

**Storage in Early Modern Art Museums:
The Value of Objects Behind the Scenes**

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Full text

As Martina Griesser stated in 2012, the history of museum storage has still to be written.¹ She presumes that this history began in the late 19th century – when appropriate storage rooms were designed and built for the first time. That stands to be proven: actually, the first modern museums, founded in the decades around 1800, did have some structures that can be called storage rooms. In the following minutes, I would like to show you how this question arose in the first place, and how curators reacted to it. Some written sources and plans show us traces of the early storage design. Traces, I say, because we do not know exactly what the first storage rooms looked like. I have not found any details concerning storage rooms in museums in Paris or London. I have found some hints for museums in Italian cities and in Berlin, but no precise plans or technical details. What we can say is: The question of storing works of art in order to protect them from damage, destruction, or deprivation arose often and all over. At the same time, the storage of objects behind the display space was avoided or at least only temporary. In the early history of museums, storage rooms seem to have not been planned as such.

Indeed, storing works of art was contrary to the very reason museums were founded: bringing hidden collections and treasures to light, making them visible to a public (which itself was in the state of being formed as the modern society, the citizens) and exhibiting them for the purposes of education, enjoyment, and the objects' own good. This was indeed one argument for the foundation of the first pinacothèque, the Royal Gallery in the Luxembourg Palace in Paris.

1. Paris, Palais du Luxembourg: gallery 1752

In 1750, a selection of ninety-nine paintings and twenty drawings from the French Royal collection were put on display in the former royal apartment rooms, and in two gallery wings.² One of these galleries contained the Rubens cycle of the Life of Maria de' Medici, which was part of the original palace design. François Blondel described the Luxembourg Palace in 1752, shortly after it was opened to the public. It provided access to some treasures of the Majesty's painting collection, and it appears that all the rooms were accessible – at least they are all mentioned as hosting important works of art that should be visited.³

The storage was in Versailles: as a preparatory report says (I quote the document from Andrew McClellan's survey from 1994 here), "the King's paintings are so uncomfortably housed in picture cabinets at Versailles that they must be stacked one on top of another, thwarting the curiosity

¹ Griesser-Stermscheg 2012; a detailed study on the topic, in fact, is her habilitation: *Tabu Depot. Das Museumsdepot in Geschichte und Gegenwart* (Konservierungswissenschaft – Restaurierung – Technologie, 10), Wien, Köln, Weimar (Böhlau) 2013.

² McClellan 1994, p. 13.

³ Blondel 1752, p. 50.

of foreigners and others who desire to see them.”⁴ We clearly see that it was not only the wish to show the artworks to the public that led to the gallery’s foundation but also the need for conservation. The paintings should neither be stored on top of one another, nor should they be moved often to show them to visitors. Even more clearly, the report says shortly afterwards, “And as they will be on display attention will be given to those in need of restoration.”⁵ This was indeed an important point: If the paintings were presented to a public, care would be taken of them.⁶

2. Paris, Grande Galérie du Louvre (Hubert Robert, 1798)

Both arguments, accessibility and protection, were crucial for the amassing of artworks in the revolutionary museums from 1792 on.⁷ In this year the Louvre was destined officially to be “depot” of paintings, statues and other objects belonging to the state. The point was to keep the works safe – both from their former owners, such as churches or noblemen or the Royal families, and from vandalism by radical revolutionists.⁸ The word “Depôt” meant a safe place for public property, and it connotes accessibility, as well. The nation’s treasures should be shown to and used by the public, for study and enjoyment.⁹ We can find this illustrated in Hubert Robert’s series of ideal perspectives of the Grande Galérie at the Louvre.¹⁰ Here we see one version that presumably documents how the gallery was disposed in the first years of the revolutionary Museum. We see paintings and sculptures on display on the walls and on easels, mostly female visitors, some of them with children. They seem to be doing more copying or chatting, than looking at the objects on the walls.

