

The Destruction of Monuments

Well why not??? save the statues of Adolf Hitler. Apart from the sculpture itself being unimpressive... With the beginning of the Secessionists in Vienna and then in the 1890s in Germany - it's all rather unimpressive Optical Record and stylistic retarded kitsch. The French had a head start on degradation of their sculpture quality prior to the Austrians and Germans. Saint Gaudens - a product of the French Academy as an American student in Paris after his production work on relief cameos in Naples - is a small potato - not a particularly good sculptor - a rather awful sculptor compared to the best contemporaries in Europe. But I agree, allowance to tear down one is allowance to tear down all sculpture - even a statue representing the most famous subject that might actually be Gumby in disguise. Otherwise - yes, why not grand statues of Hitler? We have the Medici and every other imaginable person of historical actions called into questionable norms of moral and ethical conduct. Even going back to the Greeks we have despotic kings, rulers, and heroes that plundered, mythological realms of Dionysian cult subjects, realms of erotic lust depicted in beautiful works of sculpture in what are the greatest achievements in art. They - Greek Classical, Hellenistic, and early Greco-Roman in the best examples have more significance as the greatest achievements in High Art than any Christian period sculpture, regardless of the subject, whether of a pious Saint, a sculpture of Christ, an honorable personage, anything from the Renaissance through til now. They butchered people, held massive numbers of slaves and serfs in proportion to the entitled society and are the framework for Western society in most all categories of great achievement. Greco-Roman heritage is the heritage of greatness that Europe is founded on. The barbarians are always ready to demolish civilization.

The statues made by American sculptors of the 19th century are not particularly sophisticated or of high merit compared to the better contemporaries in Europe, at least as a measure based on Classical / Hellenistic / early Greco-Roman sculpture standards. I can't really get worked up over most of the American 19th century sculptures potentially missing from view. But the scale, compositional mass of the better American attempts in sculpture and the well educated Classical and Beaux Art architects responsible for the pedestal designs as part of an architectural urban design vista - viewed altogether is often pleasing. There are some exceptional sculptures that were imported from Europe such as the various

figure and portrait bust works of Jean Antoine Houdon's sculpture, the Munich, Germany sculptors August von Kreling who collaborated with Ferdinand von Miller - for the "Genius of Water" monument imported to Cincinnati, Ohio renamed the Tyler Davidson Fountain, The destroyed by vandals - Ernst Herter sculpture monument - the "Lorelei Fountain" in New York City, Old Saint Paul's Episcopal Church in Baltimore, Maryland with the relief sculptures of Christ and Moses made in Spain by the court sculptor Antonio Capeliano. Capeliano also made the female figure atop the Hellenistic Neo-Egyptian Revival cenotaph [the marble sculpture of the female figure suffered the elements long ago probably missing much of it's refinement in detail even in the late nineteenth century, a replacement has been erected which bears little resemblance to the quality of the original] - Battle Monument commemorating the 1814 battle in Baltimore. The 1814 battle monument was designed by J. Maximillian M. Godefroy. The Indiana State Soldiers and Sailors Monument, Indianapolis, Indiana. 284 ft 6 in (86.72 m) tall neoclassical monument built on Monument Circle designed by German architect Bruno Schmitz was built over a thirteen-year period, between 1888 and 1901. Even though Nikolaus Geiger has sculpture as part of the monument, his representation here is not equal to the two other Denkmals in Germany designed by Bruno Schmitz which include prominent sculptures by Nikolaus Geiger. Those Monuments designed by Bruno Schmitz with Nikolaus Geiger's (1849-1897) sculpture are the *Kyffhäuserdenkmal*, also known as Barbarossa Monument (*Barbarossadenkmal*), is an Emperor Wilhelm I monument in the Kyffhäuser mountain range in the German state of Thüringen. It was erected from 1890 to 1896 atop the ruins of Kaiser Barbarossa medieval Kyffhausen Castle near Bad Frankenhausen. Nikolaus Geiger sculpted the Kaiser Barbarossa relief sculpture in red sandstone. The 6.5 m (21 ft) high figure was fashioned on site from several sandstone blocks. Nikolaus Geiger, sculptor, with architect Bruno Schmitz, also designed the Grabstätte Carl Hofmann, (Alter St.-Matthäus-Kirchhof Berlin), an example of late 19th. Century, German school of architecture, and sculpture monument incorporating a high level of content derived from Greek Hellenistic period influence. The Soldiers and Sailors Monument as an architectural design is beautiful.

