

An Archaeologist's Eye: The Parthenon Drawings of Katherine A. Schwab

Exhibition Prospectus



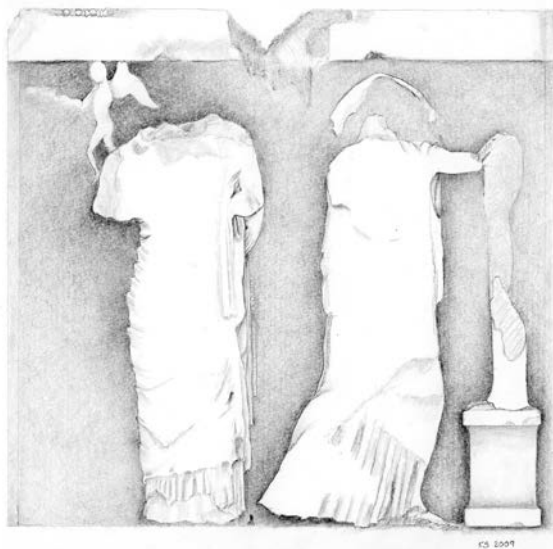
Katherine A. Schwab, *East Metope 2: Dionysos and Giant*, 2005, pastel on paper

Abrupt and violent destruction by human hands and the slow degradation through the corrosive effects of air pollution have transformed the ancient Parthenon metope sculptures into ephemeral and evocative images hinting at ancient mythological battles which can now only be resumed in the viewer's imagination. In 2005, the American art historian and archaeologist Katherine Schwab (b. 1954) began experimenting with graphite and pastel on paper to develop a new method of recording her observations of the east and north metopes. A tension emerges in her drawings between what is preserved and what has been lost, creating a theme of presence within absence. The drawings invite the viewer into an imagined world once inhabited by Pheidias and his fellow sculptors. Through these drawings the Parthenon metopes are being reimagined in our time. The sustained narrative of the earth-born Giants defeated by the Olympian Gods and the Sacking of Troy are once again recreated within each viewing, compelling the viewer to re-envision the elusive image.

Schwab's drawings arise from the intersection of artistic ability and archaeological expertise. Through the process of drawing Schwab has made new observations and discoveries that have contributed to our larger understanding of the east and north metopes series. Previous archaeological drawings relied on lines to denote the outline of figures in architectural sculpture. Line drawings remain critically important in many archaeological studies, but they do not visually communicate the preserved depth of the surviving contours of figures within these metope compositions, which were severely damaged not later than the 6th century CE when the temple was converted to a Christian church. Her experiments with a brown pastel pencil and graphite, to develop the negative ground, highlight visible forms that emerge as if suspended in an imagined space, similar to the ancient marble panels, which had a painted background.

The Exhibition begins with the east series where the theme is the Olympian Gods fighting the Earth-born Giants for supremacy of Mount Olympus. These fourteen drawings reflect Schwab's experimentation with pastel pencil starting in 2005 to reveal nuances of surface variation within the original marble panels. Variation in tone and depth are explored, ranging from the darkest tones to soft and light fleeting shapes within the composition. The Exhibition continues with twelve graphite drawings of the surviving north metopes showing episodes from the Sacking of Troy. Schwab's use of graphite in these drawings, all of which were made in 2009, reflects a consistent style in articulating the surviving carved surfaces of the marble panels. In some instances the maximum depth is preserved, allowing the viewer to readily imagine the missing fragments. Elsewhere, the figures are elusive and are suggested by ephemeral marks in graphite, which requires the viewer to look more carefully while contemplating the poses and actions evoked. The final section includes drawings of complete figures and details from the Parthenon frieze and pediments.

This collection of Parthenon drawings by Katherine Schwab forms the first exhibition of her work to travel in the United States.



