

## Heinrich Ludwig **Ferdinand von Arnim** a. d. H. Kraatz

Architect, Water Colour Artist, Head of the Royal Prussian court planning department and building control office, Professor

Born in Köslin on September 15<sup>th</sup>, 1814;

Died of appendicitis in Potsdam March 27<sup>th</sup>, 1866;

His grave is to be found on the Bornstedt graveyard in Potsdam;

Married to Marie Luise Wilhelmine Luck;

Born in Berlin, January 17<sup>th</sup>, 1822;

Died in Potsdam, January 5<sup>th</sup>, 1907

### **Biography:**

1833 – 38 Training and education to become an architect at the royal building academy in Berlin;

1833 Land surveyor;

1838 Architect;

1839 Member of the Berlin association of architects;

1840 Main building contractor under Ludwig Persius;

1844 Superintendent of building measures;

1845 Architect in the court's building commission and Prince Carl of Prussia's architect;

1846 Teacher, 1857 professor at the building academy in Berlin;

1849 Royal architect at court;

1852 Royal architect in Hesse's Potsdam department

### Buildings in Berlin:

1850 Cloister yard Glienecke;

1863/67 Swiss houses, Glienecke;

1859/62 Rebuilding the hunting lodge in Glienecke;

### Buildings in Potsdam:

1844 -54 Friedenskirche in the park of Sanssouci (together with his brother-in-law Ludwig Ferdinand Hesse);

1859 Villa Arnim

taken from: Gerhild H.M. Komander 06 /2004

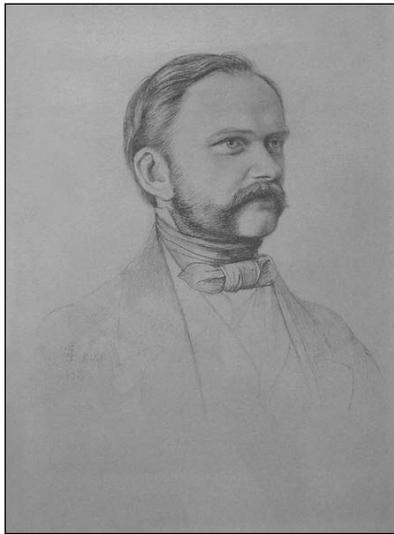
## **Ferdinand von Arnim** Schinkel's forgotten pupil

by Jessica Hänsel

Karl Friedrich Schinkel promoted many a talent and trained a large number of young architects in his life. The relationship of his pupils with each other was thoroughly positive; many of the friendships between the architects had been formed during their common university years, others developed only later in their working lives. Not least, thanks to their similar artistic orientation in which they had been shaped by their common teacher did they join in friendship later. Schinkel's appearance has been preserved in numerous portraits and his more well-known pupils Ludwig Persius, Friedrich August Stühler and Ludwig Ferdinand Hesse, who have already found their places in research, were depicted by famous artists in their days. In contrast, Ferdinand von Arnim however has received little attention as an architect, hence his appearance has remained in the dark. So much the better that three drawings

by an unidentified artist from the possession of the Arnim family have now been published for the first time. They show Ferdinand von Arnim, his wife and his daughter Marie in the year 1852.<sup>1</sup> These portraits are to give us the opportunity to examine the life and work of the neglected Schinkel pupil a bit closer.<sup>2</sup>

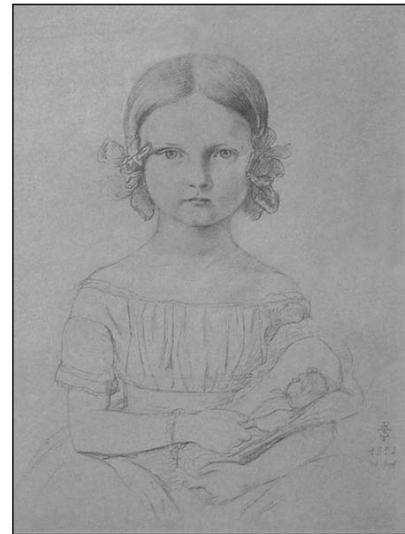
Heinrich Ludwig **Ferdinand von Arnim** was born in Köslin (Hinterpommern) on September 15<sup>th</sup> 1814. His father, Friedrich Ludwig I von Arnim, a godson of Frederic the Great, came from Neu Storkow in der Neumark; he was a royal Prussian Captain (ret.). 1812 he married Henriette Gadebusch.



