



Life-size statue of *Goddess of Hope*, 1817, executed for Caroline von Humboldt.
Engraving by Ferdinando Mori (platemark 305 × 200 mm)

Thorvaldsen, Bertel

Copenhagen 1768/1770 – 1844 Copenhagen

Le Statue e li Bassirilievi inventati e scolpiti in marmo dal Cavaliere Alberto Thorvaldsen scultore danese. Disegnati ed incisi dai Riepenhausen e da Ferdinando Mori.

Rome, [Ferdinando Mori], 1811 (issued circa 1817)

FOLIO (420 × 280 mm), complete suite of eighty numbered plates (including title) printed on 78 folios (nos. 33–36 printed on two leaves); the matrices of varying sizes (largest 200 × 410 mm, smallest 190 × 135 mm), of which eleven (plate nos. 11–15, 18–21, 23, 31) are signed by the Riepenhausen brothers, and the remainder by Mori (except no. 63, unsigned).

PROVENANCE Bibliothek des Fürsten von Löwenstein-Rosenberg, Kleinheubach, printed label on front cover *Zur Fürstlich Löwenstein-Rosenbergischen Hofbibliothek in Heubach gehörig*¹ — Sotheby's Deutschland GmbH, 'Wertvolle Bücher: aus der Fürstl. Löwenstein-Wertheim-Rosenberg'schen Hofbibliothek sowie aus dem Besitz privater Sammler', 10 June 1986, lot 1257 — Martin Breslauer, Inc., 'Catalogue 111: Rare books, manuscripts, autographs: a selection arranged according to subjects', New York c. 1994, item 73

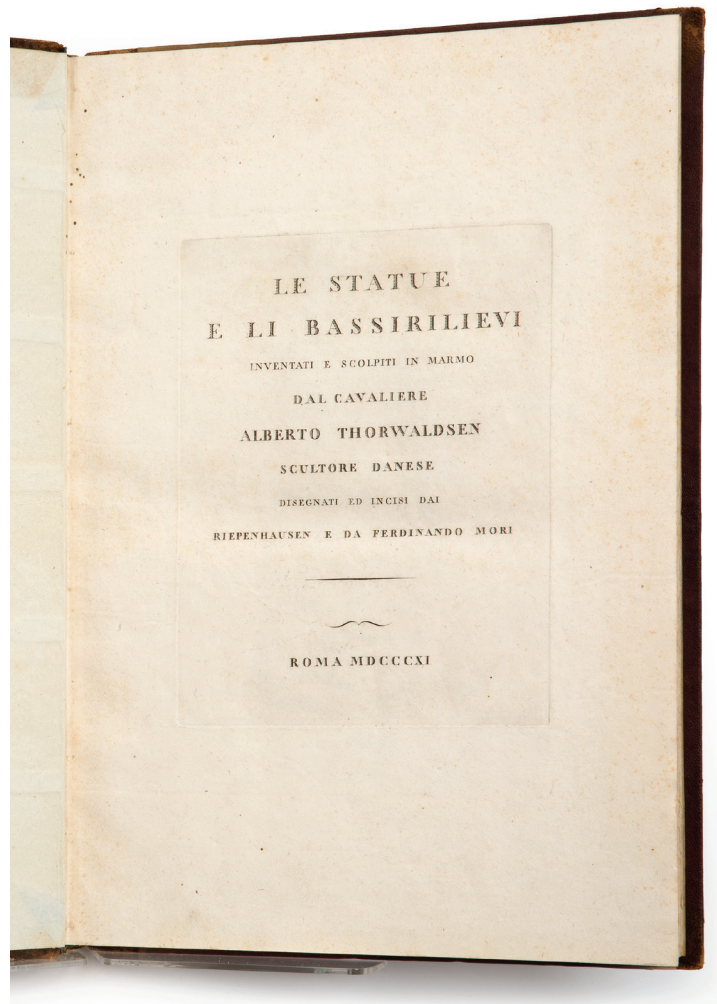
One plate trimmed inside platemark along one side, otherwise preserving broad margins, clean and fresh.

BINDING contemporary German half-roan binding, the leather back decorated in gilt and blind and by an orange lettering-piece, violet cloth on covers.

A SERIES of line engravings documenting statues and reliefs produced in Thorvaldsen's Roman workshop, eleven drawn and engraved by the brothers Franz (1786–1831) and Johannes (1788–1860) Riepenhausen, the remainder by the engraver-publisher Ferdinando Mori (1775/1782–1852). It is heralded as one of the earliest publications reproducing works by a modern artist, and responsible for focusing the attention of all Europe on the sculptor.²

¹ On the dispersal of this library, see *Kostbare Bücher aus drei alten fränkischen Bibliotheken: Bronnbach, Kleinheubach, Neustadt a.M.: Beiträge zur Bibliotheksgeschichte und Katalog des 1985 ersteigerten Bestandes*, edited by Peter Kolb and Gottfried Mälzer (Würzburg 1988).

