



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

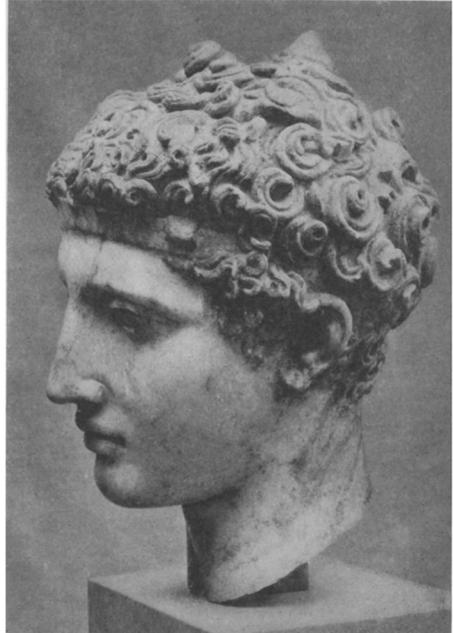
JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

HEAD OF A GREEK ATHLETE

IN his Masterpieces of Greek Sculpture, Professor Furtwängler called attention to a fine marble head of a Greek athlete in the possession of Lord Leconfield, at Petworth, which

Museum last summer, out of funds from the Hewitt bequest, and is now on exhibition in the Room of Recent Accessions (see the frontispiece, and figures).¹

Its resemblance to the Petworth head is so close as to leave no doubt of a common derivation, but it is distinctly the more



GREEK HEAD OF AN ATHLETE
FIFTH CENTURY

up to that time had been little appreciated or even known among students of Greek art. He adjudged it correctly as a copy of a lost original of the fifth century B. C., and even named the sculptor to whom he thought the original could be ascribed, a point which we may pass over for the moment. That the original was an important statue was to be inferred not only from the merits of the Petworth head, but from the fact that he could cite three other copies of it, one in the Riccardi Palace in Florence, another — a fragment of one side only — in the Museum at Trèves, and a third, formerly in the possession of a Roman dealer. To these four must now be added a fifth, a life-size head which was purchased by the

beautiful of the two, and in the subtlety of the modeling is probably a more faithful reproduction of the original, full of the spirit of fifth-century work.²

It is also remarkably well preserved, as the only part missing, with the exception of a few unimportant breaks in the hair, is the tip of the nose, which has been restored in plaster. Of its history and

¹The length of the face from the bottom of the fillet to the bottom of the chin, is 17cm., not quite 6¾ inches. The marble is apparently Pentelic.

²The best illustrations of the Petworth head are the atlas of the German edition of Furtwängler's *Meisterwerke*, pl. XVI. Two views of it are also given in the English edition, figs. 64, 65, where it is discussed on pp. 161 ff.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY

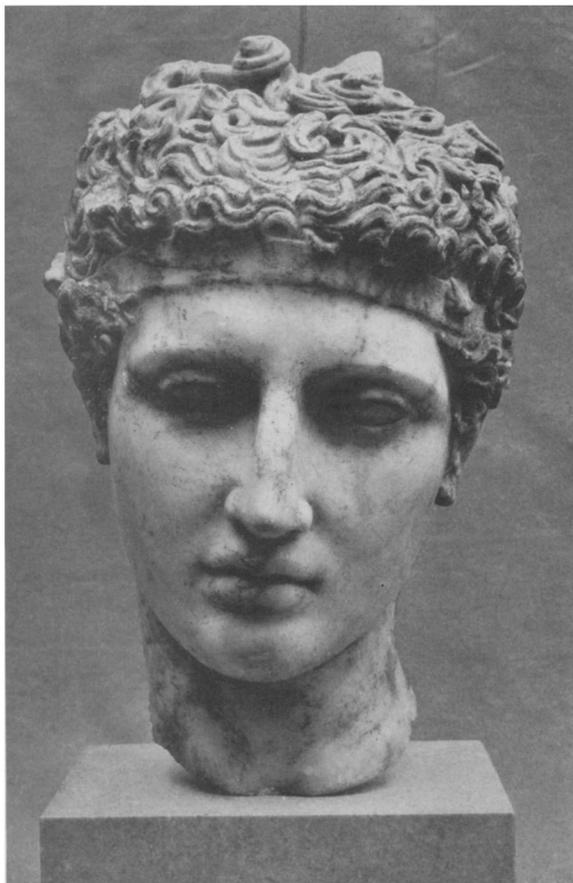
PRICE TEN CENTS

BULLETIN OF
THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM
OF ART

VOLUME VII

NEW YORK, MARCH, 1912

NUMBER 3



GREEK HEAD OF AN ATHLETE
FIFTH CENTURY

provenance we have as yet no data beyond the statement that it is a recent discovery, and this appears to be borne out by the fact that when it was purchased the surface was still covered with a hard incrustation, which has since been carefully removed from the face.

Upon the exceptional beauty of this head there is no need to insist, because it is sufficiently apparent from the illustrations, although it can be fully appreciated only by a study of the marble itself, under the constantly changing conditions of light and shade which are needed to bring out the full effect of the modeling. Aside from the beauty of the features, the head has a certain romantic quality which is unusual in Greek art, especially of this period, and which doubtless adds to its attractiveness from a modern point of view, though it is largely accidental and can be explained on other grounds. The head is evidently from a statue representing a young athlete, who is marked as a victor by the fillet which he wears, the badge of victory in an athletic contest. Some further idea of the figure may be gained from the fact that the head was not carried erect, but, as the lines of the neck show, bent considerably to the right. Also, there is on the top of the head a small square projection — repeated on three of the other copies — which from analogy is to be interpreted as a support for an arm, indicating that he stood with one arm resting on his head, a pose not uncommon in statues of the fifth century. He was, therefore, a victorious athlete resting after a competition, and the impression of melancholy made by the face — heightened now by the discoloration of the marble, which intensifies the shadows in and about the eyes — was intended by the sculptor only as a suggestion of physical fatigue. The sculptors of that period never attempted to express either sentimental moods or spiritual emotions in the faces of their statues, and even fatigue is no more than hinted at, in the slightly drawn corners of the mouth.