Many other European sculptors work and bronze castings after Greek and Greco-Roman sculpture attain a higher order of monument in the U.S.A. than the native U.S.A. sculptors. Some of the imports were of very good quality but many were rather crude cheaper castings, or from the decline period post 1820 in France.

Most of the European immigrant sculptors to the U.S.A. during the nineteenth century were ones of lower skill, talent, and training. The nineteenth century native European sculptors had a much better reception, funding, support, as well as the ability to make a higher order of sculpture in the nude figure for public monument in nineteenth century Europe than the U.S.A. The American sculptors that arrived in Europe to study predominately pursued their training in Paris and Rome. Neither of these cities had particularly sustained their golden period of art or training by the second half of the nineteenth century. The Americans were also ill prepared to glean what was alternatively available - European sculptor holdouts against photographically oriented Optical Record art. The American sculptors with such a lack of prior serious training in the U.S.A. never came to realize the Optical Record art was a degenerate art-form, or were unwilling to address the negative self analysis. The freedom of finance to re position themselves - the arriving American artists - to relocate to Vienna, Austria or Germany - Germanic regions Berlin, Dresden, Munich, Königsberg in order to achieve a more demanding course of study would have gone against the socially brainwashed misconception of the enduring position of France and Italy in art of the nineteenth century. Especially the second half of the nineteenth century when art was declining in quality rather quickly as the century proceeded. Generally I avoid looking with any focus at the actual sculpture portion of most monuments in the United States. It's like listening to a tone deaf Fred Flintstone screeching an out of time synchronization caveman rendition of rap music claiming to be replacements of standards supplanting Othmar Schoeck, Richard Strauss, Ferruccio Busoni, Brahms, Franz Schubert, Beethoven, Mozart, Bach, Rameau, etc... Unlike Classical music art became corrupted and dysfunctional starting in the late eighteenth century France and Italy. I avoid altogether looking at sculptures and monuments after 1900. But the monuments should never have an anarchist mob of imbeciles attacking the culturally important symbols of the past enacting their destruction. The monuments context / value is often more complex, foreign, nuanced and contrary to contemporary viewpoints which discredits the simpleton deciding their fate. The replacement monuments if any are expected will surely be enormously more visually hideous than the prior monuments - especially those pre-dating 1900.

Even if White Privilege is true, what does that concept actually mean? It's a malleable indistinguishable mush of a statement. If one implies Greco-Roman heritage then I would lend an agreement that yes White Privilege is real because

it is the glue of philosophical, aesthetics, ethics, mathematics, architecture, art, music on and on of which high water marks of achievement were gleaned – the cultural roots surviving as a basis of society. The privilege of being a recipient of this regardless of ethnic background at this point in time equates its value. Though because of what fractured remnants survive in this heritage from a butchered attack by barbarians – the fruits of it are discombobulated. Those barbarians were the Europeans themselves in the nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty first centuries. So certain European countries have surviving tidbits depending on their maintained cultural aspects, as also Western oriented countries have corrupted fragments in general. The criticism of White Privilege it seems is the desire to take the aim of the Vox Populi to the lowest common denominator possible in order to establish the most inane and primitive notions of culture so as such they should be imposed on all to match the antithesis of Greco-Roman heritage culture – to invigorate the barbarians.

