

THE FREEDMAN IN ROMAN ART AND ART HISTORY



From monumental tombs and domestic decoration to acts of benefaction and portraits of ancestors, Roman freed slaves, or freedmen, were prodigious patrons of art and architecture. Traditionally, however, the history of Roman art has been told primarily through the monumental remains of the emperors and ancient writers who worked in their circles. In this study, Lauren Hackworth Petersen critically investigates the problematic notion of “freedman art” in scholarship, dependent as it is on elite-authored texts that are filled with hyperbole and stereotypes of freedmen, such as the memorable fictional character Trimalchio, a boorish ex-slave in Petronius’s *Satyricon*. She emphasizes integrated visual ensembles within defined historical and social contexts and aims to show how material culture can reflect preoccupations that were prevalent throughout Roman society. Interdisciplinary in scope, this book explores the many ways that monuments and artistic commissions usually ascribed to freedmen spoke to a much more complex reality than that presented in literature.

Lauren Hackworth Petersen is assistant professor of art history at the University of Delaware. A scholar of Roman art and architecture, she has published in *Arethusa* and *The Art Bulletin* and has received grants from the American Academy in Rome, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Getty Foundation.

Cambridge University Press
0521858895 - The Freedman in Roman Art and Art History
Lauren Hackworth Petersen
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

THE FREEDMAN IN
ROMAN ART AND
ART HISTORY



LAUREN HACKWORTH PETERSEN

University of Delaware



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press
 0521858895 - The Freedman in Roman Art and Art History
 Lauren Hackworth Petersen
 Frontmatter
[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
 Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo

Cambridge University Press
 40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011-4211, USA
www.cambridge.org
 Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521858892

© Lauren Hackworth Petersen 2006

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2006

Printed in Hong Kong by Golden Cup

A catalog record for this publication is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Petersen, Lauren Hackworth, 1965–
 The freedman in Roman art and art history / Lauren Hackworth Petersen.
 p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN-13: 978-0-521-85889-2 (hardback)

ISBN-10: 0-521-85889-5 (hardback)

1. Art, Roman – Italy. 2. Freedmen in art. 3. Social status in art. I. Title.
 N5760.P48 2006
 704'.086250937 – dc22 2006000504

ISBN-13 978-0-521-85889-2 hardback

ISBN-10 0-521-85889-5 hardback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party Internet Web sites referred to in this publication and does not guarantee that any content on such Web sites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Cambridge University Press
0521858895 - The Freedman in Roman Art and Art History
Lauren Hackworth Petersen
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

For Stephen and Miles

D. M.

Max Hackworth Oswald

Bruce Royal Petersen

CONTENTS



<i>List of Illustrations</i>	page ix
<i>List of Abbreviations</i>	xv
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	xvii
INTRODUCTION: THE ROMAN FREEDMAN, “FREEDMAN ART,” AND TRIMALCHIO	I
PART I: PUBLIC LIFE AND ASSIMILATION	
ONE: REBUILDING POMPEII: THE POPIDIUS FAMILY AND THE TEMPLE OF ISIS	17
TWO: THE VISIBILITY OF THE AUGUSTALES IN POMPEII	57
THREE: MEMORY MAKING IN THE FUNERARY REALM: THE TOMB OF THE BAKER IN ROME	84
PART II: SOCIAL INTEGRATION: DOMUS AND FAMILY	
FOUR: “FREEDMAN TASTE” IN DOMUS DECORATION	123
FIVE: TO CLAIM A DOMUS: THE HOUSE OF THE CAECILII AT POMPEII	163
SIX: FAMILY AND COMMUNITY AT THE ISOLA SACRA NECROPOLIS: THE TOMB OF THE VARIII	184
EPILOGUE	227
<i>Appendix</i>	231
<i>Notes</i>	239
<i>Bibliography</i>	275
<i>Index</i>	289

ILLUSTRATIONS



COLOR PLATES

- I. Priest wearing the mask of Anubis, from the Temple of Isis at Pompeii
- II. Isis and Io, from the Temple of Isis at Pompeii
- III. House of the Fruit Orchard, room 8, Pompeii
- IV. Monument of Eurysaces, south facade, Rome
- V. House of the Marine Venus, peristyle garden, Pompeii
- VI. Casa dell'Ara Massima, *pinax* of Narcissus, Pompeii
- VII. House of the Caecilii, drawing of the south wall of the *tablinum*, Pompeii
- VIII. Tomb of the Varii, no. 87, Isola Sacra

