europe 1660–1815* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2004), pp. 252–76.

31. Mary Endell, *Dresden. History Stage Gallery. Illustrated with 10 Mezzotints, and Book-Decorations by Fritz Endell* (Johannes Seifert: Dresden, 1908). Hans H. Hofstätter, *Jugendstil Druckkunst* (Holle: Baden-Baden, 1973), p. 184; Paul Greenhalgh, 'The Cult of Nature', in P. Greenhalgh (ed.), *Art Nouveau 1890–1914*, Victoria & Albert Museum, London, 2000 (Abrams: New York, 2000), pp. 54–71, also Gillian Naylor, 'Munich Secession and Jugendstil', in *Art Nouveau 1890–1914*, pp. 286–97; Helge David, 'August Endell: The spirit and the beauty of the city', in Iain Boyd Whyte (ed.), *Modernism and the Spirit of the City* (Routledge: London and New York, 2003), pp. 85–93. The Endells also took an interest in the Rhythmic or Modern Dance school at Dresden-Hellerau, and knew Mary Wigman. Fritz Endell taught drawing at Isadora Duncan's ill-fated School of Dance.

32. Endell, *Dresden*, pp. 39–40.

33. Sponcel, *Der Zwinger*, p. 57.

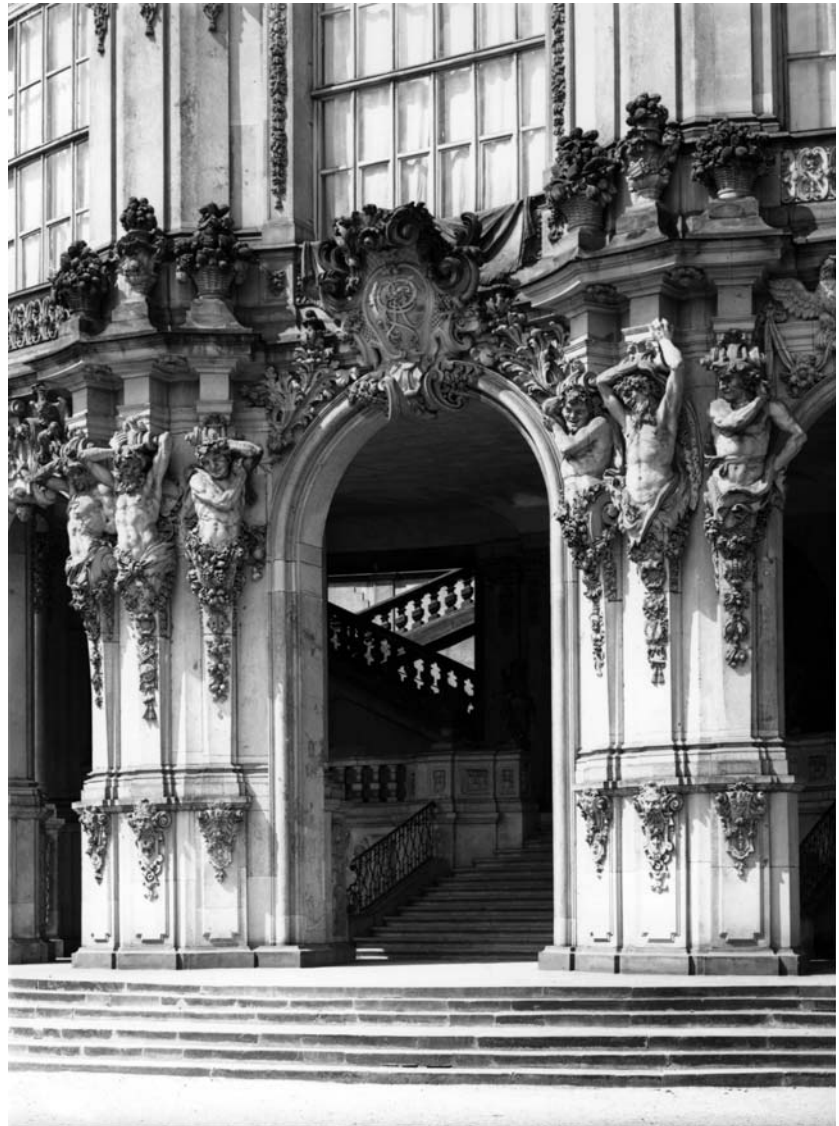


Fig. 14. Matthäus Daniel Pöppelmann and Balthasar Permoser, 'Wall Pavilion' staircase. 1709–1728. View in 1934. Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Deutsche Fotothek, Dresden. (Photo: Sächsische Landesbibliothek. Deutsche Fotothek, Inv. Nr. 145152.)

34. Endell, *Dresden*, p. 41.

35. After its post-war restoration, it displayed a chronicle of the Zwinger's history, which regrettably was removed in the early 1990s' restoration.

impaired and restored, having been sheltered from the agitated history of its partner'.³⁴ Endell thus offers an anthropomorphic account of the two gates, one closer to nature, containing and surrounded by fountains, artistically more sophisticated, and sheltered from violence, the other closer to the city, ringing bells and telling time, artistically simpler and bearing the scars of history (Fig. 2).³⁵ The Wallpavillon's beauty and its exceptional challenge to sculptors in the service of historic preservation would repeatedly become the topic of expert discussion, once the Wallpavillon could not be sheltered from adversity.

