



Berlin, 26. April 2018

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Museumsinsel Berlin, Altes Museum**

Am Lustgarten, 10178 Berlin

Di, Mi, Fr, Sa, So 10 – 18 Uhr, Do 10 – 20 Uhr

### **PERGAMON. Masterpieces of the Ancient Metropolis and 360° panorama by Yadegar Asisi**

from autumn 2018

An exhibition project by Antikensammlung – Staatliche Museen zu Berlin and Yadegar Asisi

The unique partnership that took place in 2011/2012 between the Antikensammlung and the artist Yadegar Asisi is set to continue in 2018. In the temporary exhibition building 'Pergamonmuseum: The Panorama', the exhibition project 'PERGAMON: Masterpieces of the Ancient Metropolis with a 360° Panorama by Yadegar Asisi' will be on view beginning in autumn 2018, with highlights from the Antikensammlung's holdings as well as a completely revised panorama by Yadegar Asisi. The immersive effect of Asisi's panorama, together with 80 ancient sculptures and new multimedia visualizations of the Pergamon Altar created by Studio asisi, form an exhibition approximately 2000m<sup>2</sup> in size that turns a visionary overarching concept – to make it possible for the contemporary visitor to see the city of Pergamon as it was in ancient times – into a reality.

To this end, the temporary exhibition building 'Pergamonmuseum: The Panorama' was erected in February 2017 opposite the Bode-Museum, in the street Am Kupfergraben, based on Yadegar Asisi's conceptual design and plans drafted by the architectural firm spreeformat architekten. Interimsbau Pergamonmuseum Realisierungsgesellschaft mbH, an enterprise of the WOLFF GRUPPE Stuttgart/Essen, executed the construction. The building is expected to be in use until 2024 for the exhibition project 'PERGAMON: Masterpieces of the Ancient Metropolis with a 360° Panorama by Yadegar Asisi'.

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The panorama takes visitors back to the year AD 129, showing them the ancient city of Pergamon on the west coast of Asia Minor. Yadegar Asisi reconstructs the city as it was during the time of the High Roman Empire under the rule of the Emperor Hadrian (AD 117–138). Embedded in the terraces of the Acropolis atop the city's 300-metre-high hill, monumental buildings, among them several temples and a massive theatre, blend into the landscape of hilly peaks.

The visuals from the first Pergamon panorama have been comprehensively reworked with the aim of bringing the lives of the ancient city's different social classes into sharper focus. In co-operation with the Antikensammlung team, the artist has conceived roughly 40 new scenes and woven them into the picture. An elaborate photo shoot in a Berlin film studio brought the work to completion in October 2017. The team responsible for costumes, props, and masks resembled a film production crew in size and composition. Unit production managers, lighting technicians, and panorama photographers were enlisted to execute an eclectic array of tableaux under the direction of Yadegar Asisi, based on a detailed storyboard and involving up to 40 costumed extras.

The depiction of the Dionysia, a series of annual festivals held in honour of the god Dionysus in which ancient Pergamon took part, formed a focal point of the newly added scenes. Various sacrificial scenes were also staged on the reconstruction of the Pergamon Altar. Through these representations, the revised panorama produces for visitors an even stronger sense of connection to everyday life in ancient Pergamon. Additionally, the revision incorporates corrections to individual buildings and the topography of the hill on which the city stood, reflecting the latest research coming out of the archaeological dig conducted by the German Archaeological Institute and the Antikensammlung.

The parallel exhibition has been planned by Studio asisi and incorporates approximately 80 of the Antikensammlung's most important works from Pergamon – including the largest piece of the Telephos frieze from the Pergamon Altar. In preparation for the show, the originals underwent extensive conservation and restoration. This is especially true of the large

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statues of women from the courtyard of the Pergamon Altar, and the sculptures from its roof. With the exception of the Statue of Athena Parthenos from the Pergamon Library (on loan to the Metropolitan Museum of Art), all of the city's famous sculptures are on view, including the so-called Beautiful Head, the colossal head of Herakles, portrait sculptures of the king, the Archaistic Dancer from the palace, the Prometheus group, and the Athena with cross-strapped aegis. A primary aim of the exhibition is to link the Pergamon sculptures and the panorama with even greater clarity than was possible in Asisi's original 2011 work.

Different installations will deepen visitor understanding through artistic interpretation. Essential elements include newly created drawings by Yadegar Asisi that illustrate Pergamon's sculptures, architecture, and urban layout. There are also virtual visualizations such as the 13x7 metre video projection of the Pergamon Altar and a 12x9 metre light installation that impressively stages the altar's Telephos frieze. This installation simulates the natural lighting, constantly changing throughout the day, which illuminates the sculptures on the Acropolis of Pergamon. The Pergamon sculptures (famous even in their own day for the brilliance of their rendering), the newly arranged digital animations of the Pergamon Altar, and the immersive effect of the Asisi panorama come together to form a unique and innovative overarching concept. The exhibition offers visitors, in a space of nearly 2000m<sup>2</sup>, an impressive experience of the ancient metropolis of Pergamon's look and feel.

'PERGAMON: Masterpieces of the Ancient Metropolis with a 360° Panorama by Yadegar Asisi' is a *Gesamtkunstwerk*: the product of a close collaboration between the Antikensammlung and Yadegar Asisi, it combines the results of many years of archaeological and architectural research with the vision of a contemporary artist and is guaranteed to captivate a multitude of visitors, just as its predecessor did in 2011/12. At that time, 1.5 million people visited the exhibition. The combined presentation of the sculptures from the Pergamon Museum and of the Asisi panorama will enable visitors to feel as if they have stepped back in time and are partaking in life in the ancient city. For a short time only, the Pergamon Altar can be experienced here, in its original architectural context, on the Acropolis.

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The opening is foreseen for autumn 2018 and will be announced soon.  
The pre-sale of tickets will start in June 2018 at [www.smb.museum](http://www.smb.museum).

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