

	Object:	Alexander before the Corpse of Darius
	Museum:	Kunsthalle Bremen Am Wall 207 28195 Bremen (04 21) 3 29 08-0 info@kunsthalle-bremen.de
	Collection:	Alte Meister, Gemälde und Skulpturen
	Inventory number:	1071-1972/19

Description

The painting captures the moment of pathos when Alexander the Great, King of Macedon, finds the naked body of his opponent after his victory near Issus in 333 BC. Darius III, king of the Persians, was killed by his vassal Bessus while trying to flee. The crown has fallen from the head of the dead, bare body, and the column in the background, once a symbol of sovereignty, is now part of a mere architecture of ruins. Alexander punished the king's murderer, and had Darius buried with royal honors in order to reconcile himself with the Persian aristocrats and, at the same time, to strengthen his claim to power as the new king of all Persia. Antonio Balestra portrays Alexander as a reflective man, conscious of the transience of his power even while at his zenith, and displaying compassion for his adversary. Starting in 1687, Balestra trained under Antonio Bellucci in Bologna. He was further taught by Carlo Maratta in Rome in 1691, as well as by Francesco Solimena in Naples in 1694–95. In 1718, he returned to his native Verona, though he also worked in Venice, where he himself had pupils.

Basic data

Material/Technique:	Oil on canvas with earthen red/brown ground, lined
Measurements:	124.0 x 151.5 cm

Events

Painted	When	1730
	Who	Antonio Balestra (1666-1740)
	Where	

Was depicted (Actor)	When	
	Who	Darius III (-380--330)
	Where	
Was depicted (Actor)	When	
	Who	Alexander the Great (-0353--0326)
	Where	
[Relationship to location]	When	
	Who	
	Where	Persia

Keywords

- Leiche
- Painting
- Power
- Victory