As I said, this is an ideal view of the museum. In reality, the Musée Central, since 1803 Musée Napoléon, was a construction site during its whole existence.¹¹ Due to construction work on the building, like the replacing of the windows in 1804,¹² many paintings were not on display, or precisely: they stayed where they were, but the gallery room was closed, and if we believe the Prussian writer Karl Varnhagen von Ense, they were not even protected from dust and dirt during the work.¹³ Damages and robbery were reported, as well as the lack of space and of gallery keepers.¹⁴ Two aspects may have been the most significant ones, for they led to the conception of storage rooms: Restoration and fluctuation.

3. Paris, Grande Galérie du Louvre (Percier, 1823)

The writer and artist Helmina von Chézy visited the Louvre very often. She was befriended with many artists and officials who gave her access to pictures that were not on display, which means to rooms that were not open for the public.¹⁵ If we look at the plan of the Great Gallery, it is difficult to identify which rooms that could have been. Friedrich Schlegel reported in 1802 that behind the Gallery there was “a smaller room, where those paintings are stored that are currently not on display, those which

⁴ McClellan 1994, p. 14 (anonymous report from January 1750).

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 14 f.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

⁷ Pommier 1999, p. 256.

⁸ Carmona 2004, p. 212 f.

⁹ McClellan 1994, p. 9 f.

¹⁰ Faroult 2016, esp. p. 416-441 (Hubert Robert et le Louvre).

¹¹ Barbier et al. 2016, p. 692-704, 730-732.

¹² Savoy 2009, p. 158.

¹³ Feilchenfeldt 1987, p. 94.

¹⁴ Carmona 2004, p. 222; McClellan 1994, p. 131 f.

¹⁵ Savoy 2009, p. 109, 158.

are being worked on, like the Madonna of Foligno, and the Transfiguration by Raphael. Here lie, leaned against each other at the wall, the divine masterworks of Perugin and of the sweet John Bellin, unseen, and unadored!”¹⁶

This storage and restoration room was probably not in the Tuileries castle (left) nor one of the other museum rooms (right). It was most likely part of the Grand Gallery itself that must have been divided by a temporary wall. Chézy saw a lot of paintings in the “Restaurationssaal” as she says, “however, only to some of the most important ones I could dedicate a closer and repeated observation. And even some of the most exquisite ones have very quickly been removed from my gaze (...).”¹⁷

After having spoken about some paintings by Leonardo da Vinci and his scholars, Chézy continues: “Some more are resting in the archive of the restoration room. They will doubtlessly be displayed in some years, when there will be room and time.”¹⁸ The quoted “archive” might have meant some shelves or cabinets, if not the room itself. Anyway, Chézy’s observation makes clear that storage was intended to be temporary.

4. Inventaire Napoléon: Mantegna, Pala di San Zeno

The first inventory of the artworks that were kept in the Musée Napoléon was not conducted until 1810, upon demand of the minister of the Interior, Pierre Daru. The Louvre director, Dominique Vivant Denon, explained that the difficulty of writing this inventory was due to the high fluctuation of works as they entered and left the Museum, among other factors.¹⁹

Already in 1802, Schlegel provided an explanation for what happened to at least some of the works in storage, claiming that “a great number of good and famous pictures have been removed. People say they are intended to embellish the palaces of the Tuileries and St. Cloud”²⁰. While Denon assured the minister in 1810 that every movement of any object was documented,²¹ Schlegel had already in 1802 written that it was impossible “to have a complete overview on everything here and to keep it in view”.²² And this was even before the war campaigns in Flanders, during which time the museum was flooded with objects from Germany and Italy.

In 1801, the Louvre contained almost 3,000 paintings, 20,000 drawings, 30,000 prints, and 150 antiques.²³ The official report says that 6,700 paintings existed in the storage spaces of the Louvre, waiting for a place that could assume them or for restoration.

¹⁶ Eichner 1959, p. 9: Nachricht von den Gemälden in Paris, Im Herbst 1802; p. 10 f.: “[...] noch ein kleinerer [Saal], wo die Gemälde befindlich sind, die gegenwärtig nicht ausgestellt sind, die, an welchen eben jetzt gearbeitet wird, wie die Madonna di Foligno, und die Transfiguration von Raffael. Hier liegen übereinandergelehnt an der Wand die göttlichen Meisterwerke Perugins und des lieblichen Johann Bellin, ungesehen, und unbewundert!” Cfr. Carmona 2004, p. 219.