Katherine A. Schwab, *North Metope 25: Eros, Aphrodite, Helen, statue of Athena*, 2009, graphite on paper

EXHIBITION LOGISTICS AND BUDGET

ORGANIZERS: Bellarmine Museum of Art at Fairfield University, Creighton University, and the Timken Museum of Art

NUMBER AND TYPE OF OBJECT:

- 35 graphite and pastel drawings on paper, approximately 8 x 8 inch images, paper dimensions are 9 x 12 inches on average, framed
 - East metopes: 16 pastel pencil and graphite drawings, average size 8 x 8 inch images, paper dimensions are 9 x 12 inches
 - North metopes: 12 graphite drawings, average size 8 x 8 inch images, paper dimensions are 9 x 12 inches
 - Frieze and Pediments drawings: 7 graphite drawings, size ranging from paper 8 1/8 x 5 5/8 inches, image 7 1/4 x 4 3/4 inches to 9 x 13 inches
- Didactics:

Black and white photographs of the east and north metopes by Socratis Mavrommatis, available to accompany text labels (7 x 7 inches or smaller)

Text for four wall panels

Text Labels for each drawing
- Interview about Parthenon drawings in Acropolis Museum and the 2009 exhibition at Fairfield University:
http://blog.fairfield.edu/web_features/2009/09/30/dr-katherine-schwab's-drawings-selected-for-permanent-display-in-new-acropolis-museum/

Available starting 2017 for 2-4 months per venue

Space requirements: single row or double hung

Participation fee: \$5,000 USD

Includes matted and framed drawings ready to be installed, digital files for didactics, files for labels, transportation from previous venue to your venue, insurance, and administrative costs.

Exhibition Catalogue: an illustrated 60-page catalogue with five scholarly essays, approximately 8 x 8 inches in format, is available.

Programming:

Classical Studies, Greek myth in translation, Art History, Studio Art, Philosophy; educational outreach, myth and daily life in ancient Athens; forging ties to the Greek American community in the region e.g., Greek Orthodox Church parishes, AHEPA, consuls and consul generals of Greece in the U.S.; outreach and cultivation of philhellenes; lectures, gallery talks, symposium

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Ms. Carey Mack Weber, Registrar and Collections Manager
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An Archaeologist's Eye: Parthenon Drawings of Katherine A. Schwab


Exhibition Checklist

I. Drawings of the Parthenon East Metopes


The fourteen east metopes illustrate the battle of Olympian Gods fighting the Earth-born Giants, one of the earliest conflicts in Greek mythology. The theme was first identified during the 19th century when A. Michaelis recognized Dionysos in East 2, accompanied by a panther and snake, attacking a fleeing giant. The goddess Athena (East 4) plays a starring role in the battle, along with the great hero Herakles (East 11). The east series is unique among the entire metope program because all 14 panels survive, despite their sustained damage. They remained on the Acropolis until their transfer to the new Acropolis Museum for its opening in 2009. Katherine Schwab has used various shades of brown pastel as well as graphite to develop her unique method of drawing the current surface condition. Her experiments with pastel and graphite explore the background around the carved figures to heighten the depth of sculptural relief.

1.  *Parthenon East Metope 1: Hermes attacks a collapsing giant, 2005*
Size: sheet 8 9/16 x 10 15/16 inches, image 5 3/4 x 5 15/16 inches
Brown pastel on paper
2.  *Parthenon East Metope 2: Dionysos, accompanied by a panther and snake, pursues a fleeing giant, 2005*
Size: sheet 8 7/8 x 11 1/4 inches, image 7 1/16 x 7 1/2 inches
Brown pastel on paper
3.  *Parthenon East Metope 3: Ares fights a falling giant, 2005*
Size: sheet 9 x 11 15/16 inches, image 7 9/16 x 8 3/8 inches
Brown pastel on paper
4.  *Parthenon East Metope 4: Athena attacks a giant in the presence of Nike, 2005*
Size: sheet 9 x 12 inches, image 7 3/8 x 8 1/8 inches
Brown pastel on paper
5.  *Parthenon East Metope 5: Amphitrite drives a chariot, 2005*
Size: sheet 9 1/8 x 11 3/8 inches, image 7 3/8 x 8 5/8 inches
Brown pastel on paper


6.




Parthenon East Metope 6: Poseidon crushes a giant with the island of Nisyros, 2009
Size: sheet 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 10 $\frac{7}{8}$ inches, image 7 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches
Graphite on paper
7.




Parthenon East Metope 7: Hera drives a chariot with winged horses, 2005
Size: sheet 9 x 11 $\frac{15}{16}$ inches, image 7 $\frac{3}{16}$ x 8 $\frac{1}{8}$ inches
Brown pastel on paper
8.