A small fragment of the original cast collection of plasters cast after Greek and Greco-Roman sculpture are now in the Glyptothek Altierhaus der Akademie Bildende Künste Wien – allocated to the basement, and many crammed together. When Hitler came to power in Austria, the teachers and students who at that time in the Akademie Bildende Künste Wien were the proponents of indoctrination into political and artistic modernist extremist belief, performed an activist action of throwing the plaster cast that they could manage to lift up to the windows – out the upper story windows onto the outside street to smash. This as a demonstration in opposition to the Fascists coming into power. The Nazi – Fascists had awful artwork that they promoted and funded as their new art / really it was a pastiche of Bauhaus, Secessionists Realism rooted in arbitrary stylistic kitsch utilizing photography and Optical Record, mixed with other banalities of early twentieth century, and late nineteenth century movements in art. Really not any better or worse than much of the American sculpture of the twentieth and twenty first century. Though those involved in historic art promotion within the Nazi party had great veneration of Classical, Hellenistic Greek and early Greco-Roman sculpture. There was a complete disconnect between historic promotion and sanctioned contemporary art. In the early 1990s / 1989 an attempt was made to bring the surviving plaster cast collection established in the 18th and 19th century after mostly Greek and early Greco-Roman sculpture – back to the Art Academy in Wien, or a designated building in the same area to purchase for the exhibition of the surviving historic collection of

plasters. There were thousands of “activists” marching through central Wien against the return of Fascism with the return of the surviving plasters for permanent exhibition. Though the collection long pre-dated Fascism. Slowly the very small group of plaster casts that survived the events of the late nineteenth and twentieth century has finally made it to a cluttered basement in the Glyptothek Altierhaus der Akademie Bildende Künste Wien. One of the early official celebrations of the Nazi Party in Munich after Hitler had taken over France, was a procession march through Munich with Renaissance / Heraldic / Trachten costumed bearers guiding work horse drawn wheeled period carts bearing plaster casts of the most famous Greek Classical, Hellenistic, and early Greco-Roman sculpture. Large military marching bands accompanied the procession performing well known Prussian, Austrian, and Bavarian, etc... nationalist marching music of the nineteenth and twentieth century. It was a procession patterned after Napoleon’s famous victory procession through the center of Paris of similar wheeled carts carrying magnificent Greek and Roman marbles garnered from Italy. Neither of the Processions though led to a return to prior methods and content in contemporary sculpture related to Greco-Roman heritage. France had some terrific sculptors such as James Pradier, 1790, Geneva, Switzerland - 1852 Paris, France. Pradier had a better than typical of the period understanding - post Napoleon - of Hellenistic, early Greco-Roman complex visual content, orders, and composition - best for his erotic nymph related sculptures. Later in the second half of the nineteenth century in France Ernest Dubois 1863, Dieppe, France - 193-, Paris - produced one of his first sculpture works - Le Pardon, Marble, Glyptotek, Copenhagen, Denmark (Louvre, Arras, Rouen, 1892) - exhibiting his attempt to develop complex visual content derived from his study and admiration of Hellenistic sculpture. This was short lived though as a maturing aim in his sculpture. The path along this route toward a maturing process in gleaning the ability of incorporating Hellenistic Greek sculpture complex visual content is enormously difficult and demanding. Even in periods more favorable toward this goal, few consistently attempt to continue, since the cost and effort are so high. Ernest Dubois - Monument à Joseph et Xavier de Maistre (bronze, château de Chambéry, 1898), - not as imbued with complex visual content, but very well composed. His - Monument d’Eugène Fromentin (Place des Petits-Bancs, La Rochelle, 1905), - quite late in date, still not not as imbued with complex visual content, but a beautifully composed work. His Le Vengeur (Haut-relief, Panthéon, Paris), is a modernist mess, as well as his Statue de l’amiral Mouchez (1896). Ernest Dubois seems to have succumbed to the madness of

modernism with his other efforts. There are other sculptors with similar attempts in Europe post 1800 that failed after one or a few sophisticated sculpture works entering into complex visual shape content derived from Hellenistic sculpture. Most of the attempts after 1800 occurred in the Germanic regions - where support was established toward this goal with the influence of Goethe, as well as the traditions started in the late eighteenth century that continued in Austria and Germany (what was to become Germany). The support of historic collections of plaster casts as well as study after Hellenistic and early Greco-Roman sculpture was reinstated by the conservatives within the Third Reich period, after a period of modernist contemporary insanity in art that took over from the 1880s until the Third Reich. But this was completely undermined by the State controlled "Socialist Nationalist Style" that was dictated - the conservatives won then lost.

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