
Voiced by Amazon Polly

Antiquity was a very colourful place! The myth of all-white marble classical sculpture that remained uninterrupted for centuries has been put to rest thanks to modern science. Over the past thirty years or so, ground-breaking research in pigmentation have revealed new evidence for painted and ornamented surfaces on classical sculpture. Modern techniques such as X-ray fluorescence, ultraviolet light have allowed scientists and archaeologists to determine what pigments were used and how these sculptures would have originally looked.

Since 2003, the polychromy of ancient Greek and Roman sculpture has been captivating the public thanks to the “Gods in Color” travelling exhibition that has been on view in more than twenty venues all over the world. The show is based on the conclusions drawn from research on antique polychromy, conducted by an international team of scholars led by Vinzenz Brinkmann since the early 1980s. His work started with examining the marble sculptures from the 5th century BC Temple of Aphaia, now in the Glyptothek in Munich. In the process, he revealed examples of physical evidence used to inform the recreations of the original colour design and paint scheme of the statues.



The successful “Gods in Color” exhibition is currently being held in Frankfurt at the Liebieghaus to

celebrate for the 40th anniversary of polychromy research in Germany. It juxtaposed some 70 originals with more than 30 spectacular reconstructions bringing “colourful antiquity” back to life.

One thing is certain... Antiquity was colourful!

The touring 'Gods in Color' [#exhibition](#) has now returned in expanded form to Frankfurt's Liebieghaus museum (Germany), with more than 100 objects including a number of new reconstructions.

Find out more... <https://t.co/5MUjxD90fZ>
[pic.twitter.com/ofZ8m8HQCf](https://t.co/5MUjxD90fZ)

— Following Hadrian ☐☐ (@carolemadge) [March 9, 2020](#)

More recently, there has been a growing interest in the digital reconstruction of ancient polychromy thanks to the technological development of computer graphic tools. Over the past two years, I have been following the “Romans in color” project led by Ukrainian, Serbia-based, graphic designer Danila Loginov of the **History in 3D** creative team. With this project, his goal is to create digital colour reconstructions of portraits of Roman Emperors and Empresses by reconstructing the polychromy of the sculptures. Danila completed the first 12 Caesars last April.



To reconstruct the polychromy, Danila relies on the latest scientific findings, including:

- the analysis of traces of pigments on sculptures
- the research into the different types of natural dyes and materials
- the written descriptions of characters in ancient sources
- the study of the colour palette used by Roman painters on the Pompeian frescoes, the Fayum portraits, etc.

A mini project about recreating the polychromy of some of Hadrian's portraits emerged from our conversations on Facebook. He started his work on a statue of Hadrian from Perga which is now on display in the Antalya Museum (Turkey).



Cuirassed statue of Hadrian wearing the Corona Civica. From Perga, Antalya Museum.



Digital colour reconstruction by Danila Loginov

I was so impressed by the results, I sent Danila other portraits of Hadrian that I loved to see it coloured, but also of Sabina and Antinous.

- Cuirassed bust of Hadrian from Italica, Archaeological Museum of Seville (Spain)





- Cuirassed bust of Hadrian in the Galleria degli Uffizi in Florence (Italy)





- Bust of Hadrian in the British Museum in London (UK)





- Bust of Sabina in the Prado in Madrid (Spain)



Idealised and rejuvenated portrait of empress Sabina (wife of Hadrian) with hairstyle inspired by the imagery of the goddess Diana, c. 130 AD, Museo del Prado, Madrid



- Marble bust of Antinous, from Rome, in the British Museum





Danila has been working in the 3D modelling field since 2009, founded “History in 3D” in 2011, and has since participated in various historical 3D reconstruction projects ([Corinth](#), [Felix Romuliana](#), [Palace of Diocletian](#)). The team’s main project is currently “Rome in 3D” aiming at creating the most complete, detailed and accurate 3D reconstruction of the Eternal City as it looked like in the first half

of the 4th century AD. As a result of their work, several video clips have already been published on the History in 3D YouTube channel where one can see the recreated imperial forums, the Colosseum, Palatine, the [Baths of Caracalla](#), the [Pantheon](#) as well as the [Column of Trajan](#).





Pantheon in 3D (2011): Pantheon dome



Pantheon in 3D (2011): Pantheon interior

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