
Department of Greek and Roman Art Newsletter

2023 Volume XII

Dear Friends,

For the first time ever, we were pleased to host a Met Live Arts program in our galleries. In celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Martha Graham Dance Company, several dancers performed Graham's *Lamentation* in front of the Badminton Sarcophagus. It was incredibly moving. Graham's interest in Greek myths and their interpretation through dance is well known and she, herself, had an important history with The Met, including a deep artistic partnership with Noguchi, and the new commission that she created in honor of the opening of the Temple of Dendur.

We were all saddened to learn of the recent passing of our dear friend and great patron John A. Moran. John was a world traveler with a deep curiosity about ancient civilizations and a sincere passion for ancient Rome — its history and archaeology. His fascination with our collection made for frequent visits to the galleries which continued up until his last days. John will be profoundly missed by The Met family. Our deepest condolences, thoughts and prayers are with his widow, Carole O. Moran, and his family.

At the end of last month, we said goodbye to *Manneddu*, the Sardinian Giant from Mont'e Prama, who amazed thousands of visitors as they entered our galleries, standing



Photo by Stephanie Berger.

in the middle of the Belfer Court much as Sardinia itself lies near the center of the Mediterranean Sea. We continue to make considerable progress on two major capital projects.

We are currently preparing the Belfer Court for the upcoming display, *Cycladic Art: The Leonard N. Stern Collection on Loan from the Hellenic Republic*, which opens January 25, 2024, and will include a complete refreshing of our display of prehistoric and early Greek art. Simultaneously, we have completed the design development phase of the new Cypriot Galleries, which are scheduled to open in September of 2026.

In this issue, you can read about recent staff activities, including Sarah Lepinski's stay in Rome as The Met Visiting Curator at the American Academy. I had a very productive visit to Anavlochos in eastern Crete to study the Iron Age Greek metal finds from the site. A small but noteworthy curatorial purchase has been made that is a fine addition to our collection of Roman bronzes. We welcome new staff to the Department and are delighted to have another Mary Jaharis 12-month Intern as well as host Victoria Greene as this year's Dietrich von Bothmer Fellow. The Department currently has on loan a significant sculpture for an exhibition on Phidias at the Capitoline Museum and has also lent major sculptures to the new European Paintings Galleries in the Met — fostering the interconnections across art history that are one of the fundamental aspects of this great institution. Our Philodoroi program is as robust as ever and we are planning an incredibly special Philodoroi Travels trip to Naples, Herculaneum, Paestum and Velia next April.

All the magnificent work highlighted in this newsletter is made possible with your financial support, and for this we thank you. Wishing you a happy holiday season,

Seán Hemingway

Seán Hemingway
John A. and Carole O. Moran Curator in Charge

**THE
MET**

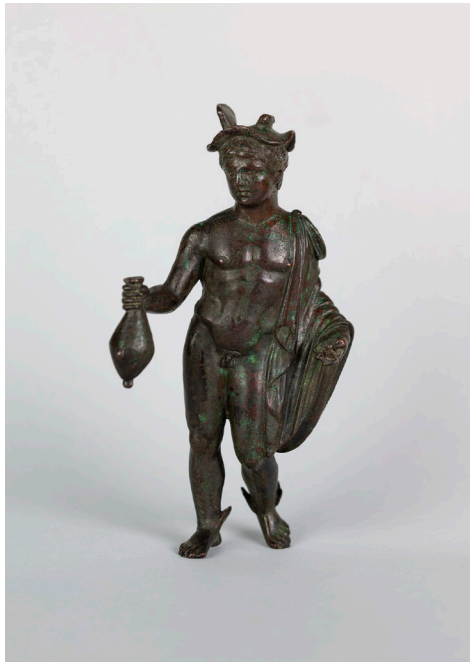
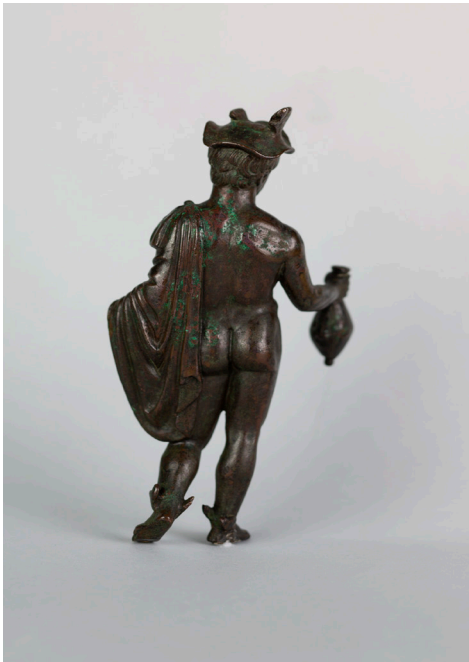
Recent Acquisition

Bronze Mercury statuette

The Department of Greek and Roman Art is pleased to announce a new acquisition, exhibited recently with Charles Ede at the TEFAF New York Art Fair—a small Roman bronze representing the god Mercury, holding a money pouch (2023.561).

The bronze statuette was in the collected works of Sir Francis Cook, 1st Baronet of Doughty House, Richmond, Surrey, prior to his death in 1901. The initial publication of the statuette occurred in the 1908 catalogue of the collection inherited by his son, Wyndham Francis Cook (1860-1905), then by his grandson Humphrey Wyndham Cook (1893-1978), who subsequently sold the bronze Mercury to Christie, Manson & Woods in 1925, where it was acquired by Spink and Son Ltd of London. The god reappeared at the Sotheby's London March 2021 sale of property from the family collection of the late Countess Mountbatten of Burma (1924-2017).

The Roman god Mercury is represented as a young naked man with wings both on his ankles and on his characteristic hat (petasos). It can be dated to the Imperial period, in the 2nd century CE. At the time, most Roman household shrines, particularly in Gaul and Italy, had such bronze statuettes of Mercury—who served as the protector of wealth. The money pouch is a typically Roman attribute of the god, while the contrapposto position is reminiscent of the widely copied Hermes, by the Classical Greek sculptor Polykleitos.



Statuette of Mercury, ca. 2nd century CE. Purchase, Patricia and Marietta Fried Gift, 2023.
Photos © Metropolitan Museum of Art