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Carnuntum Ludus and Gladiators (Images: M.Klein, 7reasons/ Hans Splinter, Flickr)

Gladiator school discovered in Carnuntum



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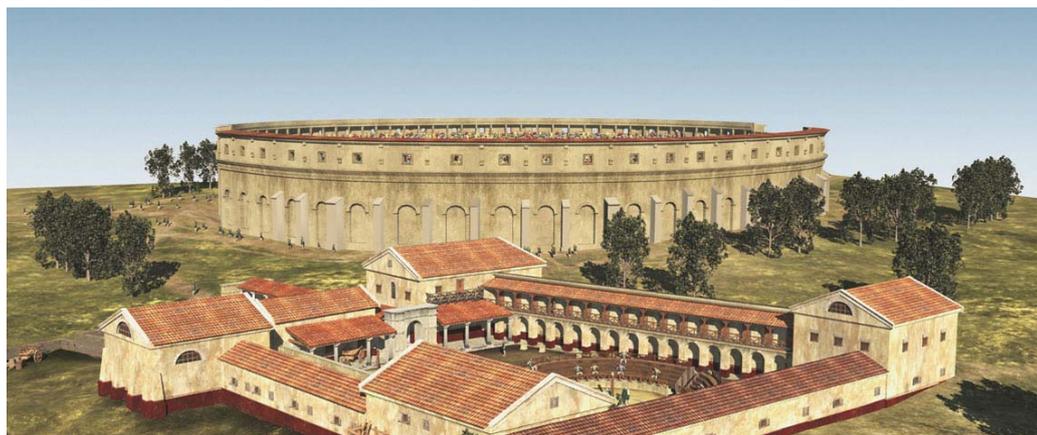
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MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2011 | [FEATURED](#), [NEWS](#)

A remarkable discovery has been made by an international team from the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Archaeological Prospection and Virtual Archaeology (LBI-ArchPro), together with the Archaeological Park Carnuntum, using state-of-the-art ground penetrating radar.

As a gladiators' training and living quarters next to the amphitheatre of the civilian city of Carnuntum (*Petronell-Carnuntum*), the newly discovered gladiator school, still buried beneath the ground, shows clearly defined building structures that can only be compared with the Amphitheatrum Flavium and Ludus Magnus in Rome.



A research team from the Province of Lower Austria and the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute made the discovery and then created a digital version of the gladiator school.

The devices (developed by LBI-ArchPro) are highly efficient at finding



Carnuntum Ludus and Amphitheatre, M.Klein / 7reasons

archaeological remains and provide images of the subsurface with unparalleled detail to a depth of several metres.



GPR system in action. (c) LBI ArchPro

A motorized multi-channel ground penetrating radar device was used in close cooperation with the Province of Lower Austria and the Central Institute for Meteorology and Geodynamics, in order to closely examine areas that had been previously highlighted by aerial photography.

This area is situated to the west of the amphitheatre which was built in the first half of the 2nd century AD outside the civilian city. The archaeologists were thrilled when the new sensors showed an extensive self-contained building complex: the gladiator school (*ludus*) in Carnuntum.

The Amphitheatre, with a capacity of up to 13000 spectators, was excavated from 1923 to 1930, and according to contemporary inscriptions was the fourth largest amphitheatre in the entire Roman Empire. Despite the excavations, the area where the gladiator school has now been discovered received little attention. The aerial photographs showed buildings with shops and taverns along the east side of the Roman road, which led out of the ancient city to the arena. However, there were no matching buildings on the opposite side of the road. This was the area that was investigated with the new system and remarkably, after only a few hours, the gladiator school was discovered.



GPR data interpreted. (c) LBI ArchPro

Carnuntum's gladiator school is a self-contained building complex covering 2800 square metres surrounded by a wall. The buildings are laid out around a large inner courtyard, where ground penetrating radar disclosed a circular training arena with a diameter of 19 metres with wooden spectator stands. Detailed radar images show the foundations of a heated training hall, an extensive bathing complex, and a structure which could have been an administration wing and

the living quarters of the gladiator school's owner. In addition the gladiators' cell-like living quarters were found – each small room only 5 metres square.

The infrastructure including water pipes, underfloor heating systems and drains as well as paths to the amphitheatre, gateways, and the foundations of memorials can be clearly seen in the high resolution radar data. The archaeologists also believe that a gladiator burial ground (with individual large grave monuments, stone sarcophagi and simpler graves) is to be found just behind the gladiator school.

The site has now been reconstructed as a virtual model. The result can be viewed with Wikitude World Browser software, a mobile augmented reality application, which embeds the virtual contents of a specific geographical location into the real camera image in a mobile phone or iPad.



Carnuntum Ludus, M.Klein / 7reasons

The Roman city of Carnuntum was once a bustling metropolis of around 50,000 inhabitants that covered an area of 10 sq. kilometres. Now the ancient city has been brought back to life: after 1700 years its former glory is being recreated from the ruins.

The Archaeological Park Carnuntum has become a cultural-tourism site with reconstructions of all types of architecture from a Roman city recreated in its historical context: a citizen's house, a splendid city mansion and a public bathing complex. All layouts and decorative details as well as the level of the roads in the city quarter are from one single period which opens a unique window on the first three decades of the 4th century AD.

The Archaeological Park also has further locations with the ruins of two Roman amphitheatres as well as the preserved structures of Austria's largest archaeological monument from Roman times: the Heidentor (Heathen's Gate). It is situated outside the city walls of the civilian city and was once a triumphal arch in honour of Emperor Constantius II. The Museum Carnuntinum is Austria's largest Roman museum and shows the most spectacular finds from the ancient metropolis on the Danube.

More information:

[Archaeological Park Carnuntum](#)

Through its promotion of research into, Austria's largest archaeological landscape, the Province of Lower Austria has set new standards both in the scientific sector as well as in the field of presentation and communicating with regard to the conservation and presentation of archaeological sites.

[LBI-ArchPro](#)

[Ludus Magnus](#)

[Heidentor \(Heathen's Gate\)](#)

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