The investigation of collecting practices, especially of the visual arts, is inevitably accompanied by a question of display. The display of a collection, whether public or private, is synonymous with the imposition of order onto the objects of that collection. Yet only in rare cases have the vagaries of textual transmission and archaeological survival preserved evidence of these aspects of ancient art consumption. This is especially true for the collection and display of panel painting, a more ephemeral medium than sculpture. Literary sources, especially of the Roman Republic and Empire, indicate that Greek panel paintings produced from the 5th to 3rd centuries BCE counted among the most desirable and most highly praised of all artistic products of Greco-Roman antiquity (Plinius, *naturalis historia* xxxv.118; Cicero *Brutus* 70; Quintilianus, *institutio oratoria* xii.10.3–6). And panel paintings, extremely portable and easy to display (Plinius, *naturalis historia* xxxv.37), were eminently collectible. The trade in panel painting in the final centuries BCE must have been widespread and of a highly varied character. On one end of the spectrum Cicero writes with delight of the little panels he has purchased to decorate a *porticula* at his villa at Tusculum (Cicero, *ad familiares* vii.23.3). On the other Augustus paid 600,000 *denarii* for the Aphrodite *Anadyomene* of Apelles (Strabon, xiv.2.19), which he then erected in the Forum of Iulius Caesar (Plinius, *naturalis historia* xxxv.91).

Outside of the well-known mummy portraits (Parlasca, 1969–2003; Seipel, 1998) and other finds from Roman Egypt (Matthews, 2001: 163–177; Sande, 2004: 81–100) only a few painted panels of any kind, such as the archaic wooden tablets from Pitsa (Orlandos in *EAA* vi.200–06, s.v. *Pitsa*) and the painted marble panels from Roman Campania (Mielsch, 1979: 233–248; Graeve, 1985: 227–256), have survived to the present day. And, although Plinius records the locations of nearly fifty panel paintings in the city of Roma alone (Plinius, *naturalis historia* xxxv, passim; cf. Rouveret, 1989: 475–476), he pays little attention to their organisation or display.

Some hints of the collection and display of panel paintings have survived, however, of which the following paper reads in tandem two distinct sources. These are a set of inscribed temple inventories from late Hellenistic Delos and a group of Roman fresco paintings from the Villa della Farnesina, likely executed sometime between 28 (Mols & Moormann, 2008: 79–80) and 19 BCE (Beyen, 1948: 19–20), perhaps on behalf of a member of the imperial family. The former include among their lists of votive offerings a wide range of robust and precise descriptive terms for painted panels; in the latter representations of panel paintings appear set within illusionistic architectural frameworks.

Each of these may be considered a representation of a collection at least insofar as it refers to a body of objects assembled for ‘symbolic rather than actual needs’ (Bounia, 2004: 1) and the goal of this paper is to examine both the constitutive parts and the compositional logic of those collections, with special attention given to panel painting. It seeks to understand both what kinds of panel paintings the sources refer to, and the ways in which those paintings were organised and displayed. Art historians have relatively rarely, and only briefly, discussed the paintings listed in the Delian inventories with reference to the surviving material record (Vallois, 1913: 289–299; 16; Pfuhl, 1923: 613–614; Fuhrmann, 1931: 291 n. 58; Pritchett, 1956: 253; Schebold, 1972: 50; Moreno in *EAA* vi.171–174, s.v. *pinakes*, 1987: 16; Scheibler, 1998: 1–2; 2000: 1030, s.v. *pinax* (6); cf. Jones, 2014: 295–304). But such a comparison yields a number of heretofore-unrecognised insights. Not only did each format of panel painting imitated in Roman mural decoration of the 1st century BCE have an attested precedent in the Hellenistic world, the Roman mural panels essentially exhaust the Hellenistic descriptive terminology. Yet, where a lexical comparison of the inventories and murals reveals a web of connections, a structural comparison elucidates deep dissimilarities.
between the two contexts in the organisation and value of panel painting.