FIGURES

1	House of the Vettii, room <i>p</i> , Pompeii	page 6
2	Priapus, House of the Vettii, <i>fauces</i>	7
3	Frieze of Cupids and Pysches, House of the Vettii, room <i>q</i>	8
4	House of the Vettii, room <i>q</i>	9
5	Plan of Pompeii	21
6	Plan of the Civic Forum at Pompeii	22
7	Temple of Isis, Pompeii	23
8	Entrance to the Temple of Isis	24
9	G. B. and F. Piranesi, view of the Temple of Isis at Pompeii, eighteenth century	25
10	Re-creation of an Isiac ceremony at the Temple of Isis at Pompeii, eighteenth century	26
11	Isiac worship, fresco from Herculaneum	27
12	Plan of the Temple of Isis	28
13	Temple of Isis, back side with niche	29
14	Bacchus, from the Temple of Isis	30

ILLUSTRATIONS

15	Basilica, Pompeii	31
16	Reconstruction of the Temple of Isis at Pompeii	32
17	Temple of Isis, enclosure above the subterranean room (<i>purgatorium</i>), north side	33
18	Temple of Isis, enclosure above the subterranean room (<i>purgatorium</i>), east side	34
19	Reconstruction of the north and west walls of the portico, Temple of Isis	35
20	Reconstruction of the east wall of the portico, north section, Temple of Isis	35
21	Reconstruction of the north wall of the <i>Ekklesiasterion</i> , Temple of Isis	36
22	<i>Navigium Isidis</i> or <i>inventio Osiridis</i> , from the north wall of the <i>sacrarium</i> , Temple of Isis	37
23	Osiris enthroned, from the west wall of the <i>sacrarium</i> , Temple of Isis	38
24	Isis, from the Temple of Isis	39
25	Venus, from the Temple of Isis	41
26	Drawing of a <i>lararium</i> from <i>pistrinum</i> IX.3.10–12, Pompeii	43
27	<i>Lararium</i> , House of the Vettii	44
28	Shrine of Isis, Serapis, Harpocrates, and Anubis, House of the Gilded Cupids, Pompeii	45
29	House of Octavius Quartio, room <i>f</i> , Pompeii	47
30	Egyptianizing frieze from the Villa of the Mysteries, Black Tablinum, Pompeii	49
31	G. B. and F. Piranesi, inscriptions from the Temple of Isis at Pompeii	53
32	Herm portrait of C. Norbanus Sorex, from the Temple of Isis	55
33	Monuments of C. Calventius Quietus and C. Munatius Faustus, Herculaneum Gate, Pompeii	63
34	Plan of the necropolis at the Herculaneum Gate	64
35	Tomb of C. Calventius Quietus	65
36	<i>Corona civica</i> , tomb of C. Calventius Quietus	66
37	<i>Bisellium</i> , monument of C. Munatius Faustus	67
38	Scene of grain distribution, monument of C. Munatius Faustus	68
39	Ship at sail, monument of C. Munatius Faustus	69
40	Tomb of C. Vestorius Priscus, Vesuvius Gate, Pompeii	70
41	Tomb group at the Herculaneum Gate, north, nos. 35–43	71
42	Tomb of M. Cerrinius Restitutus, Herculaneum Gate	73
43	Stele, from the tomb of M. Cerrinius Restitutus	75
44	Tombs of A. Veius Atticus and C. Munatius Faustus, Nuceria Gate, Pompeii	76
45	Eumachia's tomb, Nuceria Gate	77