Parthenon East Metope 8: Zeus attacks a fleeing giant, 2007
Size: sheet 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 10 $\frac{7}{8}$ inches, image 6 $\frac{7}{16}$ x 7 $\frac{1}{16}$ inches
Brown pastel on paper
9.




Parthenon East Metope 9: A giant flees Apollo, 2008
Size: sheet 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 10 $\frac{7}{8}$ inches, image 6 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 6 $\frac{5}{8}$ inches
Graphite on paper
10.




Parthenon East Metope 10: Artemis drives a chariot, 2005
Size: sheet 9 x 11 $\frac{9}{16}$ inches, image 8 $\frac{3}{16}$ x 9 inches
Brown pastel on paper
11.




Parthenon East Metope 11: Eros and Herakles attack a kneeling giant, 2006
Size: sheet 8 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 10 $\frac{7}{8}$ inches, image 8 $\frac{5}{16}$ x 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches
Brown pastel on paper
12.





Parthenon East Metope 12: Aphrodite pursues a fleeing giant, 2006
Size: sheet 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 10 $\frac{7}{8}$ inches, image 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 7 $\frac{15}{16}$ inches
Brown pastel on paper
13.



Parthenon East Metope 13: Hephaistos attacks a collapsing giant, 2006
Size: sheet 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 10 $\frac{7}{8}$ inches, image 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 7 $\frac{9}{16}$ inches
Brown pastel on paper
14.








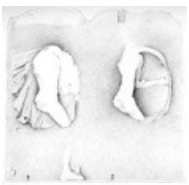




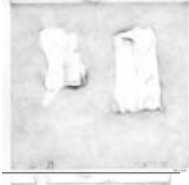

Parthenon East Metope 14: Helios drives a chariot, ascending above Okeanos, 2005
Size: sheet 9 $\frac{5}{8}$ x 8 $\frac{5}{8}$ inches, image 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 5 $\frac{1}{8}$ inches
Brown pastel on paper

15.  *Parthenon East Metope 14: Helios drives a chariot, ascending above Okeanos*, 2008
Size: sheet 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 10 $\frac{7}{8}$ inches, image 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 8 inches
Graphite on paper
16.  *Parthenon East Metope 14: Proposed reconstruction*, 2010
Size: sheet 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 10 $\frac{7}{8}$ inches, 7 $\frac{11}{16}$ x 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches
Graphite on paper

II. The Parthenon North Metopes








The Sacking of Troy and the legendary Trojan War formed the theme of the original 32 north metopes, which was recognized in the 19th century by A. Michaelis due to Menelaos' deadly pursuit of his beautiful wife Helen in North 24-25. Only 13 metopes survived the 1687 explosion and remained in situ, with the exception of 2 panels. As of 2012, all the surviving panels were transferred to the Acropolis Museum. Katherine Schwab's use of graphite reflects a nuanced description and exploration of the metope surface in the north series, all of which were drawn in 2008-2009.

17.  *Parthenon North Metope 1: Athena brings a chariot to a halt*, 2009
Size: sheet 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 10 $\frac{7}{8}$ inches, image 7 $\frac{5}{8}$ x 7 $\frac{5}{8}$ inches
Graphite on paper
18.  *Parthenon North Metope 2: Two male figures descend from a ship*, 2009
Size: sheet 8 $\frac{11}{16}$ x 10 $\frac{7}{8}$ inches, image 8 x 8 inches
Graphite on paper
19.  *Parthenon North Metope 3: Two warriors arming for battle*, 2009
Size: sheet 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 10 $\frac{7}{8}$ inches, image 8 x 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches
Graphite on paper
20.  *Parthenon North Metope A: Youth falls from a horse*, 2009
Size: sheet 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 10 $\frac{7}{8}$ inches, image 7 x 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches
Graphite on paper
21.  *Parthenon North Metope D: Man and woman flee to left (Rescue of Aithra?)*, 2009
Size: sheet 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 10 $\frac{7}{8}$ inches, image 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 8 inches
Graphite on paper

