

COLNAGHI



Statue of Narcissus

Roman, Hadrianic, ca. 117-138 A.D.

Marble

Height: 60.2 cm; 23 5/8 in.

Provenance:

Private collection, 18th century (based on restoration techniques);
John Watkins Brett, Esq. (1805-1863) collection, UK;
Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 5-18 April 1864, lot 1110;
Sir Charles Robinson (1824 – 1913) collection, UK;
Alfred Moritz Mond (1868 – 1930), The Lord Melchett collection, UK;
Sotheby's London, *The Melchett Collection of Paintings, Drawings and Antiquities*,
23-24 May 1951, lot 43;
Christopher Norris collection, UK, 1951;
W.H. private collection, Connecticut, 1988;
US private collection, Connecticut, 2004;
US private collection, 2015.

Published:

Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 5-18 April 1864, lot 1110.
Arndt P., Amelung W., eds., *Photographische Einzelaufnahmen Antiker Sculpturen*,
München 1893- 1947, cat. no. 4926.
Strong E., *Catalogue of the Greek and Roman Antiquities in the Possession of the*

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Right Honourable Lord Melchett, P.C., D.Sc., F.R.S., Oxford, 1928, pp. 16-17, no. 10, pl. XVII.

Sotheby's, London, 23-24 May 1951, lot 43.

Vermeule C. C., Von Bothmer D., "Notes on a New Edition of Michaelis: Ancient Marbles in Great Britain, Part Two," in *American Journal of Archaeology* 60, 1956, pp. 337-338.

Zanker P., "'Iste ego sum". Der Naive und der bewusste Narziss," in *Bonner Jahrbücher* 166, 1966, p. 159, fig. 8.

SCHEFOLD K., *Die Göttersage in der klassischen und hellenistischen Kunst*, München, 1981, p. 210, fig. 288.

Rafn B., "Narkissos," in *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae* (LIMC), vol. VI, Zürich, München, 1992, p.707, no. 43.

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A male youth stands in contrapposto, with his weight on the left leg and the right at ease, and both arms raised and resting atop his head, right hand clasping the wrist of the left. His musculature is well defined, with accentuated pectorals, abdominal muscles, and iliac furrows.

This figure represents Narcissus, the mythical Boeotian hunter, son of the river god Kephisos and the nymph Leiriope. The seer Teiresias foretold a long life for Narcissus but only if he never saw his own face. Ovid in his *Metamorphoses* (III, 339-510) recounts how many young girls and youths fell in love with Narcissus but were rejected, including Echo. One disappointed suitor asked Nemesis the goddess of vengeance to punish Narcissus, which she did by having him fall irrevocably in love with his own reflection, leading to Narcissus' death and metamorphosis into the genus of flower bearing his name, known more commonly as the daffodil.

The sculptural type, thought to be based on an early Hellenistic original of post-Praxitelean and post-Lysippan workmanship, is known from Roman copies, including an example in the Musée du Louvre, Paris, (inv. no. MA435). The gesture of the type borrows from similar poses used for depictions of Apollo and Dionysus—referred to as 'divine repose'—though Narcissus' downward gaze sets him apart from these divine figures. There is also a strigillated sarcophagus in the Galleria Lapidaria, the Vatican Museums (inv. no. 169), with two very closely related images of Narcissus. The pair of Narcissuses on the Vatican sarcophagus to elucidate the original composition: in both cases, Narcissus' downward gaze is met by a reflection of his face, depicted in relief on the ground next to the youth (Figures 1-2). Narcissus is often depicted accompanied by a small figure of Eros, and it is likely that a similar figure may have originally been positioned on the shoulder of the Melchett Narcissus, based on the losses to the shoulder.

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The surviving copies of this type are Hadrianic or Antonine in date. This representation of Narcissus can be seen to have informed contemporary depictions of Antinous, the lover of the emperor Hadrian who drowned in the Nile and was thereafter divinized. In establishing the cult of Antinous, Hadrian used existing symbols and imagery, and Narcissus, with his young, beautiful face, flowing locks, and watery grave, is an apt, haunting echo of the death of Antinous.

The statue survives in excellent condition; it has been carefully repaired and restored with finely worked 18th-19th century marble insertions. The upper 2/3 of the statue, including the arms, head, and torso, down to the left buttock and thigh, are the high-quality work of an ancient Roman sculptor. There are some restored patches in these areas including the fingers of the right hand and the crown of his head. The face has had some careful replacements in marble at the nose, lips/chin and left eye. The torso is in very good condition with some marble restoration in patches on the right upper arm and shoulder, and the left elbow and shoulder. The genitalia are a restoration. The left buttock and thigh are ancient. The base and tree along with the lower part of the statue from the left knee down and the right hip down are matching marble restorations.