² Brigitte Kuhn-Forte, in *Zwischen Antike Klassizismus und Romantik: Die Künstlerfamilie Riepenhausen*, catalogue of an exhibition Winckelmann-Museum (Mainz 2001), pp.210–212, no. VII.8: 'Das 1811 erschienene Stichwerk ist ein Meilenstein in der Geschichte des römischen Verlagswesens:



Es handelt sich um eines der ersten Beispiele der Reproduktion des Oeuvres eines modernen Künstlers... Es machte Thorvaldens Schöpfungen in ganz Europa bekannt...'.³

The works reproduced by the Riepenhausen brothers are a baptismal font commissioned by Charlotte Schimmelmann for the church of Brahetrolleborg, Funen, Denmark (1805–1807; plates 11–14), a relief of ‘The Dance of the Muses on Helicon’ modelled by Thorvaldsen in nine days as a birthday present for Jacqueline Elisabeth Schubart (1804; pl. 15), four reliefs for the façade of Christiansborg Palace, Copenhagen (1807–1810; pls. 18–21), a relief of ‘Hector with Paris and Helen’ (1809; pl. 23), and another of ‘Cupid revives Psyche’ (1810; pl. 31). Ferdinando Mori reproduced all the other works, among them the celebrated Alexander frieze for the Palazzo del Quirinale in Rome, Thorvaldsen’s first commission for the Napoleonic dynasty (1812; pls. 33–54); a statue of Mars, commissioned by the Bavarian crown prince Ludwig, for which the model has been lost (1808; pl. 32);³ the tripartite funeral monuments for August Boehmer (pls. 67–69) and J. Ph. Bethmann-Hollweg (pls. 71–73), executed in 1812 and 1814 respectively; and the portrait of Elisabeth Ostermann-Tolstoi modelled in 1815, and sculpted in 1815–1819 (pl. 77). Seven of Mori’s preparatory drawings for the plates of the Alexander reliefs are preserved in the Thorvaldsen Museum in Copenhagen (Inv. D175–181, associated with pls. 33–37, 40, 43, 49–50), as well as his pencil drawing of Mars (D174), and drawings for twenty-three other plates.⁴

The publication evidently was instigated in 1809 by Joseph Anton Koch, who planned to draw and engrave the sculptures himself, but soon transferred the project to the Riepenhausen brothers and Ferdinando Mori. Initially, all the costs were borne by Thorvaldsen, and the work first distributed in 1811 as a suite of title and twenty-one plates.⁵ In 1813 Mori assumed the publication rights,⁶ and the work grew in three stages (to

³ Bjarne Jornaes, ‘Thorvaldsens “klassische” Periode 1803–1819’ in *Bertel Thorvaldsen: Untersuchungen zu seinem Werk und zur Kunst seiner Zeit*, edited by Gerhard Bott (Cologne 1977), pp.49–106 no. 34 and fig. 11.

⁴ Mori’s drawings are Thorvaldsen Museum, Copenhagen, Drawings D159–189 (corresponding to pls. 2–6, 8–10, 16, 22, 24–25, 27–29, 32–37, 40, 43, 49–50, 52–53, 55, 57, 59–62, 77).

⁵ The first two (of seven, or eight?) *distribuzioni* seem to have been issued simultaneously. The first was comprised of the title and ten plates (Giasone [frontal view]; Giasone [side view]; Briseide consegnata agli eraldi di Agamennone; Ganimede; Apollo; Bacco; Venere; Psyche; Amore e Psyche); the second contained eleven plates (Il Battesimo; La Madonna; Gesù Cristo; La Gloria; Apollo che suona e le muse danzano intorno alle tre Grazie; Ebe; Frontone; Ercole ed Ebe; Esculapio ed Egia; Prometeo e Minerva; Giove e Nemesi). The prints were enclosed in a printed wrapper: *Collezione delle statue e de bassirilievi inventati e scolpiti in marmo dal cavaliere Alberto Thorvaldsen scultore danese*. Cf. Maria Vittoria Marini Clarelli, ‘L’opera di Thorvaldsen nell’editoria romana dell’Ottocento’ in *Bertel Thorvaldsen: 1770–1844: scultore danese a Roma*, edited by Elena di Majo (Rome 1989), pp.308–312 (‘le dispense o distribuzioni furono sette’).