'In the war he suffered much but he has fairly recovered by now'. The subject of this sentence is not a person, but a building, the Zwinger in Dresden, gendered masculine in the German language. And the war referred to is not



Fig. 15. Matthäus Daniel Pöppelmann and Balthasar Permoser, Steps down into Nymphenbad. 1709–1728. Möbius. View in 1930. Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Deutsche Fotothek, Dresden. (Photo: Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Deutsche Fotothek, Inv.Nr. 7229.)

World War II, but the Seven Years War of 1756–1763 whose traces elsewhere in the city Bernardo Bellotto also recorded in paintings and prints (1765–1766). The writer of the sentence is Johann Christian Hasche, author of the *Detailed Description of Dresden... with all its external and internal objects of interest...*, published in two volumes in 1781 and 1783.³⁶ In his preface Hasche praises the city's 'patriots', 'who more than once saved Dresden from its fall' and from its 'ruins and mountains of rubble'.³⁷ I now turn to some of the most important of these 'patriots', though mainly from a later age.

Prior to the bombing resulting in its partial destruction in 1945, the Zwinger had just been thoroughly restored. This was its fourth restoration, the first being the one praised by Hasche in 1781–1783, the second the one following the



Fig. 16. Matthäus Daniel Pöppelmann and Balthasar Permoser, Nymphenbad cascade. 1709–1728. View in ca. 1910. Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Deutsche Fotothek, Dresden. (Photo: Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Deutsche Fotothek, Inv. Nr. 257336.)



Fig. 17. Matthäus Daniel Pöppelmann and Balthasar Permoser, Nymphenbad cascade. 1709–1728. Dresden. (Photo: Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Deutsche Fotothek, Inv. Nr. 111039.)

36. Johann Christian Hasche, *Umständliche Beschreibung Dresdens mit allen seinen äußern und innern Merckwürdigkeiten historisch und architektonisch mit zugegebenem Grundriß*, 2 vols (Schwickert: Leipzig, 1781, 1783), vol. 2, p. 236.



Fig. 18. Zwinger courtyard during restoration the fourth Zwinger restoration. 1924–1936. View in 1926. Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Deutsche Fotothek, Dresden. (Photo: Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Deutsche Fotothek, Inv. Nr. 1572.)

37. Hasche, vol. 1, preface without pagination. Similarly, Karl Wilhelm Daßdorf describes the Zwinger as recently rescued after decades of neglect. Daßdorf, *Beschreibung der vorzüglichen Merkwürdigkeiten der Churfürstlichen Residenzstadt Dresden und einiger umliegenden Gegenden* (Walthersche Hofbuchhandlung: Dresden, 1782), p. 46.

38. Walter Bachmann summarised this development in an essay for the daily *Dresdner Anzeiger* (24 February 1924) and the *Frankfurter Zeitung* (29 February 1924). Typoscript and newspaper clips at the Landesamt für Denkmalpflege Sachsen (henceforth LDP), DN Zwinger Akten 1924–1948 (Altakten).

39. Cornelius Gurlitt's publications include *Die Kunstdenkmäler Dresdens, Beschreibende Darstellung der älteren Bau- und Kunstdenkmäler des Königreichs Sachsen*, vols 21 and 22 (Meinhold & Söhne: Dresden, 1900, 1901). On the Zwinger, see pp. 422–55; *Dresden, Die Kultur in Einzeldarstellungen*, ed. C. Gurlitt, vols 23 and 24 (Marquardt & Co: Berlin, 1905); and 'Die Erneuerung des Dresdener Zwingers', *Die Denkmalpflege. Zeitschrift für Denkmalpflege und Heimatschutz*, vol. V/XXXIII, 1931, pp. 88–91. On his influential support of the Zwinger restoration, see Heinrich Magirius, 'Cornelius Gurlitt als Denkmalpfleger: Zur Methodik der sächsischen Denkmalpflege im 1. Drittel des 20. Jahrhunderts', in H. Magirius et al., *Geschichte der Denkmalpflege in Sachsen* (VEB für Bauwesen: Berlin, 1989), pp. 144–7.

