

HEAD OF A YOUNG MAN

ROMAN, 2ND – 1ST CENTURY BC
MARBLE

HEIGHT: 15 CM.

WIDTH: 8 CM.

DEPTH: 9 CM.

PROVENANCE:

*FORMERLY WITH THE ART DEALER
ERNEST BRUMMER (1891-1964), PARIS,
FROM AT LEAST 16 MAY 1940.
THEN IN A FRENCH PRIVATE
COLLECTION.*



This precious marble head represents a young man. Devoid of any attribute or hairstyle detail that could help identify him, all his beauty is concentrated in the delicate features of his youthful face. He is depicted beardless and his round cheeks and slightly upturned chin give him a calm, peaceful expression. His lips are full, his mouth small

and the corners of his lips and opening of his mouth very lightly etched, as though he were offering a discreet smile. His nose is narrow and dovetails with thin eyebrows. The exquisitely sculpted contours of his almond-shaped eyes give him a gentle, peaceful expression. His ears were left free while his hair must have been made up of small, individually sculpted curls. Finally, our head is carried by a narrow neck that is moving in a very particular way. His head seems to be turned to the left, creating a twist of the neck and giving us quite a spectacular impression of realism. Our piece is thus precious in both its details and precisely executed facial features, as well as in the gorgeous patina covering the stone. Sculpted from a lovely marble that was originally almost translucent, the material has, over the centuries, taken on a beautiful ochre hue, giving it a unique aura. Our sculpture was fitted to a pretty, green marble base from at least the 20th century.

Hellenistic art, which reached its height in the 2nd and 1st centuries BC, is characterised by a focus on realism, as well as movement and flexibility in the different poses, contrary to earlier classical Greek art. Sculptures are also characterised by fine features, oval faces and small eyes, which are slightly sunken compared to the eyebrows, giving a soft, dreamy expression, as in our example. These characteristics can also be found in a truly lovely series of small Greek heads currently conserved in the United States, and in



another sculpture currently in a private collection (ill. 1-4). Likewise, the Antikensammlung in Berlin has two gorgeous examples, one masculine and one feminine. Both display these iconographic characteristics, which can also be found in our delicate face, particularly the twist of the neck, which creates a rather spectacular sense of movement that was dear to the artists of the Hellenistic period (ill. 5-6).



Our delicate masculine head was in the collection of the Parisian art dealer Ernest Brummer (1891-1964, ill. 7). Ernest studied music and art history at the Sorbonne and the École du Louvre, where he mingled with renowned figures such as Salomon Reinach. He was the brother of Joseph and Imre, also traders, with whom he partnered to open an antique shop at 3, Boulevard Raspail, called Brummer Frères — Brummer Curiosités.

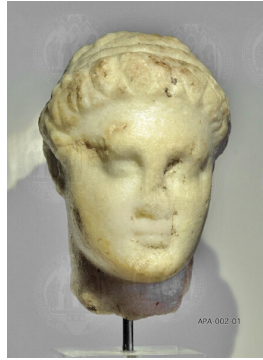
Ernest travelled widely, purchasing countless works of art over the years. During the First World War, he decided to stay in Paris, unlike his brothers, who left for the United States to open a second shop in New York. Ernest finally joined his brothers a little after the beginning of the Second World War. After Joseph died in 1947, the collection was gradually scattered through auctions. Our head was photographed in the Parisian gallery on 16 May 1940 (ill. 8). It then found its place in a French private collection.

Comparatives:



Ill. 1. Marble head of a youth, Hellenistic period, 3rd century BC, marble, H.: 14.5 cm. The MET, New York, inv. no. 10.210.23.

Ill. 2. Head of a youth, Greek, 4th century BC, marble, H.: 6 cm. The MET, New York, inv. no. 14.130.11.



Ill. 3. Head of a female satyr, Hellenistic, 3rd or 2nd century BC, marble, H.: 7 cm. The MET, New York, inv. no. 24.97.90.

Ill. 4. Head of a young man, Greek, 3rd or 2nd century BC, marble, H.: 7.5 cm. Private collection.



Ill. 5. Head of a young man, Hellenistic, 1st century BC, marble, H.: 11.5 cm. Antikensammlung, Berlin, inv. no. sk558.

Ill. 6. Young woman, Aphrodite (?), Hellenistic, 1st century BC, marble, H.: 21 cm. Antikensammlung, Berlin, inv. no. Sk613

Provenance:



Ill. 7. Ernest Brummer (1891-1964).



Ill. 8. Brummer Frères - Brummer Curiosités, Paris, 16 May 1940.