⁶ The contract between Thorvaldsen and Mori survives in the Thorvaldsen Museum, Copenhagen. Letter Archives, m3 1813, nr. 9 (<http://brevarkivet.thorvaldsensmuseum.dk/letters/m31813,nr.9>). As

32,⁷ 54,⁸ and 67⁹ plates respectively) until in 1816 it reached its optimum size of eighty engravings.¹⁰

In each of these successive issues, the same title-plate (dated 1811) was utilised. Copies of the earliest issues are recognisable by their contents, or by paper evidence (in our copy, all the plates are struck on a paper watermarked 1817). These copies potentially represent the earliest issues (fewer than 67 engravings)

- Chicago, Newberry Library, W 01. T4003 (63 plates) • Copenhagen, Danmarks Kunstbibliothek, B 265:1–2 (44 plates in 2 fascicules) • Heidelberg, Universitätsbibliothek, T 2335 RES (67 plates)¹¹ • Lausanne, Bibliothèque cantonale et universitaire, 3R 451 (54 plates) • London, Royal Academy¹² • Mendrisio, Accademia di Architettura, AAM FG 603 • Los Angeles, Getty Research Institute, 85-B5774 (22 plates, *i.e.* two fascicules, in printed wrapper) • Rome, Bibliotheca Herziana, Wa–THO 4110–4110 gr raro (51 plates) • Vienna, Albertina, K.S.D–90 (46 plates)

Copies representative of our issue (80 engravings) include

- Copenhagen, National Library, 17,–255 2°, 3 eks • Darmstadt, Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek, gr. Fol. 3/1298 • Göttingen, Niedersächsische Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, 2 ART PLAST V, 1017¹³ • Lincoln, University of Nebraska Libraries, NA327.R5 N37 1811 • New Haven, Yale University, Beinecke Library, 2004 Folio 40 • Princeton, University, Marquand Library, NB723.T5 A3f • Weimar, Herzogin Anna Amalia Bibliothek, Th Q 1 : pr [2]

the work progressed, Mori submitted proof impressions of his engravings for Thorvaldsen's approval. Thirteen such impressions (before letters, most with pencil annotations) are in the Thorvaldsen Museum, Copenhagen, Graphic Works by other artists, E751–p, E75r–y (corresponding to pls. 2, 11–12, 16, 23–24, 30, 40, 45, 64–65, 67, 69).

⁷ Adding to the series eleven prints comprising the presumed third *distribuzione*: Adone; Ettore che rimprovera Paride; La nascita di Venere; Amore ferito dall'ape; Mercurio portante Bacco alla nurice; Amorino; Amore; Bacco che porge da bere ad Amore; Carità; Amore e Psiche; Marte.

⁸ Plates 33–54 document the Alexander frieze and were initially considered a 'supplement' to the work.

⁹ The '4a Distribuzione' was circulating in August 1813 (cf. letter of Mori to Thorvaldsen in Thorvaldsen Museum, Letter Archive, m3 1813, nr. 17; and for contents, m4 1814, nr. 24).

¹⁰ The '5a Distribuzione delle Opere' was circulating in April 1816 (cf. letter of Mori to Thorvaldsen in Thorvaldsen Museum, Letter Archive, m4 1816, nr. 14).

¹¹ <http://digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/thorvaldsen1811>.

¹² *A Catalogue of books in the library of the Royal Academy* (London 1877), p.279 ('Parts 1, 4, 5').

¹³ Copy exhibited *Zwischen Antike Klassizismus und Romantik, op. cit.*, pp.210–212 no. VII.8.

A subsequent issue of the plates has a new title-plate, still dated 1811, however without mention of the Riepenhausen brothers (though their prints are retained), and adding 'Tomo I. Rami 80' as if further volumes of additional plates were to follow (none was published):

- Aarhus, Statsbiblioteket, 5–93–0569 (77 plates) • Copenhagen, Statsbiblioteket, ku 433 • London, British Library, 561*.g.8 (on paper watermarked 1821) • Milan, Biblioteca d'Arte di Milano, ATL.U.8 ('[46] c. di tav.')] • Rome, Jørgen B. Hartmann¹⁴

REFERENCE Andreas Andresen, *Die deutschen Maler-Radierer des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Leipzig 1869), III, p.115 no. 14 ('Das Werk, welches 80 Blätter enthält, ist uns leider nicht zu Gesicht gekommen, so dass wir keine Detailbeschreibung geben können'); *Bibliotheca Danica: Systematisk fortegnelse over den danske litteratur fra 1482–1830* (reprint Copenhagen 1961), I, p.1108 ('67 Tvlr. '); *Catalogo dei libri italiani dell' ottocento* (Milan 1991), IV, p.3137; *Unter Glas und Rahmen: Druckgraphik der Romantik aus den Beständen des Landesmuseums Mainz und aus Privatbesitz*, catalogue of an exhibition, edited by Stephan Seeliger and Norbert Suhr (Mainz 1993), p.148

¹⁴ Copy described by Marini Clarelli, *op. cit.*, p.309 (with reproduction of its title-page).