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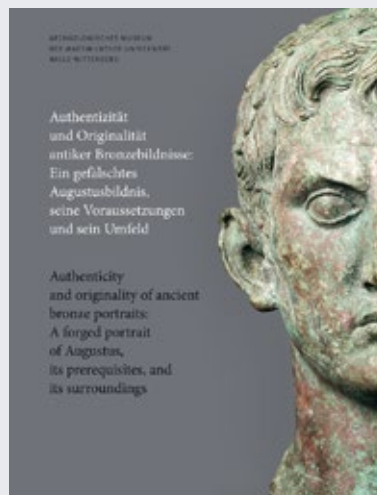
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### Authenticity and originality of ancient bronze portraits

A forged portrait of Augustus, its prerequisites, and its surroundings

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## Authenticity and originality of ancient bronze portraits

A forged portrait of Augustus, its prerequisites, and its surroundings



ARCHÄOLOGISCHES MUSEUM OF  
MARTIN-LUTHER-UNIVERSITÄT HALLE-WITTENBERG



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A hitherto unknown bronze portrait of Augustus from a swiss private collection, whose ancient origin is doubtful, was the impetus for a discussion forum and an exhibition at the Archäologisches Museum of the Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg in May 2014. Here, in interdisciplinary dialogue, the question of authenticity and originality of ancient large-scale bronzes was discussed from the philosophical-art historical, archaeological, natural scientific and technical perspective. As a result of in-depth analysis the portrait of Augustus proved to be a modern forgery.

In the exhibition it was presented in the context of several other suspect bronze portraits that have appeared in the art trade in the last decades. This compilation shows that a large scale series of forgeries must be expected.

This publication contains the contributions to the discussion forum and the current results from the examinations of the presented bronze portraits. Hopefully it will give an impulse for further, urgently needed research.



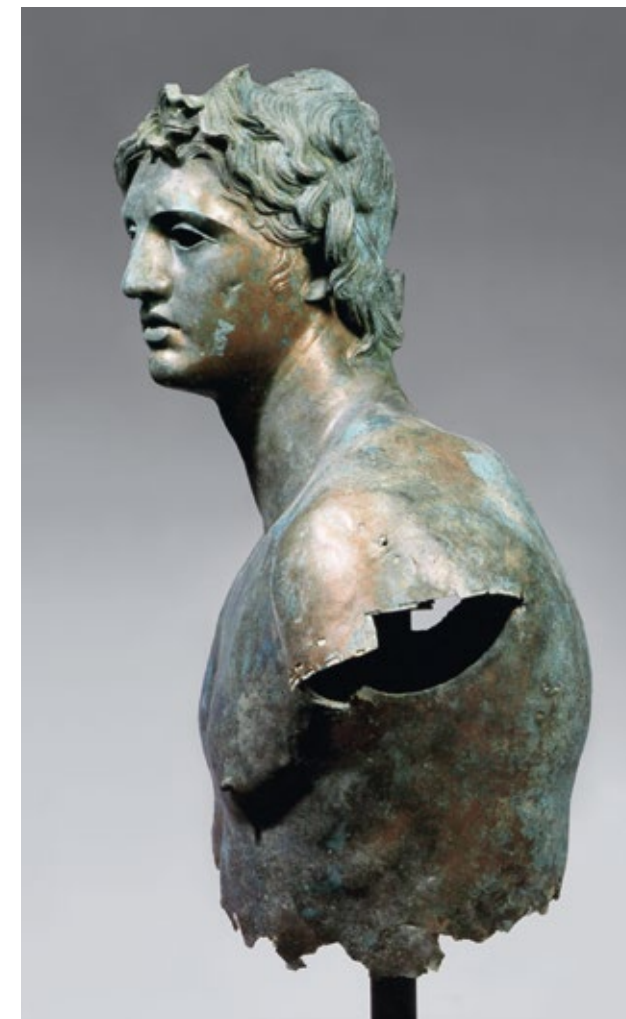
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- 1 **Bronze head of a god (?)**  
1<sup>st</sup> cent. B. C. – 1<sup>st</sup> cent. A. D., H 30.5 cm, owner unknown
- 2 **Bronze portrait of a man with a stubble beard**, 1<sup>st</sup> cent. B. C., H 29.8 cm, owner unknown
- 3 **Bronze portrait of a woman (Roman Matrona, Sabina)**  
1<sup>st</sup> cent. B. C. / first half 2<sup>nd</sup> cent. A. D., H 42 cm, owner Antikenmuseum Basel and collection Ludwig
- 4 **Bronze portrait of a ruler**  
1<sup>st</sup> cent. B. C., H 33.5 cm, owner National Museum, Dushanbe, Tajikistan (?)
- 5 **Bronze portrait of Alexander (Alexander Stendal)**, 2<sup>nd</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> cent. A. D. H 72 cm, owner unknown
- Title  
**Bronze portrait of Augustus (Augustus Arete)**, late 1<sup>st</sup> cent. B. C. – early 1<sup>st</sup> cent. A. D., H 33 cm, owner Hans Humbel, Schweiz