22.  *Parthenon North Metope 24: Menelaos, with companion, runs to the right intent on killing Helen in North 25, 2008*
Size: sheet 8 1/2 x 10 7/8 inches, image 7 3/4 x 8 inches
Graphite on paper
23.  *Parthenon North Metope 25: Eros and Aphrodite protect Helen as she runs to a statue of Athena, 2009*
Size: sheet 8 3/4 x 10 15/16 inches, image 7 5/8 x 8 inches
Graphite on paper
24.  *Parthenon North Metope 27: Woman and man flee to right (Rescue of Aithra? Theft of the Palladion?), 2009*
Size: sheet 8 3/4 x 10 7/8 inches, image 7 1/2 x 7 1/2 inches
Graphite on paper
25.  *Parthenon North Metope 28: Kreusa (?), Anchises, Aeneas, and Askanios at the moment of departure from Troy, 2009*
Size: sheet 8 3/4 x 10 7/8 inches, image 7 3/4 x 7 5/8 inches
Graphite on paper
26.  *Parthenon North Metope 29: Selene, the moon goddess, descends at the end of night, 2009*
Size: sheet 8 3/4 x 10 7/8 inches, image 7 1/2 x 7 7/16 inches
Graphite on paper
27.  *Parthenon North Metope 30: Two male figures, 2009*
Size: sheet 8 3/4 x 10 7/8 inches, image 8 3/16 x 8 1/6 inches
Graphite on paper
28.  *Parthenon North Metope 31: Zeus and a winged figure (Iris?), 2009*
Size: sheet 8 13/16 x 10 7/8 inches, image 8 1/4 x 7 7/8 inches
Graphite on paper

III. Graphite Drawings of Figures from the Parthenon Frieze and Pediments

The Parthenon sculptural program includes well preserved figures, heads, and torsos from the Ionic frieze and two pediments. Examples of these details comprise the third section, which Katherine Schwab used as a standard and guide while exploring the distinctive ideal proportions and style of Parthenon sculpture. By drawing these figures and details it became possible to visually understand the compelling and extraordinary qualities we associate with Parthenon sculpture, and to determine poses and actions in the east and north metopes. These graphite drawings were made in 2008-2013.

29.  *Parthenon North Frieze: Detail of youth in profile, from Block 2, 2009*
Size: sheet 8 1/8 x 5 5/8 inches, image 7 1/8 x 4 3/4 inches
Graphite on paper
30.  *Parthenon West Frieze: Male with cloak, from Block 5, 2008*
Size: sheet 9 x 6 3/8 inches, image 7 1/2 x 4 1/4 inches
Graphite on paper
31.  *Parthenon East Frieze: Detail of Apollo, from Block 6, 2011*
Size: sheet and image 9 x 6 5/16 inches
Graphite on Paper
32.  *Parthenon East Frieze: detail of Poseidon from Block 6, 2013*
Size: sheet and image 13 1/4 x 9 5/8 inches
Graphite on paper
33.  *Parthenon East Frieze: detail of Artemis from Block 6, 2012*
Size: sheet 10 7/8 x 8 3/4, image 9 1/4 x 6 3/4 inches
Graphite on paper
34.  *Parthenon East Pediment: Figure O – Horse from Selene's Chariot group, 2010*
Size: paper 8 3/4 x 10 7/8 inches, image 8 x 10 1/4 inches
Graphite on paper
35.  *Parthenon West Pediment: Figure M – Torso of Poseidon, 2013*
Size: paper and image 13 1/4 x 9 5/8 inches
Graphite on paper

Sample Drawings

Parthenon East Metope 2:

