

COLNAGHI



Statue of Asclepius

Roman Imperial, ca. 100-150 A.D.

Marble

Height: 68 cm; 26 $\frac{3}{4}$ in.

Provenance:

Jacques Bacri (1911-1965), Paris, France; inventory number BC19

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The god of medicine (Asklepios in Greek) is depicted with a bare chest and well defined musculature, thick drapery wrapped low around his waist and flung forwards over his left shoulder. His back is covered by the drapery which falls in vertical folds from the left shoulder. He stands contrapposto, weight on his right leg, the left knee slightly bent, his hips cocked. The head, feet and arms now missing, some staining and encrustation to the proper left side, the surface with root marks, some areas of damage restored to the drapery on the proper left side.

This type, known as the Campana Asklepios is a Roman copy of a 4th century BC Greek masterpiece. In the original the figure supported his weight on a stick, which had a serpent coiling its way upwards. Asklepios, meaning 'to cut open', was the son of Apollo, reared and educated by the centaur Chiron, the same who taught Achilles. Chiron passed on the wisdom of healing to Asklepios, who soon became the master and started to treat the deceased, bringing them back to life. For this sin Zeus struck him dead with a thunderbolt. After his apotheosis, mankind continued to worship him as the god of healing. The cult of Asklepios started in Epidauros around the 5th century BC. His cult grew over the centuries and spread throughout the Graeco-Roman world. In the 3rd century BC he was one of the first eastern deities to be adopted into Roman state religion, where he was worshipped in both the public and private spheres.

References:

Compare an almost identical example in the Museumlandschaft Hessen Kassel, inventory no. Sk 10, and an over life- size example from the collection of Giampietro Campana in Rome, now in the Hermitage Museum, inventory no. ΓΡ-4178