References:

Rafn B, "Narkissos," in *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae* (LIMC), vol. VI, Zürich, München, 1992, pp.703-711.

Schefold K., *Die Göttersage in der klassischen und hellenistischen Kunst*, München, 1981, pp. 209-211.

Zanker P., "'Iste ego sum". Der Naive und der bewusste Narziss," in *Bonner Jahrbücher* 166, 1966, pp. 152-170.

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Figure 1: Galleria Lapidaria, the Vatican Museums, inv. no. 169.



Figure 2: The Vatican Museums Sarcophagus (detail)

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- 1117 Two marble profiles of Roman emperors
- 1118 A rosso-antico amphora—on marble plinth—8½ in. high
- 1119 A rosso-antico tripod, 11½ in. high—on a green marble plinth, 3 in.—and red marble pedestal, 6 in.

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10 STATUETTE OF NARCISSUS

Plate XVII

H. (exclusive of restoration) .38 m.

Restored: lower half of nose; right half of upper lip; lower lip and chin; left eyebrow, eye and upper half of cheek; crown of head; patches of back of left shoulder, left elbow, top of right shoulder and on both sides of right upper arm; thumb, index finger,

little finger and upper half of the two remaining fingers on right hand; penis, right leg from groin; left leg from above knee; support; plinth. There is an irregular round hole (filled with plaster) .017 m. diameter on back of right shoulder.

A boy, with the weight on the left leg (on side of support), and the right at ease, stands with arms thrown over his head (right hand clasping left wrist)—a gesture borrowed from figures of Apollo and Dionysos represented in an attitude of 'divine repose' and likewise known from the figure in the Louvre (copy of Antonine date), long famous as the 'Génie du Repos éternel'. *R.R.S.* I, 151. 7. Replica of a type represented by another but larger statuette in the Vatican (Gall: Chiaramonti, Amelung, I, p. 756, No. 655, Pl. 81). These figures without doubt represent Narcissus, being identical with the two corner



Fig. 5. Sarcophagus with figures of Narcissus (Vatican)

figures of a sarcophagus in the Vatican (Gall: Lapidaria, Amelung, I., p. 288, No. 169), where Narcissus is shown according to the myth, looking at his reflection in the water, naïvely indicated by a mask-like face on the ground (Fig. 5), to which a small Eros draws his attention. The patches on the shoulders and on the right arm, and the hole in the right shoulder, suggest that a small figure of Eros was perched above the boy's shoulders, urging him to admiration of his own image.

The statuette was probably sepulchral and may have adorned the grave of one who had died young.

From the Collection of the late Sir Charles Robinson, C.B.



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Photographische Einzelaufnahmen
ANTIKER SCULPTUREN

Serien zur Vorbereitung eines Corpus Statuarum
(„ARNDT-AMELUNG“)

HERAUSGEGEBEN VON
GEORG LIPPOLD
(BIBLIOTHEK ARNDT, UNIVERSITÄT ERLANGEN)

SERIE XVIIIA

TEXT

MIT BEITRÄGEN VON
MARGARETE BIEBER,
FREDERIK POULSEN, EMIL KRUGER
GEORG LIPPOLD

MÜNCHEN 1947
MÜNCHNER VERLAG UND GRAPHISCHE KUNSTANSTALTEN GMBH.
BISHER F. BRUCKMANN KG.

Vgl. Vat. Kat. a. a. O. Laurenzi, *Ritratti Greci* 98, Nr. 28. Die Bohrerarbeit ist im Haar deutlich, wenn auch nicht so auffallend wie beim vatikanischen Exemplar: die Ausführung fällt wohl in die zweite Hälfte des 2. Jahrhunderts n. Chr.

4925. Kopf des Demosthenes. Burlington Exhib. 1904, 258, Nr. 68, Pl. XXVI. Aukt. Kat. Christie 17./8. 4. 1902, Nr. 239. Ebenfalls in Samml. Melchett: Strong, *The M. Coll.* Nr. 21. Zu Arndt-Br. 111—20. Suhr, *Portraits of Greek Statesmen* 44, Nr. 31. Zum Typus: Laurenzi, *Ritratti Greci* 114, Nr. 61. Dazu das Ex. in Washington, *AJA.* 41, 212.

4926. Narkissos. Samml. Melchett: Strong Nr. 10. Reinach, *RS.* VI, 178, 6. „Hoch (ohne Ergänzung) 0,38 m. Ergänzt: untere Hälfte der Nase, rechte Hälfte der Oberlippe, Unterlippe und Kinn, linke Braue, linkes Auge und obere Hälfte der Wange, Scheitel, Flicken in der linken Schulter hinten, am linken Ellbogen, rechter Schulter und an beiden Seiten des rechten Oberarms; Daumen, Zeigefinger, kleiner Finger und obere Hälfte der zwei übrigen Finger an der rechten Hand, Penis, rechtes Bein vom Ansatz, linkes von oberhalb des Knies an, Stütze, Plinthe. Unregelmäßig rundes Loch hinten auf rechter Schulter“ (Strong). Zum Typus vgl. zu E-A 2552/53. Die Haltung der Wiederholungen weicht im Einzelnen ab. Es liegt diesen Narkissosfiguren wohl kaum ein plastisches griechisches Werk, eher ein Bild, zugrunde.

