



Berlin, 28. February 2017

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Lost Etruscan bronze returned to Berlin Antikensammlung (Collection of Classical Antiquities)**

– Check against original text in German –

A valuable Etruscan bronze statuette that had been missing since the Second World War has been returned to the Berlin Antikensammlung (Collection of Classical Antiquities). The Antikensammlung – Staatliche Museen zu Berlin is one of the world's major collections of classical antiquities and is part of the Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz (Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation). The piece depicting a man in a helmet hurling a lance had been part of the collection of the Antikensammlung since 1869. It was recently identified on the art market.

The bronze was part of an English private collection probably acquired before 1979 and was sold at auction in 2015. It was subsequently consigned for sale to the art dealership of Oliver Forge and Brendan Lynch Ltd. ([www.forgelynch.com](http://www.forgelynch.com)). Oliver Forge consulted Dr. Judith Swaddling at the British Museum, who identified it as having come from the pre-war holdings of the Berlin Antikensammlung. Having learned about the history of the piece from Oliver Forge, the owner decided to return it to the Antikensammlung – Staatliche Museen zu Berlin.

Hermann Parzinger, President of the Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz, said: "I am very grateful to the consignor for his generosity, to Oliver Forge for his support in returning this piece to the museum, to the British Museum for its identification, and to Dr. Dyfri Williams, formerly of the British Museum, for assistance with its return. This is an excellent example of how owners, the art trade and museums can work together successfully to restore works of art that have been lost through historical circumstance to the collections they once came from."

The bronze statuette, which is 17cm tall, can be dated to the late archaic period (late 6th – early 5th century B.C.). It is a typical example of highly abstract small depictions of warriors from central Italy (Etruria and the surrounding regions), which were given as votive gifts to certain deities. The warrior wears a so-called Attic helmet with the panels that protect the cheeks folded upwards, and a cuirass with stylized decoration over a tunic. Originally he held weapons (a spear and a shield), but these were already missing when the statuette entered the Collection of Antiquities in the 19th century, having been acquired from the estate of the first archaeologist at the Berlin museum, Eduard Gerhard.

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The identification of the bronze with the inventory number Fr. 2202a was made possible due partly to older publications and partly to the entry in the online database “Ancient bronzes in Berlin” (<http://ww2.smb.museum/antikebronzenberlin>). The electronic catalogue lists almost all Greek, Etruscan and Roman bronzes of the Antikensammlung. It has been compiled with the use of catalogues and inventories. Every artwork still in the collection is illustrated by new photographs, while missing objects are illustrated by historic black-and-white photographs from the museum’s archives. A full bibliography provides references for further reading. The database also serves to document the museum’s losses, which were mostly sustained as a result of the war, thereby supplementing the printed volume published in 2005 detailing the museum’s losses of sculpture, vases, ivory and bone, and gold jewelry along with gems and cameos.

Press images can be downloaded at:

[www.preussischer-kulturbesitz.de/newsroom/presse/pressebilder.html](http://www.preussischer-kulturbesitz.de/newsroom/presse/pressebilder.html)