Those dissimilarities highlight the novelty of the murals of the Farnesina. In the temple inventories, painted panels are simply one category of votive offering, given no more emphasis or importance than any of the other, myriad dedications. As has long been recognised, however, the paintings of the Farnesina figure themselves specifically as collections of fictive panel paintings, or pinacothecae (Leach, 1982: 162–164; 1988: 373–403; 2004: 137–140; Scheibler, 1994, 32–33; Bergmann, 1995: 102–107; Clarke, 2005: 264–278; Hallett, 2005: 433–435; Tanner, 2006: 267–276; Wyler, 2006: 213–232; Mols & Moormann, 2008: 69–77; cf. Van Buren, 1938: 70–81). Moreover, the panel paintings represented in the murals of the Villa della Farnesina are worked not only in a wide variety of formats but also in an equally impressive array of genres and historical styles. The variety and specificity of reference are so complete as to suggest that these murals present the image of an encyclopaedic collection of panel paintings, in which examples of the preceding centuries of Greek artistic production were brought together and recast as notional spolia in a Roman domestic context. The term spolia is meant here both in its ancient militaristic sense as the spoils of war, to indicate that Greek art accrued to Roma at least in part through a process of conquest (Pape, 1975; Miles, 2008: 13–104), and in its contemporary art-historical sense, to indicate the re-use of a pre-existing artistic material, form, or type (Brilliant, 1982: 2–17; Brilliant and Kinney, 2011). In both senses, access to spolia is a by-product of Roma’s conquest of the Mediterranean. But beyond serving as testaments to political reality, this paper argues, the murals reveal a powerful concept of the painted panel as an object of collection whose value does not lie solely in its physical form.

The Lexicon of the Painted Panel

Temple inventories were already produced on Delos in the Classical period. Yet such inventories, compiled and inscribed anew every year, only began to list objects in non-precious materials, including statues and paintings, after 166 BCE (Hamilton, 2000: 8–11, 40–43, 465–479; cf. Prêtre, 1999: 389–96). I have systematically appraised the information yielded by the inventories concerning painted panels in light of the material record elsewhere (Jones, 2014: 295–304). Here I offer a brief epitome of the major correspondences and points of divergence between the two. Twenty-one surviving inventories from Delos refer to panel paintings; they apply at least thirty-five different descriptive modifiers to the term πίναξ. One inventory in particular, executed in the year 155–156 BCE under the archonship of Kallistratos (IDélos iii.147), refers more frequently to painted panels than any other – listing more than 220 – even though it now lacks the section concerning the holdings of the sanctuary of Apollon, which would have been the wealthiest on the island. In most cases we have no idea at all what the subject matter of the paintings might have been, but the inscriptions yield a full and varied picture of descriptive terms for the sizes, material supports, formats, and modes of display of painted panels.

Independent physical counterparts to most of the terms given in the inventories do not survive, but representations of painted panels began to appear within Roman murals sometime in the middle of the 1st century BCE. The densest collection of such fictive painted panels to have survived comes from an early Augustan villa sited on the right bank of the Tiber River, commonly referred to as the Villa della Farnesina. The villa was partially excavated in 1878–79 during the digging of the embankments of the Tiber (Andreae, 1969: 430–433; Bragantini & de Vos, 1982; Mols & Moormann, 2008). The decorative schemes of the villa’s three surviving cubicula are particularly striking in the rich variety of fictive painted panels incorporated into complex architectural illusions.

Cubicula B and D, which flanked the triclinium (C) and opened directly onto the garden of the villa (Bragantini & de Vos, 1982: 128–233; Sanzi di Mino, 1998: 56–93; Mols & Moormann, 2008: 21–37), share a basic composition. The long walls lining the antechambers of both cubicula display an architectural scheme probably based ultimately on the articulation of a theatre front (Beyen, 1938; Clarke, 1991: 47–49; Sauron, 1994: 536–567; Leach, 2004: 93–114). On the left wall of cubiculum B, above a multi-coloured dado, a narrow green stage projects from a deep red backing wall; white fluted columns rise from podia, themselves projecting out from the stage, to support a narrow architrave [fig. 11.1]. Under the architrave the backing wall is separated into two registers by a simple white cornice. Fictive panels and life-like candelabra in the forms of the Egyptian deities Isis and Zeus Ammon enliven an otherwise severe rhythm. The alcove walls of B share the same dado, stage, and backing wall as the antechamber walls. But the rear wall of the alcove, by contrast, is articulated into a more centralised and compact composition of an aedicula supported by columns rising from a projection of the stage [fig. 11.2]. The vibrant red of the backing walls dominates both rooms, but that strong colour is offset by an exceptionally dense proliferation of architectural details, fictive panels and sculptural forms, which are each...