Dionysos, accompanied by a panther and snake, pursues a fleeing giant, 2005

Brown pastel on paper, 7 1/16 x 7 1/2 inches

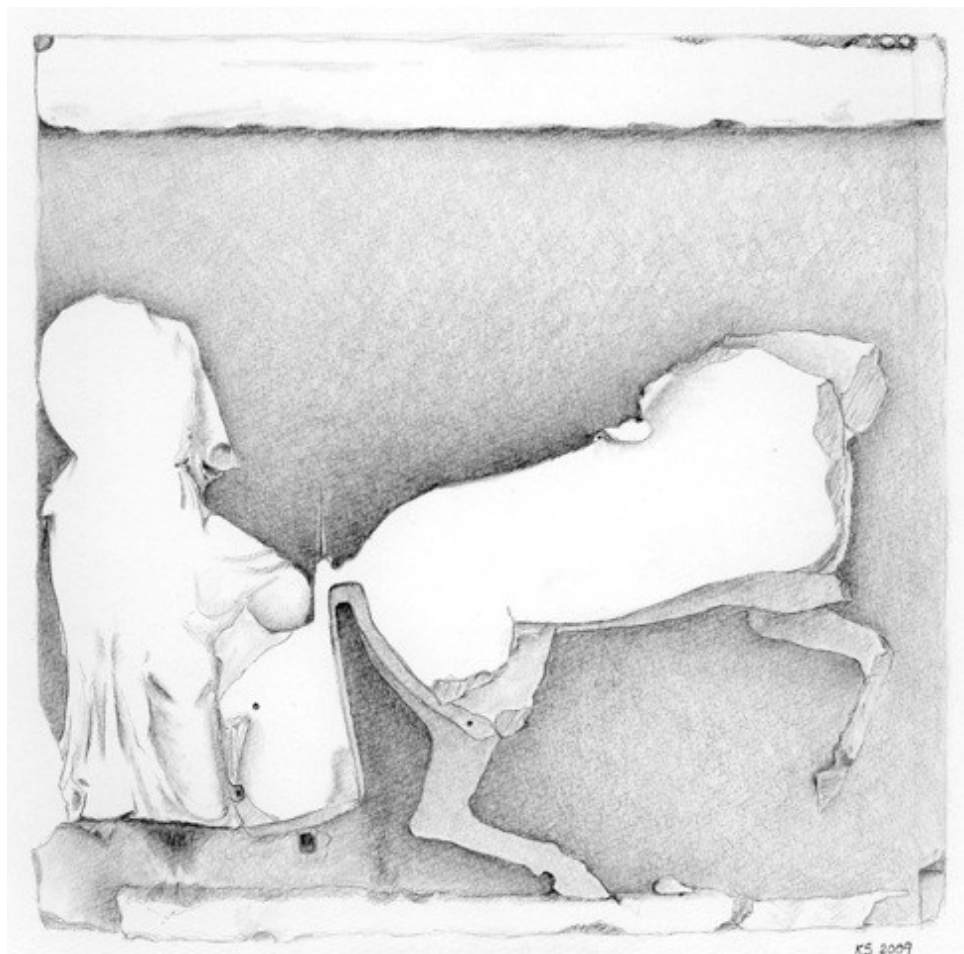
Collection of the Artist



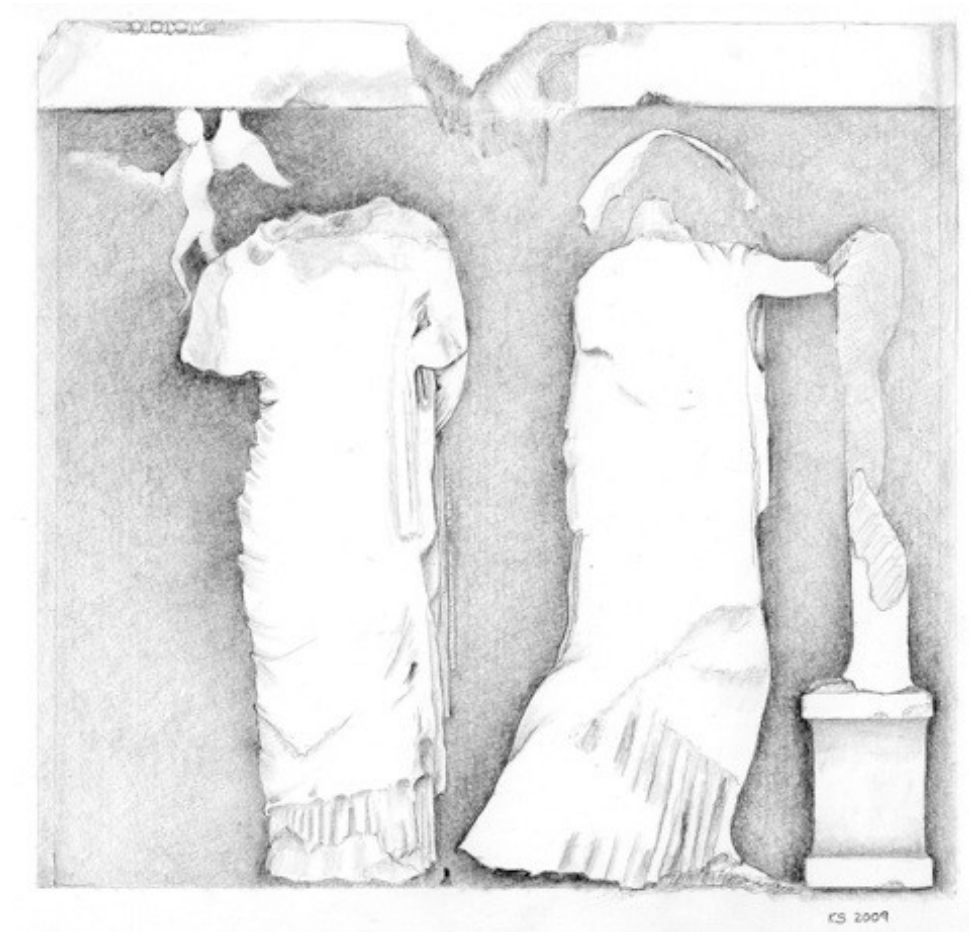
Parthenon East Metope 11:
Eros and Herakles attack a kneeling giant, 2006
Brown pastel on paper, 8 5/16 x 9 1/2 inches
Collection of the Artist