Napoleonic Battle of Dresden in 1813, the third necessitated by the Revolution of 1849 which used the Zwinger as a battle field. The fourth restoration took place between 1924 and 1936 under the auspices of Dresden's first Institute for Historic Preservation (Landesamt für Denkmalpflege), which grew out of the 'Zwingerbauhütte' (Zwinger workshop) and was founded especially for this restoration purpose. As the institute's founder and Saxony's first state conservator Walter Bachmann (1883–1958) put it in 1924: 'Today the Zwinger is, to the expert's eye, a *ruin*, and threatens to be apparent as such also to the layperson, namely, to *collapse* soon. This is the naked truth that not only concerns Saxons/Saxony [Sachsen]'.³⁸ The direct influence of the architectural historian Cornelius Gurlitt (1865–1938), founder of historic preservation in Saxony and among the first to recognize Saxony's baroque architecture, was crucial.³⁹ The man who led the restoration was the architect and architectural historian Hubert Ermisch (1883–1951), who had written his dissertation in architectural history under Gurlitt. By all accounts Ermisch completely identified with the Zwinger restoration project. He stimulated and took very seriously the interest of Dresden's population in it, inviting people to tour the site during restoration, a practice revived during the recent reconstruction of the Frauenkirche. Photographs of the Zwinger courtyard in 1926 show workers and citizens going about their everyday lives among the sculptures set up there for restoration or replacement, matched by their new doubles (Fig. 18). Ermisch published progress reports in local newspapers, a practice continuing in Dresden to this day, and also, mid-way into the restoration, a guide to the Zwinger, with a preface by Gurlitt, in which, almost echoing Hasche's words of 1781, both appeal to Dresden's 'patriots'. Gurlitt writes: 'Dresden has an obligation to the Zwinger of which it must always be aware'.⁴⁰ Ermisch puts it more emphatically, committing himself to an ethics that twenty years later would guide his rescue of the Zwinger after 1945:



Fig. 19. Georg Wrba and workshop, Nymphs. Nymphenbad, north gallery. 1924–1929. Mantzsch. View after 1924. Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Deutsche Fotothek, Dresden. (Photo: Sächsische Landesbibliothek. Deutsche Fotothek, Inv.Nr. 99162).

It is precisely this circumstance, that here a cultural creation of supreme importance has been preserved in spite of all the storms that had raged through it, which obliges us to hold all hands over it, to do everything that will guarantee its existence for future generations.⁴¹

Ermisch made controversial decisions, such as digging out the Zwinger's ramparts and moat and restoring the Nymphenbad, by then, as we have already seen, a landscaped ruin. He supported the extremely controversial juxtaposition of some of the remaining eighteenth-century statues of nymphs in the niches of the Nymphenbad's South side with modern versions in a part naturalistic, part expressionistic style, on its North side (Fig. 19). These were designed by the sculptor Georg Wrba (1872–1939), originally from Munich and by then a Professor of sculpture at Dresden's Art Academy.⁴² Wrba had actually first been in charge of the Zwinger restoration in its entirety, an assignment that suggests an uncertainty as to whether to consider the Zwinger primarily a work of sculpture or a work of architecture. Ermisch and Wrba had major disagreements that soon led to an exchange of roles, with Wrba now serving as artistic collaborator in the area of sculpture. Subsequently, they evidently collaborated well and Ermisch defended the sculptor and his controversial work. Public opinion supported them: 'Fortunately, one did not restrict oneself to slavishly imitating the old sculptures . . . but gave artists the opportunity to create something new'.⁴³

The debate surrounding the Nymphenbad restoration deserves close attention in that it touched upon a number of questions regarding the concepts of originality and imitation, thereby reopening debates as old as Winckelmann's *Reflections on the Imitation of Greek Works in Painting and Sculpture* written and published in Dresden in 1755. For example, the 'Denkmalrat' or 'Monuments Council' discussed (8 March 1930) whether 'the new sculptures created in Permoser's spirit' should be labelled or

40. Hubert Georg Ermisch, *Zwinger-Führer*, preface by Cornelius Gurlitt (Wolfgang Jess: Dresden, 1926); preface.

41. Ermisch, *Zwinger-Führer*, p. 37.

42. On Wrba, see *Dresden: Von der Königlichen Kunstakademie zur Hochschule für Bildende Künste (1764–1989)* (VEB Verlag der Kunst: Dresden, 1990), pp. 207–10, 275–6; Günter Kloss, *Georg Wrba (1872–1939): Ein Bildhauer zwischen Historismus und Moderne* (Michael Imhoff: Petersberg, 1998).

43. *Dresdner Volkszeitung*, 24 August 1929, p. 5.



Fig. 20. Balthasar Permoser, *Nymph Going to Her Bath*. Nymphenbad, south gallery. 1711–1716. Möbius. View in 1929. Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Deutsche Fotothek, Dresden. (Photo: Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Deutsche Fotothek, Inv. Nr. M 984.)



Fig. 21. Georg Wrba, *Nymph Going to Her Bath Nymph*. Nymphenbad, north gallery. 1928. Dresden. (Photo: Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Deutsche Fotothek, Inv. Nr. 8099.)

44. Copy of the letter, p. 2, and minutes of the meeting in LDP, Zwinger Akten 1924–1948 (Altakten). On Winckelmann's concept of allegory as transparent, self-explanatory imitation, see Christiane Hertel, 'The Ends of Allegory: Winckelmann, Rocaille and Volcanic Displacement', in Lisa Rosenthal and Cristelle Baskins (eds), *Rethinking Allegory: Embodying Meaning in Early Modern Culture* (Ashgate Press: New York, 2007), pp. 35–56.

