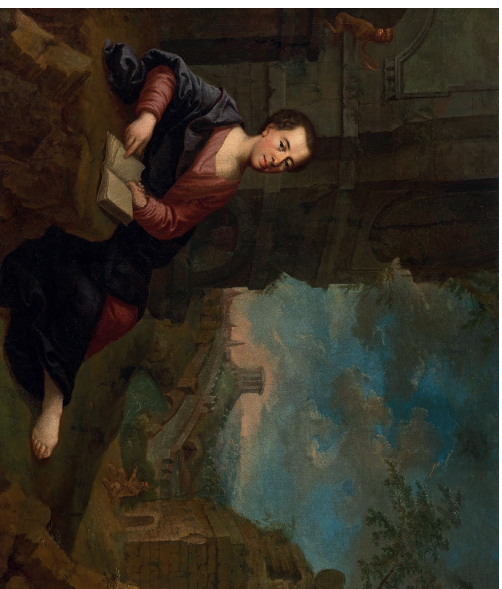


*The one way for
us to become great,
perhaps inimitable,
is by imitating
the ancients.*

These are the words German art historian and archaeologist Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717–1768) wrote in his 1755 *Thoughts on the Imitation of Greek Works in Painting and Sculpture*. He wrote this work before journeying to Rome: like many antiquarians of his day he first learned about the Classics through immersion in literature. In Germany he also encountered the souvenirs—coins, gems and figurines—that Grand Tourists and other travellers brought north from visits to Italy.

Once in Rome Winckelmann began to study the remains of Greek, Graeco-Roman and Roman art on a larger scale. Through personal contacts and writings, Winckelmann influenced generations of scholars, aesthetes, collectors, craftsmen and artists both within and beyond Italy. He inspired others to imitate both the spirit and forms of antiquity in their own artistic productions, large and small.



Anon., Portrait of J.J. Winckelmann
against a Classical landscape, after 1760.
Royal Castle, Warsaw.

*This exhibition was curated by
Katherine Harloe, Allan Hiscutt & Amy C. Smith*

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*From Italy
to Britain:
Winckelmann and the spread
of neoclassical taste*

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