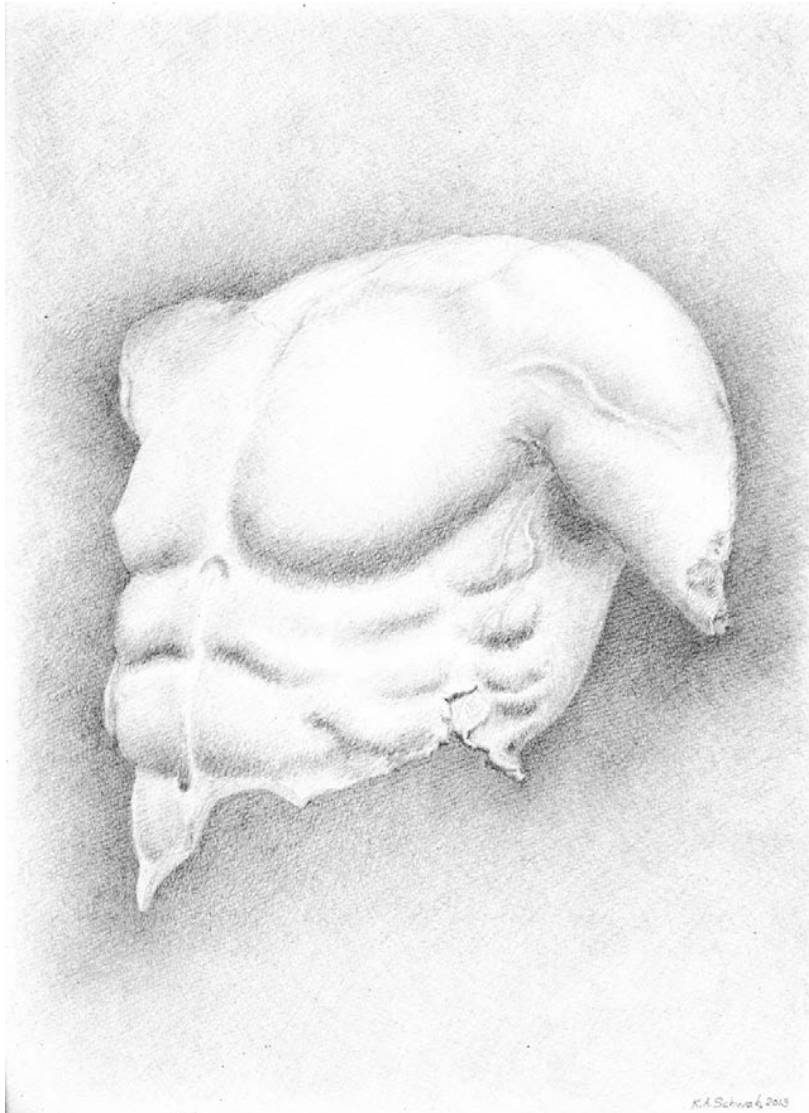
Parthenon North Metope 1:
Athena brings a chariot to a halt, 2009
Graphite on paper, 7 5/8 x 7 5/8 inches
Collection of the Artist



Parthenon North Metope 25:
Eros and Aphrodite protect Helen as she runs to a statue of Athena, 2009
Graphite on paper, 7 5/8 x 8 1/6 inches
Collection of the Artist