45. A controversy related to the Nymphenbad debate was Ermisch's wish to have Ernst Rietschel's (1804–1861) monument to King Friedrich August I (1837–1843) in the centre of the Zwinger courtyard removed. In the Weimar Republic, 'deposing' a generally liked monarch had political meaning. Gurlitt's letter addresses this sensitive issue.

whether, just as Winckelmann had argued, successful imitation was autonomous and could speak for itself.⁴⁴ The debate also involved some of the key elements of Herder's book, *Sculpture*, recasting the Pygmalion impulse as a concept of imitation in historic preservation. In a letter Gurlitt sent to the 'Monument Council' (Denkmalrat), when he had to miss a meeting (24 August 1929), he writes:

One has to understand that in questions of art there are no decisive laws. All aesthetic theory is the attempt to crystallize such a theory out of an analysis of existing art, but each time a new art also topples the old [aesthetic] laws. When the Gemäldegalerie was built to close the Zwinger courtyard, one believed that the Zwinger was atrocious, but Semper's museum building a masterpiece, ... The modern artist finds both the Zwinger and the Gemäldegalerie atrocious, and so does the not-modern artist everything the moderns create. [The] task of the Monument Council is the *preservation* of the old. (...) for we have no power to correct the history of the past.⁴⁵

Unless Gurlitt misspoke here, he suggests that unlike the history of the past the future history of the present could be influenced. If so, his student Ermisch's decisions regarding the Nymphenbad may be seen as such an influence on its future reception. In this case, the Pygmalion impulse refers to the active shaping of the history of the present through sculpture and through the pairing of eighteenth-century sculpture with modern sculpture. Let us now



Fig. 22. Matthäus Daniel Pöppelmann and Balthasar Permoser, Wallpavillon ruin. 1709–1728. E. Höhne and E. Pohl. View in February 1945. Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Deutsche Fotothek, Dresden. (Photo: Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Deutsche Fotothek, Inv. Nr. HP 2927/25126.)

consider this pairing (Figs 20 and 21). Both sculptures show figures in action and motion. Permoser's *Nymph going to her bath* steps gracefully down into the water, while slowly removing her clothing, baring her right breast and her left leg and looking pleased into the distance or across the imaginary body of water or to the nymphs across the courtyard. Wrba's *Nymph going to her bath* thrusts her left hip and right knee out as she steps down and energetically throws off drapes which never seem to have been held together by a belt and brooch of the kind we see in Permoser's work. She, too, seems pleased in anticipation of her bath and looks down at the rim of the imaginary body of water which the folds of her billowing drapes make us imagine as an agitated element, more great lake than pond. Permoser's nymph is still more dressed than undressed; Wrba's nymph looks naked and just framed by billowing drapes. Permoser's nymph suggests the ideal female nude; Wrba's nymph is a strong, all but idealized woman with muscles and ample belly and thighs. While Permoser's sculpture is organised around and along a vertical axis, thus effecting the nymph's calm serenity, Wrba's sculpture is quite dynamic and inscribed into a sweeping semicircular shape anchored by the figure's right foot and downward gaze. One work looks slow, the other fast; and so forth. Each nymph corresponds to the other by both resemblance and contrast, while also belonging to her own time, Permoser's to the early eighteenth-century courtly Garden of the Hesperides, Wrba's to Dresden as one birthplace of German modern art, especially Expressionism, somewhat inflected here by a Futurist dynamism.⁴⁶

In his guide to the Zwinger, Ermisch twice mentions that Balthasar Permoser boasted of having carved the herms on the Wallpavillon without an intermediate model, directly from the block. In other words, they were true originals, directly issuing from the artist's creative imagination, sculptural skill, and, as Ermisch notes, muscular strength. They were Permoser's creations in more than one sense:

46. A survey of Wrba's oeuvre interestingly suggest that his *Nymphenbad* sculptures, but not even all of his Zwinger sculptures, are among his most modern and least conventional. See Kloss, *Wrba*, 49–53. I would suggest that Wrba's Pygmalion way of bringing Permoser's sculpture to life in his own sculpture has modern counterparts elsewhere, in photography and film. Here I am thinking of the Kertesz' photographs of park sculptures shown in the exhibition *The Original Copy: Photography of Sculpture 1859 to today* (Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1 August–1 November 2010).

47. Ermisch, *Zwinger-Führer*, p. 31.

48. Hellmuth Allwill Fritzsche, 'Der Dresdner Zwinger im Wandel der Zeiten', *Zeitschrift für Denkmalpflege*, vol. 2, 1927–1928, pp. 187–94.

49. Ermisch, 'Der Dresdner Zwinger im Wandel der Zeiten. Eine Erwiderung auf den Aufsatz von H. A. Fritzsche im vorigen Heft', *Zeitschrift für Denkmalpflege*, vol. 3, 1928–1929, pp. 60–4.

50. Ermisch, p. 62.

51. Fritzsche, 'Der Dresdner Zwinger im Wandel der Zeiten. Schlusswort', *Zeitschrift für Denkmalpflege*, vol. 3, 1928–1929, p. 128.

