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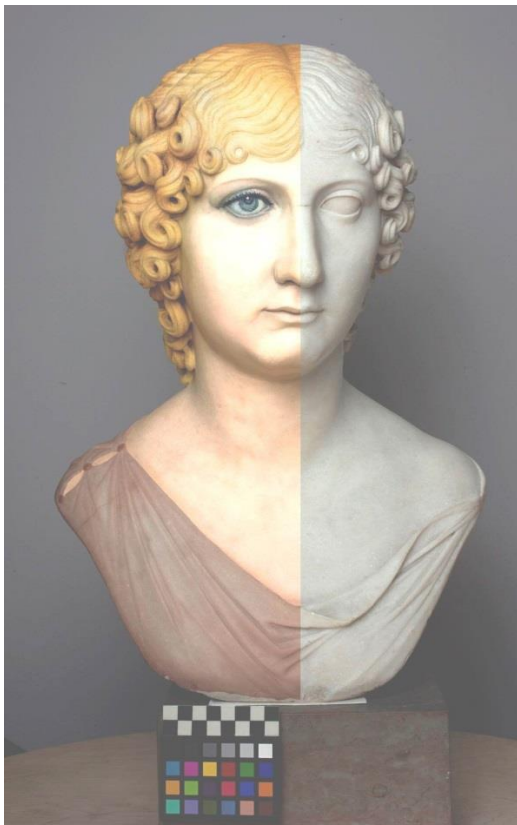
ΙΝΣΤΙΤΟΥΤΟ ΤΗΣ ΔΑΝΙΑΣ ΣΤΗΝ ΑΘΗΝΑ  
THE DANISH INSTITUTE AT ATHENS

The Danish Institute at Athens  
is pleased to invite you to a lecture in English

“Painting Marble Skin. Some speculations on Ancient painting techniques,  
skin colours and modern expectations.”

By Amalie Skovmøller, SAXO-institute, University of Copenhagen.

Tuesday the 11th of October at 19.00  
in the auditorium of the Institute, Herefondos 14A, Plaka, Athens



Although research into the nature of painted marble sculptures has progressed immensely aided by the development of modern technology, the ongoing debate over the visual purposes of sculpted marble skin remains very much influenced by scepticism today. This lecture will consider the question of painting on marble skin on Greek and Roman marble sculptures. Recent examinations of ancient marble skin surfaces have – in most cases – revealed traces of originally fully-covering paint layers. The vestiges are frequently limited to scattered grains, but sometimes actual layers are also found. While the results seem to support the theory of a universal Greek and Roman practice of applying polychrome finishes to the sculpted marble skin surfaces, the manner of application – meaning the techniques used by the ancient craftsmen – remains poorly understood. Because of this, the debate over painted marble skin remains a complex and rather controversial one in the studies of ancient sculptural polychromies. As stated by Gisela Richter almost 90 years ago, scholars continue to “cling” to certain (predominantly modern) constructed ideas of ancient sculptural aesthetics, making research into the visual purposes of painting on marble skin not only a question of collating results from scientific research, but also one of how we interpret and reconstruct the original visual purposes of ancient marble sculptures on the basis of such data.