

THE MYSTERY OF MITHRAS

EXPLORING THE HEART OF A ROMAN CULT

Edited by Laurent Bricault, Richard Veymiers and Nicolas Amoroso
with the collaboration of Laure Barthet, Margaux Bekas, Pascal Capus,
Alexandra Dardenay, Wolfgang David and Carsten Wenzel

MUSÉE ROYAL DE MARIEMONT 2021

THE MYSTERY OF MITHRAS. EXPLORING THE HEART OF A ROMAN CULT

Catalogue of the exhibition presented at the Musée royal de Mariemont from 20 November 2021 to 17 April 2022, at the Musée Saint-Raymond de Toulouse from 14 May 2022 to 30 October 2022, and at the Archäologisches Museum Frankfurt from 19 November 2022 to 15 April 2023.

Musée royal de Mariemont

Richard Veymiers, Director
Nicolas Amoroso, Curator of the Department of Greek
and Roman Antiquities
Laurent Bricault, Professor of Roman History at the Université
Toulouse – Jean Jaurès

Musée Saint-Raymond de Toulouse

Laure Barthet, Director
Pascal Capus, Assistant Curator and Head of the Sculpture
and Numismatic Collections
Margaux Bekas, Heritage Curator

Archäologisches Museum Frankfurt

Wolfgang David, Director
Carsten Wenzel, Curator of the Roman Provincial Collections

Publication Manager

Jean-Sébastien Balzat

Graphic Designer

Justine Periaux

Photographer

Andy Simon

Translator

Gil H. Renberg

Cover illustration: **Relief with image of Mithras killing the bull**, in gilded stucco, c. 200 C.E. Frankfurt am Main, Liebieghaus Skulpturensammlung, inv. 333.

Legal Deposit : 2021/0451/192
ISBN : 978-2-930469-86-7
PLU : 1343



Printed by Snel Grafics s.a. - November 2021



CONTENTS

7	Forewords
11	Acknowledgments
17	List of Authors
20	General Map
22	Timeline
	I. AN INTRODUCTION TO MITHRAS
27	Mithras before Rome Philippe Swennen & Laurent Bricault
39	Mithras in Roman Polytheism Corinne Bonnet
51	A Brief History of Mithraic Studies Richard Gordon
61	Mithras Today: A Roman God in the 20th and 21st Centuries Mathieu Scapin, Laurent Bricault & Richard Veymiers
73	The Avestan Hymn to Mithras Philippe Swennen
77	From the Capitoline Hill to Louvre-Lens: The Modern Journey of a Mithraic Relief Laurent Bricault & Richard Veymiers
87	Franz Cumont and Mithras Danny Praet & Annelies Lannoy
94	Catalogue (I.1-12)
	II. A FRAGMENTED MYTHOLOGY
121	The Myth of Mithras: A Reconstructed Story Jaime Alvar & Laurent Bricault
133	The Image of a Cult: The Tauroctony Dietrich Boschung
143	Coins and Gems: Mithraic Miniatures Laurent Bricault & Richard Veymiers
153	Mithras and Philosophy: The Exegesis of Porphyry Andreea-Maria Lemnaru-Carrez
163	The <i>Mithraea</i> of Poetovio Mojca Vomer Gojkovič
171	The <i>Mithraeum</i> at Sidon François Baratte
177	The <i>Mithraeum</i> at Hawarte Michał Gawlikowski
182	Catalogue (II.1-14)

III. INSIDE THE SANCTUARIES OF MITHRAS

- 215 **The Archaeology of the Sanctuaries of Mithras**
Andreas Hensen
- 227 **The *Mithraeum*: Articulation between Space and Decor**
Alexandra Dardenay & Yves Dubois
- 241 **The *Mithraeum*: Texts and Worshippers**
Manfred Clauss
- 251 **The *Mithraea* of Carnuntum**
Gabrielle Kremer
- 257 **The *Mithraeum* of Augusta Emerita and its Sculptures**
Trinidad Nogales Basarrate & Claudina Romero Mayorga
- 263 **The Inveresk *Mithraeum* and its Altars**
Fraser Hunter
- 270 **Catalogue (III.1-13)**

IV. AMONG THE WORSHIPPERS OF MITHRAS

- 299 **Being a Member of the Cult: Individuals and Communities**
Alison B. Griffith
- 309 **Integrating the Cult: “Mysteries” and Initiations**
Nicole Belayche
- 319 **Practicing Cult: Rituals and Banquets**
William Van Andringa
- 331 **Mithraic Rituals in the Christian Mirror**
Francesco Massa
- 343 **The Cult of Mithras in Apulum**
Csaba Szabó
- 349 **The *Mithraea* of Ostia and their Worshippers**
Françoise Van Haepere
- 357 **The Mithraic Community of Dura-Europos and its Practices**
Lucinda Dirven & Matthew McCarty
- 368 **Catalogue (IV.1-15)**

V. MITHRAS IN THE WESTERN PROVINCES

- 401 **Mithras in the Gallic Provinces**
Philippe Roy
- 411 **Mithras in the Iberian Peninsula**
Claudina Romero Mayorga
- 421 **Mithras in Germany and Raetia**
Wolfgang David
- 431 **The *Mithraeum* at Tienen**
Marleen Martens
- 439 **The *Mithraeum* at Septeuil**
Marie-Agnès Gaidon-Bunuel
- 445 **The *Mithraeum* at Angers**
Jean Brodeur

455	The <i>Mithraeum</i> at Bordeaux Marie-Agnès Gaidon-Bunuel
461	The <i>Mithraeum</i> at Mariana Ophélie de Peretti
467	The <i>Mithraeum</i> at Mérida Rebeca Rubio
473	The <i>Mithraea</i> of Nida Wolfgang David
479	The <i>Mithraea</i> of Göglingen Ines Siemers-Klenner
485	The <i>Mithraeum</i> at Kempraten Regula Ackermann
490	Catalogue (V.1-13)

VI. THE TWILIGHT OF A GOD

519	The Cult of Mithras and Christianity Aleš Chalupa
531	General bibliography
563	Photographic credits
567	General index