¹⁷ Savoy 2009, p. 109: “[...] aber nur einigen der wichtigsten konnte ich eine genaue und wiederholte Betrachtung widmen. Auch einige der vorzüglichsten wurden meinem Auge zu schnell wieder entrückt, wie eine herrliche lilienbekränzte heilige Katharina von Leonardo da Vinci [...]”.

¹⁸ Savoy 2009, p. 178: “Dies sind die einzigen Werke, die wir von Leonardo und seinen Schülern ausgestellt besitzen. Im Archiv des Restaurations-Saals ruhen noch einige, die ohne Zweifel in einigen Jahren, wenn Platz und Zeit da seyn wird, ausgestellt werden.”

¹⁹ Dupuy/le Masne de Chermont/Williamson 1999, n° 1925 (Dominique-Vivant Denon to Pierre Daru, 12 nov 1810).

²⁰ Eichner 1959, p. 11: “man hat [...] eine große Zahl guter und berühmter Bilder weggenommen, welche wie man sagt, bestimmt sind, die Paläste der Tuileries und zu St. Cloud zu verschönern”.

²¹ Dupuy/le Masne de Chermont/Williamson 1999, n° 1925 (Dominique-Vivant Denon to Pierre Daru, 12 nov 1810).

²² Eichner 1959, p. 11: “[Es ist unmöglich,] alles was hier ist, vollständig zu übersehen und es im Auge zu behalten”.

²³ Rapport présenté aux consuls de la République, par le ministre de l’Intérieur, le 13 fructidor an IX, [31.8.1801], in: Moniteur Universel 1801, p. 1427. Cfr. Thate 2003, p. 187.

In Verona, for example, the French seized a lot of paintings by Andrea Mantegna, we see here an extract of the inventory listing the parts of the San Zeno altarpiece.²⁴ I have chosen it because they are classified as placed in the Musée Napoléon, but it is not specified where. In fact, Helmina von Chézy also mentioned that these paintings were in the possession of Musée Napoléon, as we see it here, but not on display.²⁵ And not even that: Some of them were already brought out of Paris, to the provincial museum of Tours, shortly after 1803. In the inventory, at the border of the page, there is just a note “remi à Mr. Rosa”.

5. Andrea Mantegna, Pala di San Zeno

If we look at the whole altarpiece, we see that the original frame had been left in Verona, and that its several parts have been dismantled and dispersed. The three main parts were stored in the Louvre and were given back after 1815. Two of the three predella pieces were sent to Tours where they are still today, and the crucifixion remained in the Louvre, too. (If we switch back to the inventory we see the original inventory number only for the crucifixion and the note „Galerie“, which was added later.) The report from 1801 mentioned above was also intended to announce the distribution of artworks from the storage to museums in the provinces, where they should be displayed. This political order was given to spread revolutionary benefit, but it caused a lot of critique, too. Schlegel regretted the shipment to the provinces where the artworks would “hardly be ever seen again by the eye of an art lover”.²⁶

Indeed, some of the objects went missing, were stored, or even sold in the destination towns. However, most artworks were put on display, as in Mainz, where a set of about 36 paintings was arranged in a secularized monastery, which was gallery and storage at the same time, in 1809.²⁷

6. Florence, S. Marco, dormitory

This example is only one of many storage complexes. Many more of them existed in Italy, where the art academies were responsible for storing artworks in public buildings: altarpieces from secularized churches and convents, town halls or bishops' palaces.²⁸ All over the Napoleonic Italian states there were “depositi demaniali”, from small churches or chapels in provincial towns to vast complexes like the Scuola di San Giovanni in Venice or, as we see here, the San Marco monastery in Florence. All these storage units were meant to be temporary. They were usually not accessible,²⁹ only on demand and presumably with credentials. For example, in 1827 the Baron Karl Friedrich von Rumohr, who was an art critic and collector, was allowed by the city of Florence to visit the “storages of the Academy”, that is: the former convent of San Marco.³⁰

The Florentine academy had ambitious ideas for this complex. The convent of San Marco with its famous fresco paintings by Fra Angelico and Fra Bartolommeo was to be basically used as a storage for less important paintings (“Pitture di minor pregio”) and other objects on behalf of the

²⁴ Paris, Archives des musées nationaux, 1 DD*16, Inventaire general du musée Napoléon, 1810. Peintures, p. 65 f.