4927. Aschenurne. Burlington Exh. 1904, 34, Nr. 55, pl. XXIII. Aukt. Kat. Nr. 245. Antik? (vgl. Ny Carlsberg 808, das nach dem Kat. v. 1940 neuerdings als Fälschung erkannt ist).

4928. Aschenurne. Aukt. Kat. Nr. 244. Die Inschrift sicher falsch, nach *CIL.* VI 3220 (Vatican, Gall. lap. 137 d). Auch die Urne selbst macht nach den Abbildungen keinen vertrauenerweckenden Eindruck.

4929 und 4930. Porträtkopf, Griechin („Sappho“). Später Paris, Privatbesitz. Nasenspitze, Stück im Oberkopf neu. Zum Typus vgl. v. Kaschnitz zu *Vat. Mag.* 44 (PhW. 1939, 122) und M. Bieber zu Nr. 4839/40. Dazu Replik Lansdowne, oben Nr. 4908. Trotz gewisser Ähnlichkeiten mit Werken des 5. Jahrhunderts (Arndt hat auf den Ares Borghese hingewiesen, an den das Stirnhaar und die seitlich herabhängenden Haare erinnern) ist er doch wohl erst hellenistisch; dafür sprechen auch die künstlich gedrehten Seitenlöckchen. Vgl. noch Waldhauer zu *Erm.* 328.

London,

Sammlung Earl of Wemyss.

4931—4933. Kopf des Dionysos. M. 432 (Lord Elcho). Burlington Exhib. 1904, 24, Nr. 32, pl. XXX. Brendel zu E-A 3057/58. Neu Nase, Unterlippe, Flicken auf beiden Seiten. Wie die meisten derartigen Dionysosköpfe mit Binde und Efeukranz wohl nur in allgemeiner Anlehnung an Typen des 4. Jahrhunderts geschaffen, nicht genaue Kopie. (G. L.)

Lowther Castle.

Vgl. E-A XI, S. 16.

4934 links. Grabstein(?). Nicht bei M. Aufgestellt in der Passage von der Ostgalerie zum Billardraum. Auf zwei Säulen mit langgezogenen Kapitellen, dessen Einzelheiten ganz durch Bohrung herausgearbeitet sind, ruht ein mit Eierstab und Perlstab verzierter Bogen. Sein Rund ist ganz durch eine schwere Muschel ausgefüllt. Im Feld zwischen den Säulen steht ein geradbeiniger Sessel, unter dessen Kissen ein Gewand hängt. Auf dem Kissen ruht ein zweites Gewand und ein Diadem. Darüber hängt am Bogen ein weiteres, nicht mehr kenntliches Attribut. Unten vor dem Sessel stehen, vollkommen frei gearbeitet, über Kreuz, das eine nach links, das andere nach rechts, voreinander zwei Tiere, die trotz starker Beschädigung nach Körperbau und Hufen als Rehe anzusprechen sind (bei der Enge des Raums war es nicht möglich, sie mit aufzunehmen). 3. Jahrhundert n. Chr. Offenbar aus dem griechischen Osten. (E. K.)

4934 rechts. Grabstein, Römerin als Venus. M. 42. Hoch 1,35 m, breit 1,59 m, tief 0,13—14 m. Der obere Teil der Frisur ergänzt, sonst gut erhalten, nur anscheinend stark geputzt. Zwei Pfeiler tragen einen mit drei Medaillons gezierten Bogen, der mit zwei Eckakroterien mit Voluten versehen ist. Im Innern der Nische hängt eine in der Mitte hochgenommene Girlande. Die Kapitelle der Pfeiler zeigen drei Reihen aufsteigender Blätter. In der Mitte der Basis die umrahmte Inschriftfläche, die nicht benutzt ist. Unter den Pfeilern ist an der Basis links eine offene, rechts eine geschlossene Tür dargestellt (zur Grabestür: Altmann, *Röm. Grabaltäre* 13 ff.; *RM.* 57, 226; vgl. a. oben Nr. 4820). In der Nische steht eine Frau, nackt bis auf ein um Unterleib und Oberschenkel geschlungenes leichtes Gewand, dessen Ende über den linken Arm geworfen ist. Mit dem linken Arm lehnt sie sich auf einen