52. Matthias Neutzner, "Wozu leben wir nun noch? Um zu warten, bis die Russen kommen?" Die Dresdner Bevölkerung vom 13. Februar bis 17. April 1945', *Dresdner Hefte, Beiträge zur Kulturgeschichte*, vol. 41, no. 1 (Dresden – Das Jahr 1945), 1995, pp. 7–18.

This method of working: to develop his artistic ideas directly from within the cubic block of stone given to him by the architect. This seems to have been his strength. This made him the most suitable partner for the architect. And this explains the secret of how at the Zwinger sculpture and architecture are so brilliantly integrated.⁴⁷

If this feat of direct carving was the guiding principle, though perhaps not the historical truth, then indeed Ermisch could argue that the sculptures designed by Wrba and carved by his students and the Nymphenbad's architecture and its extant sculptures were integrated through a spiritual affinity and seemingly mutual imitation. They manifest a symbiotic inter-subjectivity that subsequently would invite less a viewing of than a viewing with them. By the same token, a sceptic could argue the opposite. Such a sceptic was the art historian H. A. Fritzsche. In his critical review of the Zwinger restoration in the newly founded *Zeitschrift für Denkmalpflege*, he rejected the combination of Permoser and Wrba as a 'Mischmasch', a tasteless mix, and advocated that casts be made from surviving sculptures and from replacement models.⁴⁸ Ermisch responded in the next issue: 'Casting in stone is using cement and thus an ignoble material, which is a horror for the artist'.⁴⁹ Supplementation of sculptures should be in stone and by an artist, 'von Künstlerhand':

Decorum is a matter of artistic tact. That the artist allows this decidedly modern "note" to resonate with the original must be very welcome, [and is] especially in keeping with the idea/sense of historic preservation.⁵⁰

The main difference between the two men was that for Fritzsche only a cast replica brought one close to the spirit of the original and it alone was modern in the good sense of the 1920s, an 'age of [the] highest technological refinement'.⁵¹ For Ermisch, it was the resonance and correspondence of inner artistic spirit across the divide of three centuries, a spirit conveyed and experienced through the sculptor's touch that most counted in imitation, not a statue's external similarity. This possibility of a modern resonance with the past was proof of the Zwinger's authentic life in the present. Put differently, Wrba's works, whether Ermisch himself liked them or not, truly realized the power of the Pygmalion impulse in historic preservation.

These ideas of imitation under the gaze of the Zwinger's sculptural program were completely reframed after the bombing in February 1945. As one citizen described the situation: 'Why are we still alive? To wait for the Russians?'⁵² One person who planned for their arrival was Hubert Ermisch. He survived the bombing and so did some of those who had worked with him on the Zwinger before the war. Soon after its partial destruction and while the war continued, they began to work on the Zwinger ruin (Fig. 22), securing arches, filling in gaping holes in walls and roofs, covering galleries and collecting statues, thus accomplishing a considerable amount of work by 8 May 1945, the day the war ended for Germany on the Eastern front and Soviet occupation began. Those who collected the Zwinger's architectural and sculptural remains in the spring and summer of 1945 did so while perhaps still uncertain who among their friends, acquaintances, and neighbours survived, while others still collected corpses in Dresden's destroyed centre. Ermisch was quite aware of the delicate nature of this analogy. In letters to friends, among them builders, artists, plasterers, sculptors, and photographers, he was careful to ask about their family's fate at the beginning and towards the end to request their help and support or to



Fig. 23. Matthäus Daniel Pöppelmann and Balthasar Permoser, 1709–1728. View in 1947. Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Deutsche Fotothek, Dresden. (Photo: Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Deutsche Fotothek, Inv. Nr. 61403.)

turn to unfinished, pre-destruction business on the Zwinger.⁵³ Others in this period were less careful, occasionally seeking rather than avoiding the comparison and analogy of retrieval, thus inviting, at least in hindsight, ethical scrutiny for weighing human beings against works of art and for their allegorical identification of corpses and shattered sculptures with one another in a kind of macabre neo-baroque notion of an all-pervasive tragic fate. Richard Peter's photo book, mentioned at the beginning, may be seen as pursuing this last-mentioned choice for political ends.⁵⁴ Such poignant ambiguities were sharpened by the fact that under the Nazis Dresden's city government had carefully removed its art collections but neglected to protect the civilian population or plan for their evacuation. It was, then, perhaps to be expected that the new socialist government of the GDR (1949) would cast itself as truly humanist, as a government putting human beings first and things second, a position that bode ill for a structure like the Zwinger, a quintessential example of a pleasure-seeking feudal past.