²⁵ Savoy 2009, p. 182, 574 f. (Mara Bittner, René Hartmann).

²⁶ Eichner 1959, p. 79: Zweiter Nachtrag alter Gemälde. Im Frühjahr 1804; p. 97: “[...] wo sie wohl schwerlich je das Auge eines Kunstfreundes wieder sehen wird!”

²⁷ Savoy 2015, p. 554, 556 (Désirée Wöhler); Thate 2004, p. 322-324.

²⁸ Skwirblies 2017, p. 38-56.

²⁹ Lapucci 1990, p. 85.

³⁰ Von Rumohr 1827, p. 237.

Academy.³¹ Its president, writing to the local authorities of the French government, proposed to enlarge the complex transforming it into a study centre: with the possibility to study on the ground floor and to live and work on the upper floor.³²

Trying to make public collections fully accessible to amateurs, scholars and other visitors was not limited to the revolutionary or Napoleonic program. Laws were set still by the Austrian government after 1815 to prohibit the permanent storage or sale of public goods, apart from exceptional cases of deterioration or grave circumstances.³³

The problem was the sheer number of objects in question: In Venice, there were in fact several auctions held between 1810 and 1824, selling thousands of paintings from the depositi,³⁴ and still in 1837 the central storage in the Palazzo Ducale contained more than 1,500 pictures.³⁵ Around 1820, the Brera Academy and Gallery in Milan had in storage 140 out of 656 works, 28 in the restoration room, 63 in the gallery keeper's room, and 28 in the room of the "musician Banfi" – whoever that was.³⁶ That means: forty percent of the inventoried pictures were not on display. In Vienna itself, the Royal galleries had even more of its treasures in storage: 2,200 out of 3,500.³⁷

7. Vadsterna, cloister S. Birgitta, storage (1800)

One of the few visualisations of a storage room is this etching by Swedish artist Johan Fredrik Martin showing a room of the St. Birgitta monastery in Vadsterna.³⁸ The picturesque arrangement makes it difficult to believe that it represents a documentary view. The disposition oscillates between treasure chamber and lumber-room. Here we can see an important aspect of what modern storage is: The storage facility needs not only to have room for the works themselves but also the adequate falsework, shelves, lockers, boards etc. We remember Chézy talking about "the archive of the restoration room" which may have referred to such structures. Martina Griesser considers special furniture for storing, protecting and sorting objects as predecessors of modern museum storages. In fact, at the turn of the 18th /19th century, structural order and protection measures for the objects had not yet been developed for the spaces behind the scenes.

8. Paris, Petits-Augustins, Musée des Monuments Français (1821)

Nonetheless, protection was the crucial purpose of storage. While the Louvre contained works of art that were considered undoubted treasures, the Musée des Monuments Français, founded and led by Alexandre Lenoir in an former monastery in Paris, contained objects that had literally been saved from vandalism, destruction or neglect. We see here the whole structure of the museum, containing the presentation and period rooms in the convent (bottom right), in the courtyard (middle) and in the garden (upper left). Like in Vadsterna, the storage room seems to be in disorder, but in fact, it is arranged to be part of the exposition itself.

³¹ Skwirbliès 2017, p. 63; cit. Florence, Archivio di Stato (ASF), Prefettura dell'Arno, 166, fasc. 17, fol. 4 (Giovanni Degli Alessandri, director of the Academy of Fine Arts).