ILLUSTRATIONS

46	Tomb of P. Vesonius Phileros, Nuceria Gate	79
47	So-called Temple of Vespasian, Civic Forum, Pompeii	81
48	Monument of Eurysaces, Rome	88
49	Monument of Eurysaces, north facade	89
50	Monument of Eurysaces, west facade	89
51	Monument of Eurysaces, south frieze	90
52	Monument of Eurysaces, north frieze	91
53	Monument of Eurysaces, west frieze	91
54	Monument of Eurysaces, east facade	92
55	Plan of the Aurelian gate and Eurysaces' monument	93
56	Portrait of husband and wife, usually attributed to Eurysaces' monument	94
57	Atistia's epitaph, usually attributed to Eurysaces' monument	95
58	Reconstruction of the east facade of Eurysaces' monument	97
59	Model of the area surrounding Eurysaces' monument	100
60	Plan of the area around Eurysaces' monument	101
61	Reconstruction of tombs along the Via Appia, Rome	102
62	Tomb of Caecilia Metella, Rome	103
63	Pyramid tomb of G. Cestius Epulo, Rome	104
64	Exedra tomb of Mamia, Herculaneum Gate, Pompeii	105
65	Plan of the area at the Porta Maggiore, Rome	107
66	Triumphal frieze from the Temple of Apollo Sosianus, Rome	109
67	Roman kneading machine, plan and section	111
68	Square depression inside the truncated cylinder, Monument of Eurysaces, northeast corner	113
69	Model of the Monument of Eurysaces	115
70	Tomb of C. Cartilius Poplicola, Ostia Antica	119
71	House of the Menander, plan, Pompeii	126
72	House of the Menander, view from the entrance to the <i>tablinum</i>	127
73	House of Octavius Quartio, plan, Pompeii	130
74	House of Octavius Quartio, view to the garden	131
75	House of Octavius Quartio, upper terrace with <i>euripus</i>	132
76	Model of the Villa at Oplontis	133
77	Dining grotto and fishponds, Villa at Sperlonga	135
78	Tomb of the Octavii, Nuceria Gate, Pompeii	137
79	House of Livia, room C, Rome	139
80	Villa under the Farnesina, <i>cubiculum</i> B, north wall, Rome	140
81	Villa of the Mysteries, room 4	141
82	House of the Cryptoporticus, room 22, Pompeii	142
83	House of M. Lucretius Fronto, <i>tablinum</i> , north wall, Pompeii	143
84	House of Octavius Quartio, room <i>h</i>	144
85	Villa of the Mysteries, room 5	145
86	Villa at Oplontis, garden paintings and garden views	146

ILLUSTRATIONS

87	House of the Menander, interior of the peristyle garden wall	147
88	House of the Menander, exterior of the peristyle garden wall	148
89	House of the Marine Venus, plan, Pompeii	149
90	House of the Marine Venus, back wall of the peristyle garden	150
91	House of the Ceii, plan, Pompeii	151
92	House of the Ceii, view into garden <i>h</i>	152
93	House of M. Lucretius Fronto, painting of a wild-animal park in the garden	153
94	House of the Menander, painting of a wild-animal park, interior wall of the peristyle garden	154
95	House of the Ceii, garden corner	155
96	House of the Fruit Orchard, plan, Pompeii	157
97	House of the Fruit Orchard, room 12	158
98	House of the Fruit Orchard, <i>triclinium</i> 11	159
99	House of Octavius Quartio, window in room <i>f</i>	160
100	House of Octavius Quartio, garden view and landscape painting	161
101	House of the Caecilii, plan, Pompeii	164
102	Erotic painting, from between <i>triclinium</i> 19 and room 18, House of the Caecilii	165
103	Herm portrait of L. [Caecilius . . .], from the House of the Caecilii	167
104	House of the Caecilii, atrium	168
105	House of the Caecilii, peristyle garden with a painting of a wild-animal park	169
106	House of the Caecilii, First-Style remains, room 7	174
107	House of the Caecilii, dog mosaic, <i>fauces</i>	175
108	Ancestor shrine/ <i>lararium</i> from the House of Balbus (formerly thought to have been from the House of the Four Styles), Pompeii	177
109	House of the Caecilii, <i>tablinum</i> with remains of herm portraits	179
110	Theseus abandoning Ariadne, from <i>triclinium</i> 19, House of the Caecilii	180
111	Relief from the <i>lararium</i> at the House of the Caecilii	181
112	Isola Sacra	185
113	Drawing of Isola Sacra	187
114	Plan of Isola Sacra, Portus, and Ostia Antica	188
115	Isola Sacra, plan of necropolis	190
116	Amphora tombs and tile graves, Isola Sacra	192
117	<i>Tomba a cassone</i> , Isola Sacra	192
118	Reliefs of a midwife and doctor, tomb no. 100, Isola Sacra	193
119	Tomb of the Verrii, no. 29, Isola Sacra	195
120	Tomb of the Claudii, no. 49, Isola Sacra	197
121	Tomb of the Attii, no. 54, Isola Sacra	198
122	Exterior epitaph from the tomb of the Varii, no. 87, Isola Sacra	199
123	Tomb of the Varii, entrance to the tomb chamber	200