Parthenon West Pediment:
Torso of Poseidon
Size: paper and image 13 1/4 x 9 5/8 inches
Graphite on paper
K.A. Schwab, 2013



Artist's Biography

Dr. Katherine Schwab received her B.A. from Scripps College, where she majored in Ancient Greek Civilization. Subsequently, she earned her M.A. in Art History from Southern Methodist University, and her Ph.D. from the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University. Dr. Schwab joined the faculty at Fairfield University in 1988 where she is both Professor of Art History in the Department of Visual and Performing Arts and Curator of the Plaster Cast Collection at the Bellarmine Museum of Art. The plaster cast collection includes gifts from the Acropolis Museum. Dr. Schwab has been awarded three separate fellowships (both pre- and post-doctoral) by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, in addition to the Robert E. Wall Award at Fairfield, as well as other honors and grants in support of her research on the Parthenon Metopes, the Caryatid Hairstyling Project (www.fairfield.edu/caryatid), and restoration work on the plaster cast collection. Grayscale scans of her research drawings are on permanent display in the Parthenon Gallery of the new Acropolis Museum in Athens, Greece. Her publications include several book chapters and journal articles and, most recently, exhibiting her original Parthenon drawings.

Schwab received permission from the Ministry of Culture in Greece to study of the Parthenon east and north metopes beginning in 2003. Subsequently, she was asked to provide grayscale scans of her metope drawings for the permanent installation of the Parthenon Gallery in the new Acropolis Museum in Athens. She is the only American archaeologist to have drawings included in this installation. Fairfield University's Lukacs Gallery hosted the first exhibition of her original drawings in 2009. A selection of her Parthenon drawings were exhibited in "Gifts from Athens," the inaugural exhibition of the Bellarmine Museum of Art in 2010. She was recognized for her contributions to Greek culture with the "Hellene of the Year," award by AHEPA District 7 (Connecticut and Rhode Island) in 2011, followed by the "Paideia Award," for the state of Connecticut given by the University of Connecticut in 2012.

Artist's Statement

Katherine A. Schwab

Since the 1990s my drawings have become an integral process of seeing and understanding the sculptural qualities of the Parthenon east and north metopes, a series of sculptures that have remained in Athens, Greece since antiquity. This engagement with the Parthenon sculpture has been prompted by my research investigations into these badly damaged marble relief panels. Beginning in 2008 I turned to the Parthenon frieze and the pediments because many of the figures, whether human or animal, are in a good state of preservation and they allow a closer analysis. The initial goal with these drawings of figures from the frieze and pediments had been to create a visual dictionary of forms for my research publications, but in the process, I became increasingly fascinated with the change in my drawings. Not only do the drawings reveal my personal discovery of the sculptor's intent, through isolating forms or details, the drawings also assume their own presence and identity, thereby offering the viewer an opportunity to see a famous monument in a new light. We can explore the decisions made by the original artist, thus experiencing a link to a time and place 2,500 years ago, and yet these drawings help to create an immediacy through their own identity which dissolves temporal and geographic distance.

Initially experimenting with pencils of increasing softness, and exploring the effects of charcoal and silverpoint, eventually I found that a fine Alvin mechanical pencil and Stabilo pastel pencils on Holbein paper allowed me to achieve the sensitivity and almost fugitive or sculptural qualities I sought. Having studying Tibetan thangka painting in the western Himalayas in 2004, in which all preparatory drawing was made with a fine mechanical pencil, I learned more about its control and potential subtlety. As for the subject, a first hand examination in Athens and London, photographs, and plaster casts have been essential sources for these drawings. My drawings of the marble surface in the east and north metopes developed the background plane as a means of helping the fragmentary figural contours emerge and assume poses and actions. Using pastel pencil or graphite, this method led to new discoveries that enhance our understanding of the compositions.

My use of graphite is subtle, with an exploratory sense of the paper's surface. At times these drawings can almost seem to emerge out of the background, attaining a sculpture-like quality. The sculptors who carved the Parthenon sculpture found seemingly endless ways to portray the human figure and horses, which become more discernible through drawing these figures. My drawings have a coherence that reveals my journey of discovery, and this sense of discovery can also engage the viewer who may be familiar, or not, with the Parthenon and its sculpture, but who now may possibly see it anew.

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