Ferdinand von Arnim (anonymous) 1852



Marie Luise Wilhelmine,  
wife of Ferdinand von Arnim  
(anonymous) 1852



Marie, daughter of  
Ferdinand von Arnim (anonymous) 1852,  
owner Mrs Eva von Arnim

Ferdinand and his three sisters Otilie, Minna, and Emilia came from this marriage. Ferdinand himself entered into marriage with Marie Luise Wilhelmine Luck in Berlin in 1844. His first child was the daughter Marie, born 1845; in between the years 1846 and 1852 four sons were born, Hans, Max, Curt and Ernst, who all came to great honours in military services. From 1833 onwards Ferdinand went to the royal building academy in Berlin studying architecture and passing his first exam as land surveyor in 1835; he was able to finish his university years as architect in 1838.

He gained practical experience under the guidance of Karl Friedrich Schinkel and Johann Georg Karl Hampel but also in collaboration with Ludwig Persius in Potsdam and Klein-Glienecke. 1839, being only 25 years old, he became a member of the Berlin association of architects and in 1844 he was already promoted as a court building inspector. After Persius' death in the year 1845 von Arnim became the architect of the "Immediatbauten" (= buildings that were to be built immediately) of the building-commission at court and Prince Carl of Prussia's architect. He worked for the Prince for about twenty years in Klein-Glienecke and was appointed his court architect in 1849.



Ferdinand's tomb  
on the Bornstedt graveyard in Potsdam

In 1846 he began to work as a teacher at the building academy in Berlin and remained there up to his death as a professor for the subject design. As early as 1866, at the age of only 52 years, Ferdinand had to ask for his retirement for reasons of ill health of which further details have remained unknown. He died from appendicitis March 23<sup>rd</sup> 1866 in Berlin. His tomb on the Separee (= extra part) of the court gardener's family Sello was designed by his brother-in-law Carl Ferdinand Busse, privy building councillor and later director of the Berlin building academy.<sup>3</sup>

Ferdinand von Arnim was not only a gifted architect, but also had outstanding abilities as a water colourist. Most of the "Potsdam Verduten" (= landscapes painted true to life) were most probably officially commissioned works. On an educational trip to Italy he found the opportunity to capture the buildings of Rome, Florence and Venice in water colour paintings of a rich colourfulness.<sup>4</sup> The detailed, delicate and extremely correct execution, especially of the architectural elements is characteristic of Arnim's paintings that express the strong influence of his occupation as an architect. Von Arnim also occupied himself with sketches for mural paintings, like decorating the "Stibadium im Paradiesgarten" (= a rather large and richly decorated park bench made of stone, standing in the Paradise Garden in Potsdam, Sanssouci), which the court painter Lompeck executed according to Arnim's drafts.

The influence of his role model example Ludwig Persius was decisive for Ferdinand von Arnim's architectural work, which is restricted, above all, to Potsdam and Klein-Glienecke<sup>5</sup>. And thus the numerous constructions that are based on Persius' sketches take up a main part of Ferdinand von Arnim's architectural creative work. To this belong the renovation and re-building at the castle Sanssouci (1841 – 1842), the "Friedenskirche" (1845 – 1848) and the "Pfingstbergschloss" (1849 – 1862). Important original sketches of his own developed above all during his activity in Klein-Glienecke. Besides smaller projects there are three pieces of architecture which were built between 1842 and 1851, the "Torwärterhäuschen am Glienicker Park" (= house for the guard at Glienecke Park gate), the rebuilding of the hunting lodge<sup>6</sup>, the "Schweizerhäuser" (= Swiss houses)<sup>7</sup> and the cloister yard.<sup>8</sup>



Villa Arnim in Potsdam; view from the entrance of Park Sanssouci

Ferdinand von Arnim's private residential building in Potsdam most probably constitutes the peak of his architectural works. When he had it built on the site of the corner Weinbergstr. – Schopenhauerstr in 1859<sup>9</sup>, his direct neighbour was Ludwig Persius, who had already had his villa built opposite the so-called Obelisk entrance of Sanssouci in 1836. The design of Villa Arnim left a mark on the villa architecture in Potsdam in the second half of the century.