It is therefore truly remarkable that in June 1945, following his pre-war commitment to the Zwinger as well as a felicitous intuition or premonition, Ermisch took it upon himself to propose the reconstruction of the Zwinger to the new Communist municipal government which in August was to appoint Wil Grohmann, primarily known as a scholar of German expressionist art, to be in charge of cultural affairs. On 17 June Ermisch presented a document of touching simplicity and homemade, scrap-book quality. Apparently there were five copies of it. The copy I saw was bound with 'Leukoplast', a durable German medical tape.⁵⁵ A sign of necessity, not irony, the medical tape nevertheless also suggested a new role for Dresden's Pygmalion touch. On twenty-four pages, Ermisch proposes the immediate reconstruction of the Zwinger on the grounds that Dresden needed a cultural landmark by which it could be identified and with which its population could identify. Given that the Frauenkirche was a heap of rubble, only the Zwinger

53. Ermisch, letters at the Sächsisches Staatsarchiv Dresden; folder Landbauamt 90/2 letters of 9 April 1945, and 20 June 1945; and extensive correspondence with Hermann Menschner (construction and scaffolding), November 1946, folder Landbauamt 113; Willi Lange (architect), January 1946–June 1947, folder Landbauamt 51; Johannes Fiedler (painter and printmaker), January–June 1946, folder Landbauamt 50.

54. Hertel, *Dis/Continuities*, pp. 103–10.

55. I am grateful to Gerhard Glaser, Landesamt für Denkmalpflege, for making available to me Hubert Ermisch's *Ist die Rettung des Dresdner Zwingers möglich?*



Fig. 24. Mantzsch, Zwinger restoration team with Hubert Ermisch on the right. 1932. Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Deutsche Fotothek, Dresden. (Photo: Sächsische Landesbibliothek. Deutsche Fotothek, Inv. Nr. 252 861.)



Fig. 25. Möbius. Zwinger restoration team with Hubert Ermisch in the center. 1951. Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Deutsche Fotothek, Dresden.

56. 'Erbepflege', that is, 'curatorial attendance to cultural heritage', was written into law in 1952 and into the East German constitution in 1968. But considerable resources were allocated only much later, for example, to the restoration of Gottfried Semper's Dresden Opera, which reopened on 13 February 1985.

57. LDP, DN Zwinger Akten, Altakten. Löffler's detailed obituary for Albert Braun at Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Nachlässe, Mscr. Dresd. App. 2535, 4307, typescript, 6 p. On Braun, see also *Allgemeines Künstler-Lexikon*, ed. Günter Meissner (Saur: Munich and Leipzig, since 1983), vol. 13, 1996, p. 685.

ruin could fulfil this function. He then proceeds to argue with technical facts and numbers, assuring his readers that the project was feasible, that the buildings could be secured and restored and also that approximately 850 sculptural elements could be restored or otherwise made use of. The majority of the brochure's pages consist of carefully chosen juxtapositions of 'before' and 'after' images of the Zwinger. Sometimes there are captions under each image, sometimes there is a caption beneath only one of a pair of images, leaving the other image to speak for itself or, as if following a photographic Pygmalion impulse, speaking in the name and form or imitation of its partner. The text is written in a style that in German one would call 'sachlich', that is, objective or to the point. Indeed what may be most striking about this brochure is the complete absence of any emotion from the text. The effect is that of a photo essay, in which the photographs of buildings and ruins, whole and mutilated sculptures come to life and themselves speak a rather emotionally charged language in the eyes and mind of their beholder. It appears that this was precisely what led to Ermisch's success. The initiative to reconstruct the Zwinger was possible only at that moment, and would soon become unthinkable, until perhaps the 1980s, by which time it would have been too late.⁵⁶

The process of rebuilding and restoring the Zwinger began in the summer of 1945. It was largely dependent on low-tech means of construction and a shoestring budget, which for the first years was partly monetary, partly delivered in kind, that is, in the form of scaffolding and building materials of various sorts. Wages were lower than on other construction projects. Generally, poor health and nutrition led to the practice of growing vegetables in the Zwinger's courtyard (Fig. 23), thus making it metaphorically and literally a source of sustenance. As Ermisch later explained, he and Albert Braun (1899–1962), a sculptor who had lost his studio and all its contents in the bombing, decided to restore sculptures in stone, primarily, as he already had observed in 1928, because this was the only way to do justice to the task at hand.⁵⁷ With so much loss to deal with and so high a need to rely on memory, memory of the intact Zwinger's appearance and its sculptures and also of their restoration twenty years earlier, the 'idea of historic preservation' implied an unprecedented use of Pygmalion imagination. Apparently the reciprocity characterising the Pygmalion impulse now meant the most faithful restoration of the Zwinger through a sort of tactile memory and at the same time a healing process for those who brought it about. In the end this also entailed that Wrba's sculptures are again in their niches, in keeping with Gurlitt's definition of historic preservation as 'preservation of the old, ... for we have no power over the history of the past'.