 ILLUSTRATIONS

124	Epitaph from the tomb of the Attii	200
125	Epitaph from the tomb of the Clodii, no. 86, Isola Sacra	201
126	Epitaph from the tomb of the Fulcinii, no. 92, Isola Sacra	201
127	Epitaph from the tomb of the Claudii	203
128	Tomb of the Varii, cooking facilities and aedicula in the enclosure	205
129	Tomb of the Varii, interior chamber	206
130	Tomb of the Varii, back wall of the interior chamber	207
131	Painting of Pyramus and Thisbe and Servanda's epitaph, back wall of the tomb of the Varii	208
132	Endymion floor mosaic, tomb of the Varii	209
133	Relief of the lying-in-state ritual from the Tomb of the Haterii, Rome	211
134	Drawing of offerings made at tombs	213
135	Interior of tomb no. 93, Isola Sacra	218
136	Temple tomb of Annia Regilla, Via Appia, Rome	219
137	Barberini tomb, Via Latina, Rome	221
138	Tomb of Aphrodisia, no. 71, Isola Sacra	223
139	Tomb no. 81, Isola Sacra	225
140	Funerary monument of P. Nonius Zethus, from Ostia Antica	229

ABBREVIATIONS



Standard abbreviations can be found in the *American Journal of Archaeology* 95.1 (1991): 4–16.

AA	<i>Archäologischer Anzeiger</i>
AHR	<i>American Historical Review</i>
AJA	<i>American Journal of Archaeology</i>
AJAH	<i>American Journal of Ancient History</i>
AJP	<i>American Journal of Philology</i>
ANRW	<i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt</i>
ArchNews	<i>Archaeological News</i>
ArtB	<i>The Art Bulletin</i>
BABesch	<i>Bulletin antieke beschaving. Annual Papers of Classical Archaeology</i>
BdI	<i>Bullettino dell'Istituto di corrispondenza archeologica</i>
BullCom	<i>Bullettino della Commissione archeologica comunale di Roma</i>
CIL	<i>Corpus inscriptionum latinarum</i>
CJ	<i>Classical Journal</i>
CP	<i>Classical Philology</i>
CQ	<i>Classical Quarterly</i>
EPRO	<i>Études préliminaires aux religions orientales dans l'empire romain</i>
JdI	<i>Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts</i>
JRA	<i>Journal of Roman Archaeology</i>
JRS	<i>Journal of Roman Studies</i>
LIMC	<i>Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae</i>
LTUR	<i>Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae</i>
MAAR	<i>Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome</i>
MEFRA	<i>Mélanges de l'École française de Rome, Antiquité</i>
NSc	<i>Notizie degli scavi di antichità</i>
PBSR	<i>Papers of the British School in Rome</i>
PP	<i>La parola del passato</i>
PPM	<i>Pompei, pitture e mosaici</i>

A B B R E V I A T I O N S

<i>PPP</i>	<i>Pitture e pavimenti di Pompei</i>
<i>RA</i>	<i>Revue archéologique</i>
<i>RM</i>	<i>Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Römische Abteilungen</i>
<i>TAPA</i>	<i>Transactions of the American Philological Association</i>
<i>ZPE</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik</i>

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



My desire to study freed slaves in ancient Roman art and society began a decade ago in a graduate seminar on Pompeii taught by Professor John R. Clarke; that interest developed into a doctoral dissertation submitted in 2000 at the University of Texas at Austin. I am privileged to have worked closely with coadvisors John Clarke and Penelope J. E. Davies, who unhesitatingly gave their time, advice, and support and have continued to do so. I am deeply indebted to both of them. A special note of gratitude is also owed to Andrew M. Riggsby, Natalie B. Kampen, and Ann Reynolds, all committee members, for their critical comments at earlier stages of the project.