³² ASF, Prefettura dell'Arno, 166, fasc. 28, n. pag. (Osservazioni del Presidente, 12 feb 1811).

³³ Venice, Archivio di Stato (ASV), Demanio, 1815-30, b. 974, fasc. 102, n. 49238/1250; Skwirbliès 2017, p. 68-72.

³⁴ ASV, Dir. dip. Dem. n.º. 328, fasc. I 1/9, n. pag.; Skwirbliès 2017, p. 55, 409.

³⁵ Zorzi 1984, p. 114.

³⁶ Sicoli 1992, p. 74.

³⁷ Savoy 2015, p. 456 (Annette Schryen).

³⁸ Brückle 2015, p.15 f.

9. Paris, MMF, cross section, rooms of the 13th, 14th, 15th centuries

If we take a closer look at the floor plan, we notice that beside the exhibition spaces there were a few spaces that could have served as storage rooms (right, above the 13th century room). We can then assume that most of the objects must have been visible to the visitors.

10. Paris, MMF, rooms of the 13th and 15th century

When we look at the arrangement of the period rooms, always considering that these images are not documentary, it is obvious that the number of objects kept and shown in these rooms must have been quite limited, as the general plan has already implied.

11. Paris, MMF, catalogues 1793-1795

In the museum's early years, the rooms must have been much more crowded, when the Petits-Augustins were dedicated to the Nation as a storage space for objects of art (as we read here, this was intended only at the beginning "temporary"). The catalogues count many objects that were obviously not arranged for display but they do not tell us where they were located. The vast complex was continuously transformed from a mere storage place to a didactic exhibition space. "Dépot" was above all a synonym for a safe place, on public property, which implicitly included its accessibility to the public.³⁹ We know though that Lenoir fought with the authorities and with the Louvre keepers to be allowed to open his "dépot" to the public, and to keep it open. His fear was that it could be used as a reservoir for the Musée Central or other state officials that could dissolve it more easily if it was hidden and closed.

Most of the new public collections had to be implemented in existing buildings. We now will have a look at some newly constructed museums, to learn if and how storage became an issue there.

12. London, National Gallery at Angerstein house (F. MacKenzie, 1830 ca.)

First, a short look at the early history of London's National Gallery. In England, as we can often read in the sources, many exquisite, yet not easily accessible art collections, were hidden on private property, and spread all over the country.⁴⁰ Even if this claim was too polemical to be true, it was one of the driving reasons for the founding a National Gallery. This founding was realized in 1824 when Parliament decided to acquire the diplomat and merchant John Julius Angerstein's painting collection, including his house.⁴¹ By purchasing this collection, the parliament created a public and representative collection of masterpieces. Its founders had in mind the museums on the continent. That means that the question of storage cannot have been important for these members of parliament – as the collection was only to consist of relatively few objects of high quality that were all supposed to be displayed. We can see it in this picture, in which the collection is displayed like a nobleman's gallery – which it actually was at the beginning. However, for our purpose, it is interesting to see how fast even an exclusive and small collection that expanded very slowly, nevertheless required more and more space.

³⁹ Cfr. Savoy 2015, p. 15.

⁴⁰ Pommier 1998, p. 27.

⁴¹ Avery-Quash/Crookham 2013, p. 166 f.

13. London, National Gallery, cross section (William Wilkins, 1833)

Complaints about the lack of space had been reported since the founding of the National Gallery. The expected growth and the urge to show every single picture may have been the main reason for planning a new building so soon after the original building was opened. The plans were concentrated on the exhibition rooms, while storage space seems not to have been explicitly planned. However, in the cross section of Wilkins' project we identify two floors (bottom left) that may have – at least in part – been intended as storage spaces.

How can we explain the fact that storage seems not to have been considered at all in the planning of the museums – even in places like in Paris, Milan, or Berlin, where museum collections from the beginning contained so many objects that could never be all put on display?