Photographs exist of Ermisch and his team in 1932, posing atop a building during the Zwinger's pre-war restoration (Fig. 24) and then in the Zwinger courtyard in 1951 (Fig. 25), including some of the same men. In the first, three men pose with sculptures as in a casual group portrait. Ermisch stands proudly on the right, placing his right hand lightly in the sculpture's right hand in what looks like a mutual, cordial, perhaps ceremonial touch, whereas his two companions, cigarette in one hand, demonstrate a possessive grasp. In the later photograph, Ermisch is the only one seated, at age 68. The primary difference between these images stems from the circumstances of these individuals' lives, but it is also accountable in terms of their changed self-awareness as photographic subjects. In the image of 1951, the group does not mingle with the sculptures, perhaps even cannot do so, as if one

first had to live up to them again. A photograph of 1965 shows the restored Zwinger between the Palace and Hofkirche ruins in the foreground and new apartment blocks and industry in the distance (Fig. 26). It offers a glimpse of the solace and hope the Zwinger restoration must have offered to Dresden's citizens at the time, as 'the work that allows for beauty to emerge in the heart' of the city, from 'the midst of Dresden's field of ruins'.⁵⁸ It appears that, rather than thinking of the friendly nymphs, lusty satyrs, and silly fauns as a surreal mockery of their fate, people once again experienced them as 'perfect spectators' who were witness to the Zwinger's inhabitants. Through the part reconstruction, part preservation of Pöppelmann's, Permoser's and August the Strong's Garden of Hesperides, 'every citizen was reconstructed, healed, encouraged'.⁵⁹

In 1950, when asked to provide a biographical essay for the purpose of gaining permission to hold a Zwinger lottery to raise money for its reconstruction, Ermisch wrote in the first person singular and described himself as a well-educated humanist. He also repeats what he wrote in the 1920s, namely, that then as now he decided to have the Wallpavillon restored last, because the artists doing the work needed years of practice and immersion in the material.⁶⁰ They needed to be ready for the superior task and quality of the Wallpavillon, so that once again it would be made truly by an artist's hand and touch, 'von Künstlerhand'. This was especially so now that Permoser's satyr herms had been so damaged. Ermisch was criticised for his autobiographical account, which was deemed not in the proper socialist style. Surprisingly, this critique came from one of Dresden's most venerated art and architectural historians and professionals in historic preservation, Fritz Löffler, who himself often opposed the city's new cultural politics. This 'patriot', as Hasche might have called Löffler in 1781, held that 'Herr Dr Ermisch was not a creative personality in the sense that his work grew from his creativity' and that instead his 'achievement lay above all in the technical rescue of the Zwinger'.⁶¹ Artistic achievement lays solely with sculptors Georg Wrba before and Albert Braun after the war. Löffler dutifully added that in the GDR all served the 'Aufbau', the construction of the new socialist state. Put differently, Ermisch was not to hone his Pygmalion impulse, or at least not to write about it. To do so was now ideologically suspect in those who were not themselves artists, ostensibly because of its bourgeois and narcissistic goal of self-realisation.⁶² None of this kept Ermisch from publishing the same year an essay about the Zwinger as 'a monument across times', which begins with the announcement: 'For Dresden more than ever the Zwinger will be the city's symbol'.⁶³ Such therapeutic invocation of art might well be taken as an unanticipated measure of success for the eighteenth-century theories of sculpture, imitation, and the Pygmalion impulse put forth by Herder and also by Winckelmann. Be that as it may, for the traumatised survivors of the Dresden bombing the Zwinger's aesthetics of pleasure was now inseparable from their historical and existential position. It is difficult to know to what extent it implied the claim of political innocence or the attempt at compensation for political guilt and personal failure. Even as in Hasche's terms of 1781 they were 'patriots' and in Ermisch's words of 1926 they felt an 'obligation to the Zwinger' and to 'future generations', one may assume that those restoring and rebuilding the Zwinger rebuilt themselves and also justified their own shattered or at least reduced lives and compromised values. If in the 1920s Wrba could with such self-certainty add a compelling modern note of artistic energy so as to contribute to the Zwinger's presence, evidently nothing came to mind



Fig. 26. Döring, View of the completely restored Zwinger. 1965. Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Deutsche Fotothek, Dresden. (Photo: Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Deutsche Fotothek, Inv. Nr. 163064.)

58. Article in the *Tägliche Rundschau*, no. 82, 8 April 1948, and Hubert Ermisch's grateful letter of 19 April 1948 to the Sächsische Heimatschutz, for passing it and another article of 21 February 1948 on to him, at Sächsisches Staatsarchiv Dresden: Heinatschutz Dresden, VIII.1.3.3.07, leaves 1-246, no. 203 and 204.

59. As Hans Nadler, second State Conservator in Dresden, recalled in conversation with me, 'ideology did not matter', with the reconstruction of the Zwinger, every citizen was 'reconstructed', healed, encouraged (18 April 1996).

60. Ermisch, *vita*, 15 July 1951, 4 p., p. 4.

61. LDP DN Zwinger Akten, (Altakten): letter/memo by Löffler dated 1 October 1951. Much later, Löffler wrote a generous assessment of Ermisch as 'Erneuerer des Dresdner Zwingers' in 1975, typescript, 7 p. Fritz Löffler estate, Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Nachlässe, Mscr. Dresd. App. 2535, 4546.