I wish to thank the University of Texas at Austin for its generous support, including a University Continuing Fellowship and a Sherry and Tommy Jacks Graduate Art History Scholarship, which funded my first research trip to Rome in connection with the dissertation. The award of a Rome Prize (Arthur Ross Pre-doctoral Fellowship in Classical Art and Archaeology) at the American Academy in Rome permitted me to undertake initial research for this project. Work for this book was carried out with the support of the University of Delaware General University Research fund and a Summer Stipend from the National Endowment for the Humanities. I am extremely grateful to the Getty Foundation for a Post-doctoral Fellowship in the History of Art and Humanities in 2003–4, which was invaluable in helping me to bring this book to completion.

Several individuals have generously offered their insights at various stages of this project. I extend a warm thank you to Sandra Joshel, whose work has been an inspiration to me and whose imprint appears throughout this book. I also owe debts of gratitude to the scholars who carefully read the manuscript for Cambridge University Press and offered astute suggestions for revision, namely, to Barbara Kellum and an anonymous reader. Both helped to shape this project in immeasurable ways. My work has also benefited from conversations with friends and colleagues. I wish to acknowledge first and foremost Margaret Laird, whose work on the Augustales has coincided with my work on freedmen. Also deserving credit are Margaret Woodhull, Nayla Muntasser, Michael Koortbojian, John Bodel, Timothy Moore, Nicholas Horsfall, Shawna Leigh, Lisa Fentress, Ann

 A C K N O W L E D G M E N T S

Marie Yasin, Jeremy Hartnett, H. Perry Chapman, and Bernard Herman. The graduate students in the Department of Art History at the University of Delaware have been a font of new ideas in seminars, and I learned from them as well. Intangible but meaningful is the support from family, friends, and colleagues over the past decade.

Many thanks to Professor Lester Little, director of the American Academy in Rome (now retired), and his staff, in particular, Pina Pasquantonio, Christina Huemer and the library staff, and Marina Lella, whose persistence in seeking permissions paid off. The direct study of works of art and architecture was made possible by Pompeii's superintendent, Pietro Giovanni Guzzo, who also granted permission for extensive on-site photography; Maria Rosaria Borriello, director of the Naples Archaeological Museum; Stefano de Caro, past superintendent of Naples and Caserta; Valeria Sampaolo, il soprintendente reggente of Naples and Caserta (2004); Maria Luisa Nava, the current superintendent of Naples and Caserta; and the superintendency of Rome. Several individuals and institutions kindly assisted with the acquisition of images for this book. I thank Anna Gallina Zevi, superintendent of Ostia Antica, Grete Stefani at the photo archive at Pompeii, Luisa Veneziano at the Fototeca at the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Lavinia Ciuffa at the Fototeca at the American Academy in Rome, Antonio Palladino and Paolo Brozzi at the Library at the American Academy in Rome, Timothy McCarthy at Art Resource, the Istituto Centrale per il Catalogo e la Documentazione in Rome, the Swedish School in Rome, Michele Poisson at Ayer Publishing, the Istituto Nazionale di Studi Romani at Rome, the British Museum in London, the Winterthur Library in Delaware, Wendy Bellion, Susan Bird, Susan Walker, Peter Aicher, Laurie Haight Keenan at Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, Bettina Bergmann, Victoria I, James Stanton-Abbott, and George Freeman. I owe an especial debt to Barb Hackworth, whose generosity helped to cover the costs of acquiring photographs and permissions. A subvention from the Samuel H. Kress Foundation assisted with the book's illustration program, as did grants from the Department of Art History and the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Delaware, for which I thank Nina Athanassoglou-Kallmyer for her willing assistance. I also gratefully acknowledge the unwavering support of Beatrice Rehl, senior editor at Cambridge University Press.

Finally, I owe my deepest debt of gratitude to Stephen Petersen, who has provided unqualified scholarly and emotional support over the years. He has enthusiastically listened to my ideas, offered his own, made insightful comments on the manuscript, and photographed many of the monuments that appear throughout this book. He has been a pillar of strength for me, and it is to him and our son Miles that I dedicate this book.