Its façade with the square stone block and the rich decorations stands in striking contrast to the stern, cube-shaped-closed form of the house, but it is also characteristic of Ferdinand von Arnim's delight in details. He published sketches of his villa a number of times, from 1860 to 1865, in the "Architektonisches Skizzenbuch", in which his house was highlighted as exemplary.<sup>10</sup> In Potsdam Arnim built, apart from his own villa, another three residential houses: the Villa Arndt in the Friedrich-Ebert-Str. 63 of 1860, a villa in the Zeppelinstr. 172<sup>11</sup> and the Villa Hacke built in 1847 in the Jägerallee. He was commissioned to build a mortuary on the "Alter Friedhof" (= old graveyard), which was finished in 1851, during his work of re-designing the graveyard of the Teltower Vorstadt. However, outside Potsdam Ferdinand von Arnim was hardly active. One of the few exceptions is the castle church "Kröchlendorff in der Uckermark", built in 1864 and the successful re-designing of castle Nennhausen near Rathenow in 1960.



Villa Arnim, view from the West



Villa Arnim, view from the North, portal

Even though Ferdinand was a little younger than most of Schinkel's pupils, he was imbued with the idea of Schinkel's epoch of finding a sense of style. His mortuary on the old graveyard shows a strict neo-classical style, castle Nennhausen and the castle church of Kröchlendorff, however, are accentuated by a neogothic style. The "Schweizer Häuser am Böttcherberg" also reveal a pronounced style, as well as the Venetian-Byzantine architecture of the cloister yard in Glienecke and the rebuilding of the hunting lodge in French baroque forms. With the latter, Arnim overcame the existing stylistic scope of the Schinkel school and anticipated the time of eclecticism, which had nothing in common anymore with the diverse but still historically based style school of Schinkel.

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## Annotations:

- <sup>1</sup> The three drawings are framed under dust-free glass and could thus not be taken out of their frames for closer examination. Their external dimensions are 17 x 25.5 cm; most probably they are pencil drawings on paper.
- <sup>2</sup> Here the authoress would like to thank Mrs Eva von Arnim, a. d. Hause Kraatz, “der Unteren Denkmalschutzbehörde Potsdam” as well as the “Industry Club Potsdam” for their kind assistance.
- <sup>3</sup> Very often Ludwig Ferdinand Hesse was called one of F. von Arnim’s brothers-in-law, but there may be some mistake in connection with Carl Ferdinand Busse.
- <sup>4</sup> Judging from the dates of the pictures, F. von Arnim made the educational trip from 1852 to 1853.
- <sup>5</sup> For a detailed list of his works, see Börsch-Supan, Eva: Berliner Baukunst nach Schinkel 1840 – 1870, München, 1977
- <sup>6</sup> For Prince Carl, Ferdinand von Arnim changed the building 1860 – 1862 using French baroque-forms; unfortunately his executions are hardly preserved.
- <sup>7</sup> 1863 Arnim was commissioned by Prince Carl to erect ten “Schweizerhäuser” at the foot of the Böttcherberg in Glienecke. Apart from four of these houses the others fell victim to the drawing up of the border between East and West after the Second World War.
- <sup>8</sup> The cloister yard built in 1850 may possibly be based on sketches by Ludwig Persius that von Arnim only carried out; see also Zuhold, Gerd H.: Der "Klosterhof" des Prinzen Karl von Preußen im Park von Schloss Glienicke in Berlin, Berlin 1993
- <sup>9</sup> In 1867 a year after F. von Arnim’s death his widow sold the villa. After many changes of ownership the house was passed on to the town that made it a “Haus der Technik”. 2002 it was bought by the Semmelhaack GmbH and has been restored in the meantime; now housing the “Industrieclub Potsdam” as well as the University of Management and Communication in it.
- <sup>10</sup> That the building was indeed looked upon as exemplary can be proved by a walk along the “Allee” to Sanssouci. Here an Earl of Finkenstein has adapted the street front from the Villa Arnim when he reconstructed a baroque house in 1910.
- <sup>11</sup> The building erected in 1850 disappeared completely when in 1973 as a result of traffic regulations at the Breite Straße a large part of the historic buildings of the Neustädter Havelbucht were demolished.