62. As Gerhard Glaser (LDP, conversation 9 June 1996) reminded me, in the GDR, what was most important took an inscrutable form beyond the reach of state surveillance, and thus archival materials may be misleading. They are still instructive of ideology's power.

63. Ermisch, 'Der Zwinger. Ein Denkmal über Zeiten', *Jahrbuch zur Pflege der Künste*, vol. 1, 1951, pp. 30–40, p. 30.



Fig. 27. A newly carved Polish crown, Paris-Augustus prize next to the broken original. 1991. Zwingerbauhütte sheds on Zwinger ramparts, Dresden. (Photo: author.)

64. Carl Justi, *Das augusteische Dresden* (VEB Verlag der Kunst: Dresden, 1955), p. 24, newly contextualised excerpt from Justi's Winckelmann biography of 1866. Already Sponcel, *Der Zwinger*, pp. 250–1, rejected Justi's account long before its GDR appropriation.

65. On this subject, see Hertel, *Dis/Continuities*.

66. Potts, *The Sculptural Imagination*, p. 23, without mentioning the term *tableau vivant*.

67. Michael North, 'The Public as Sculpture: From Heavenly City to Mass Ornament', *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 16, no. 4, 1990, pp. 860–879.

between 1945 and 1963 when the Zwinger was finally finished. Adorno's abnegation of art was not an available reference in Dresden. Nonetheless, we may see in the absence of a modernising note, such as Ermisch's and Wrba's in the 1920s, the possibility that after 1945 no damaged artistic self could realise itself in the sense of Herder's Pygmalion 'naked truth' of a heightened positive self-awareness. At most one might consider the sense in which the Zwinger's conservator Bachmann had used the expression 'naked truth' in 1924, namely, of the plain bottom-line, warning of imminent collapse and the shattering touch of the ground. In post-war official language, a precarious balance was struck between evoking a sculpture and sculpted architecture 'filled with the pulse of warm life', and claiming that in the melancholy appearance 'of a ballroom at dawn' with 'ghostly liveliness, a time speaks to us when Dresden was an enchanted land surpassing the dreams of ancient poets'.⁶⁴ But this 1955 appropriation of a sentence from Carl Justi's 1866 biography of Winckelmann could only have served to cement the undifferentiated cold war perception of Dresden as victim.⁶⁵

To consider the Zwinger's situation after German Reunification at least briefly in the end, I should like to return to Alex Potts' dialectical suggestion that sculpture's 'stable embodiment' is life-asserting in a given viewer's present and presence, even if that embodiment is one of past, myth, or purely imaginary humanity sculpturally stilled and brought to life.⁶⁶ It must be acknowledged that the Dresden Zwinger now lacks or resists any of the critical functions of later twentieth-century public sculpture wherever it served to invert the subject–object positions, which Michael North has argued is the case in work as different as that of Hans Haacke and Maya Lin.⁶⁷ Certainly, each restoration of the Zwinger seems to invite a heightened expectation of things to come and also an archeological perception of the past. Yet, the sculptures produced in Permoser's and Wrba's workshops, respectively, may by now have assumed a phenomenal sameness in most viewers' eyes, a fusion which suspends their once evident

triangulated reflexive relationship. In such viewing a critical moment is lost, along with the specificity of the debate that in 1924 resulted in their juxtaposition maintained in the fifth 1940s and -50s restoration. The 1990s saw yet another, partial restoration of the Zwinger, including the Zwinger's Glockenspielpavillon by 1995 as well as the ongoing preservation and recreation of individual sculptures, such as the Polish crown, Paris-Augustus' prize (Fig. 27). Such work continues unspectacularly as it does at any European sandstone cathedral workshop. An interview conducted in 1991 with the sculptor Knut Rost of the Zwingerbauhütte, then in the Frauenkirche project's shadow, is instructive. Rost, daily working to preserve some originals and to recreate others from new blocks of sandstone, argues for the acceptance of sandstone sculptures' transience and against chemical or biological efforts to freeze their lives, 'lift them above time' and make them last: 'Everything and everyone has the right to age'.⁶⁸

Accordingly, the goal of the contemporary sculptor at work on the Zwinger's preservation would have to be that his work should merely slow down this process of ageing and thus go unnoticed. Rost's modest position excludes any public visibility of the Pygmalion impulse, perhaps counting the latter among efforts to halt or freeze what he understands as a natural process. Instead he suggests that in historic preservation the difference and distance between the present and the past are solely bridged by self-effacing artistic skill. Interpretations of its results will thus lack the authenticity with which a publicly demonstrated Pygmalion impulse infused them in the early twentieth century's fourth Zwinger restoration. Then such authenticity relied on the visible assertion of the present and the recognised disruption of any appearance of historic seamlessness as well as on the perceptible mediation, reflection, and dialogue between past and present.

68. Benjamin Walther, 'Lernen, mit der Vergänglichkeit umzugehen: Bildhauer Knut Rost hat eine eigene Sandstein-Philosophie gefunden', *Die Union*, no. 155, 6 and 7 July 1991, p. 12.