

**Classical Art Research Centre Workshop 2016**  
*Generously supported by Jean-David Cahn and Tony Michaels*

**The Maker's Share in Ancient Greek Art**

The artist has always had an ambiguous place in histories of ancient Greek Art. On the one hand, famous individuals have been singled out as formative figures in the development of art. Characters such as Pheidias, Polykleitos, Praxiteles and Apelles, known mainly from later textual sources and presumed Roman copies, have always provoked intense interest despite the absence of extant works. This has no doubt been influenced by some artists' own attempts to enhance their intellectual status, for example in Polykleitos's lost treatise, the *Canon*. At the same time, scholarship on Attic vase-painting and other ceramic traditions has been structured and dominated in the last century by the attribution of works to, usually anonymous, craftsmen. This form of connoisseurship, founded by Sir John Beazley in imitation of Renaissance art-history, has given us an extraordinary apparatus, the ability to examine a two-hundred-year-old craft tradition at the level of individual makers, but our knowledge of these artists, their relationships, and their place in society remains rather rudimentary.

In parallel to these artist-focused histories of art, classical archaeology has also exhibited a strong tendency towards broader explanations and classifications. The production of art has been viewed in relation to general trends and cultural shifts that subsume the humble artists: the 'Greek Revolution', for example, the 'Severe Style', the collective experiences of democratic Athens, or the alleged shift towards greater realism and individualism in the Late Classical Period. At the same time there has been a strong emphasis on regional styles. There have also been positive reactions *against* the study of individual artists, notably in some anthropologically-informed, 'structuralist' approaches to Attic vase-paintings in the 1980s. However, classical art history has not witnessed the same crisis of confidence about the artist's role which characterized modern art history from the 1970s to 1990s. The artist's role in Greek art has been relatively little theorized and there has been comparatively little social-historical investigation.

The purpose of CARC's workshop is to try and reconcile the contradictions in these diverse approaches, stimulating fresh, new perspectives in order to elucidate the role of the artist in the formation of Greek art, especially in the Archaic and Classical periods. The research of the last 150 years has resulted in a phenomenal body of evidence and ideas, reflected most recently in the publication of the *Neue Overbeck* (a five-volume revision of Johannes Overbeck's famous compendium of sources for Greek artists). It is an excellent moment to exploit this legacy by looking afresh at the maker's share.