14. Berlin, three lists of paintings, to be stored in the Museum (1823-29)

In Berlin, for instance, about one third of the picture gallery of the Royal Museum, which was planned and built after the Napoleonic wars, was supplied by the Royal Prussian art collections, taken from the various castles.⁴² In 1828, when the selection for the future museum was organized, the future gallery director Gustav Friedrich Waagen wrote: "Yesterday and today, I have cobbled about 30 paintings with not little effort out of 1,200 pictures that are in storage in the Castle, standing there packed one on the other".⁴³ When Waagen did this, more than a thousand paintings that had been acquired for the museum, had already been sorted out.⁴⁴ And even more were to follow until the museum opened its doors to the visitors two years later. Here we see some lists of pictures that had been "magaziniert", stored, between 1823 and 1830. Some of them were expected to be given to the Royal castles in exchange for their contributions to the museum.⁴⁵ However, that was only a relatively small part. Indeed, besides the establishment and (re-)furnishing of the museum and the castles, we see a massive exchange of storage objects.

During preparation of the future museum, about 1,175 paintings that were intended for display were kept in "side rooms" of the art academy, 700 paintings intended for storage were kept in the university building. They included 148 objects for possible exchanges with other museums. More than 1,000 paintings then were stored in an empty noble palace, waiting to be auctioned (although no action ever did take place).⁴⁶

15. Berlin, Royal Museum, 1st floor plan, with storage/limited access rooms

When we look at the floor plan of the picture gallery in the Museum, we realize how fully packed it was, even without checking the catalogue with its more than 1,200 entries.⁴⁷ The rooms were divided

⁴² Vogtherr 1997, p. 197-214.

⁴³ Berlin, Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preußischer Kulturbesitz (GStA), I. HA, Rep. 81, Ges. Vatikan, n°. 172, n. pag.: Gustav Friedrich Waagen to Christian Carl Josias von Bunsen, 3 sept 1828: "Gestern u heut habe ich unter 1200 Magazinsbildern, die im Schloße aufeinander gepackt stehen mit nicht geringer Mühe an 30 herausgeklaubt, die sich trefflich für das Museum eignen und uns mehrere Meister ergänzen."

⁴⁴ Skwirblies 2009, p. 94-98.

⁴⁵ They were stored in the Royal Castle of Berlin first, which contained more than 1,200 paintings in 1828: GStA I. HA, Rep. 76 Ve, Abt. 15, Sekt. I, n°. 4, vol. 5, fol. 11v. (report by Aloys Hirt, 11 oct 1828).Cfr. Vogtherr 2005.

⁴⁶ GStA I. HA, Rep. 76 Ve, Abt. 15, Sekt. I, n°. 4 Adh., fol. 33r-v (report by Aloys Hirt, 11 oct 1823); GStA I. HA, Rep. 76 Ve, Abt. 15, Sekt. I, n°. 4, vol. 4, fol. 27 (King Frederick William III to Karl vom Stein zum Altenstein, 20 jun 1826); about the sale project: GStA I. HA, Rep. 76 Ve, Abt. 15, Sekt. I, n°. 4, vol. 2, fol. 66v. (report by Karl Friedrich Schinkel and Hirt, 1 mar 1823), *ibid.* n°. 4Adh, fol. 28 (report by Schinkel and Hirt, 4 aug 1823); cfr. Paul 1997, p. 183.

⁴⁷ Waagen 1830.

into cabinets which were dedicated to the various schools, and which contained up to 40 paintings each. Two separate rooms (green) were part of the gallery but had only limited access. These compartments were dedicated to the “curiosities of art history”, a study gallery for visitors particularly interested in Medieval and early Renaissance painting. Finally, we see two extra rooms that were, as Schinkel wrote in 1824, planned for storage and restoration. These rooms are 29 by 17 feet each, which is about 9 by 5 metres.⁴⁸ Considering that the basement was too wet to store paintings and that the ground floor did not provide any room for it, these small chambers must have been the “Magazin-Räume” for some hundred paintings that did not make it into the gallery. Many of them were then distributed – just as the Louvre had done some decades before – to various provincial museums, “where these paintings will have a highly beneficial effect, while they would remain unnoticed here, (...) and fill the storage rooms.”⁴⁹ According to Bode, the narrow corridors aside the Rotunda were also more and more filled with discarded paintings, “hung up and set up, as well and as badly as it was possible.”⁵⁰