The main thing that the sculptor sought to express was his ideal of the beauty of young manhood in its perfect development, in which the physical and intellectual elements were harmoniously blended, as far

removed as possible from brutality on the one hand, or sentimentality on the other; and in the success with which that ideal has been achieved, our head must be regarded as an example of a very high order. The broad, low forehead, with its almost imperceptible swelling above the brows, the low curve of the latter, and the sharp angle at which the eyes are set below them, the slight but intentional difference in the size of the eyes, the delicate oval of the cheeks, tapering to the small chin, and the finely modeled nose and mouth, all play their part in making up the beauty of the face, the simple lines of which are accentuated by the thick, almost turbulent masses of curly hair above it.

Some of these characteristics are so individual, and make the head so different from the types of the better-known sculptors of the fifth century, as to lead us to seek its creator among the artists of the period who are less famous to-day. Among these is Kresilas, to whom Furtwängler attributed the original of the Petworth head, together with other works of a similar character.

All we know definitely about the life of this sculptor is that he was born at Kydonia, in Crete, and that he was active in the second half of the fifth century B. C. Inscriptions from three pedestals, bearing his signature, have been found on the Akropolis of Athens, which make it probable that he worked in that city during part of his career, more especially because one of the pedestals had belonged to a statue of Perikles. That statue, by the way, was probably the one which called forth the admiration of Pliny, who says that Kresilas made "an Olympian Perikles, worthy of the epithet, and it is wonderful how in this art he made noble men more noble," — a remark which might well be applied to our head. A fourth inscription with his signature has been found in Argolis, and as this is written in Argive characters, Furtwängler regarded it as proof that he worked also in that district, though one such inscription could hardly be regarded as establishing the fact, as it might have been made by a local stone-cutter for a statue sent from another place. However this may be, several other

statues by him are mentioned by ancient writers, chiefly Pliny, the best known being his Amazon at Ephesos, which was regarded as ranking next to those by Pheidias and Polykleitos among the various figures of Amazons erected there. This fact alone would establish him as one of the great sculptors of his time, and it is unfortunate that we have so little knowledge of his style and characteristics as an artist. Furtwängler assumed that the well-known busts of Perikles in the British Museum and the Vatican were copied from the statue referred to above, and upon them based his attribution of other heads and statues which he classed as works by or derived from Kresilas. Among these our head may properly be classed. The assumption, however, remains a conjecture which though plausible is not yet established; and if not established as regards the bust of Perikles, it is still less so in the case of some of the other types which he associated with that. Therefore all we can at present assert positively regarding the original of our head is that it was the work of a great sculptor of the fifth century, and that he may have been Kresilas.

E. R.

RENAISSANCE PORTRAIT MEDALS

THE seven Renaissance portrait medals described in the following notes have been acquired by the Museum at various times during the last three or four years. The six Italian medals are shown in the cases of small bronzes at the south end of the hall in Wing F; the seventh, a medal designed by Jehan Perréal, will be found in the adjoining gallery, F. 6.

The most beautiful of these medals is one¹ of Leonello d'Este (1407-1450), Marquis of Ferrara, by the famous master of the early Renaissance, commonly known as Vittore Pisano called Pisanello, but, in view of recent discoveries, probably to be identified with Antonio Pisano (di Puccio or Pucino), who was born in Pisa or Verona before 1395 and died at Naples(?) between 1450-1456. Of recent literature

¹Gift of Mr. H. Heilbronner, 1909.—Bronze. Low relief. Diameter, 2½ in.

dealing with the identification of Pisanello with the artist Antonio di Puccio, his biography and the date of his works, the reader should consult in particular the notes published by Biadego, in *Atti del Reale Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti*, 1907-1910, and the articles by L. Testi in *Rassegna d'Arte*, 1910 and 1911.

On the obverse of the medal, Leonello is represented in profile to the right, bare-headed, and wearing scale armor. The legend, separated by olive-branches, reads: LEONELLVS . MARCHIO . ESTENSIS . On the reverse is a mask of a triple-faced child, between two trophies of armor suspended from olive-branches. Signed: OPVS . PISANI . PICTORIS. The triple-faced *impresa* can not be explained with certainty, but is probably a complimentary allusion to the prudence of Leonello. The triple-head is found again on the shoulder-piece of King Alfonso's armor in a drawing by Pisanello in the collection His de la Salle, in the Louvre. Of the seven portrait medals (eight, if we regard as two the slight variations of the medal with the lynx *impresa*) which Pisanello made of Leonello, the only one bearing a date is the marriage-medal of the year 1444; the others, however, were probably executed within a few years of this date.

By a Ferrarese (?) follower of Pisanello is a medal² of Niccolò III d'Este (1384-1441). On the obverse is the bust portrait in profile to the right of the Marquis, wearing a high *berretto*, and a tunic edged with fur over an undervest. Legend in relief: NICOLAI MARCHIO ESTENSIS. On the reverse is a coat-of-arms, the fleurs de lys of France quartered with the eagle of the House of Este. To the left of the shield is the Gothic letter *ſ*, to the right, *ſ*, the initial letters of Nicolaus Marchio. The reverse is bordered by a wreath of laurel. This medal must have been executed after the first of January, 1431, as this is the date of the letters patent from Charles VII, King of France, to Niccolò III, authorizing him

²Rogers Fund, 1909.—Bronze. Low relief. Diameter, 2⅜ inches.