

The *Disegni intagliati*: A forgotten book illustrating the first discoveries at Herculaneum.

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The *Disegni intagliati*: A forgotten book illustrating the first discoveries at Herculaneum

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Journal of the History of Collections, Volume 23, Issue 1, 1 May 2011, Pages 15–28,
<https://doi.org/10.1093/jhc/fhq022>

Published: 10 November 2010

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Abstract

Published in 1746, the *Disegni Intagliati di Pitture Antiche* comprise ninety

engravings reproducing marbles, bronzes and paintings found in the excavations of Herculaneum. Only three copies of this work have survived and seem to have been forgotten until a recent discovery in the Royal Library in Madrid. They were most likely published for the King of Naples, but only a limited number of copies were produced and soon thereafter the project was abandoned in favour of a publication describing the discoveries of Herculaneum by Ottavio Bayardi, librarian of the Royal Library in Naples. By reconstructing the history of the *Disegni*, this article aims to provide fresh insights into the early excavations at Herculaneum and their political context.

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