16. Berlin, Royal Museum, gallery and roof cross sections

Even in its schematic design, the cross section (left) shows that the gallery was filled as much as possible. A real storage was not planned for, at least not for all the paintings that had been left over. Wilhelm von Bode claims many decades later that he would have climbed up to the space under the roof (right) finding there about a thousand paintings, Renaissance panels, canvases without frames and stretchers, deteriorated by humidity, heat and dust.⁵¹ If we believe him, this was actually the final storage for the less valued objects.

Let me sum up our observations. At the beginning we saw how Enlightenment and Revolution caused the wish – and the claim – to give access to hidden works or collections, for education, studies, and enjoyment. This aim represented indeed the opposite of storage. Early museums had four solutions for the increasing number of objects in their possession: first, they tried to display as much as possible, in galleries or open storage rooms, or to extend the exhibition space. Second, they distributed the surplus to provincial museums, to public houses, churches etc. Third, keepers tried to exchange or, fourth, to sell the objects that were not desired to be kept. Storage was only intended on a temporary basis, and was not explicitly planned for or furnished.

Nonetheless, there was another idea that grew in the decades around 1800: the awareness that works of art and other objects, too, belonged to a heritage that needed protection. The responsibility was soon given to the newly created museum structures. They were to keep the objects not only accessible but safe. Consequently, museums had to face the necessity of storing these objects as custodians.

The Louvre was not the only place where this happened, but it surely was one of the most significant examples. Its swiftly expanding collection and fluctuation did not only provoke admiration.

⁴⁸ GStA BPH, Rep. 50 J, n°. 1283, fol. 3 v (report by Karl Friedrich Schinkel, 28 May 1824).

⁴⁹ GStA I. HA, Rep. 76 Ve, Abt. 15, Sekt. VIII, n°. 12, vol. 1, fol. 53 (Karl Friedrich Schinkel to Carl von Brühl, 1 Nov. 1836 (copy): “Jedenfalls werden diese Bilder an ihren künftigen Bestimmungsorten von entschieden vorteilhafter Wirkung sein, während sie hier, wo wir vortrefflich mit Gegenständen dieser Gattung versehen sind, ohne Beachtung bleiben und die Magazin-Räume füllen.”

⁵⁰ Paul 1997, p. 182 f.: „Gleich bei Aufstellung vor der Eröffnung der Galerie 1830 hatte man [...] in zwei schmalen Gängen neben der Rotunde das, was allmählich ausgeschieden wurde, aufgehängt und aufgestellt, so gut und so schlecht es ging.“

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 183.

The archaeologist and writer Antoine Quatremère de Quincy criticized museums as uprooting graves for artworks that would lose their meanings and their value by being collected, put in order and stored.⁵² As the Mantegna example has shown, this uprooting actually happened.

And although this refusal did not reflect the majority of public opinion, the hidden storage of artworks appeared like something unseemly, something that had to be avoided. But storage in the sense of keeping cultural heritage in a safe place for public interest – that was the important point, which led to modern museum storages. As Helmina von Chézy put it in 1804: „Good Paris, as big as it is, does not know yet where to find the space for the riches that the grace of the god of victory has given to it. There is no worthy place for such treasures, and there cannot be any within short time. It is like the works of art lived in rented accommodation, until their real temples [...] will arise one day.“⁵³

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⁵² Pommier 2000, p. 475; Haskell 1979, p. 155.

⁵³ Savoy 2009, p. 178: "Das gute Paris, so groß es auch ist, weis noch nicht, wo es den Platz zu den Reichthümern hernehmen soll, welche die Gunst des Siegesgottes ihm zugewandt. Es giebt hier kein würdiges Lokal für solche Schätze, und kann noch sobald keins geben. Ist es doch, als ob die Kunstwerke jetzt zur Miehthe wohnten, bis ihre eigentlichen Tempel, sich ihrer würdig, einmal erheben."

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