

TORSO OF APOLLO

ROMAN, 1ST-2ND CENTURY AD
MARBLE

HEIGHT: 63.5 CM.

WIDTH: 31 CM.

DEPTH: 20.3 CM.

PROVENANCE:

*SOLD AT SOTHEBY'S LONDON, JULY 1ST,
1969, LOT 108.*

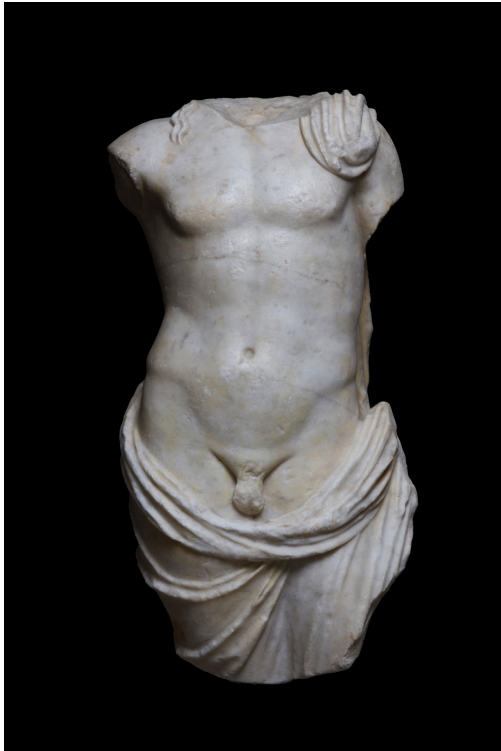
ACQUIRED BY J. EISENBERG.

SOLD TO FORT WAYNE MUSEUM IN 1971.

*DEACCESSIONED BY THE FORT WAYNE
MUSEUM IN 1996.*

*SOLD AT SOTHEBY'S NEW YORK ON
DECEMBER 17, 1996, LOT 61.*

ACQUIRED BY ROBERT NOAKES.



Carved from a luminous white marble, this Roman torso portrays a partially nude young man. Two locks of wavy hair trail along his right collarbone, while a chlamys—a short Greek-style cloak—rests gracefully on his left shoulder. The drapery flows down his back and wraps around the upper part of his legs. The deeply incised folds are rendered with remarkable precision, cascading down his

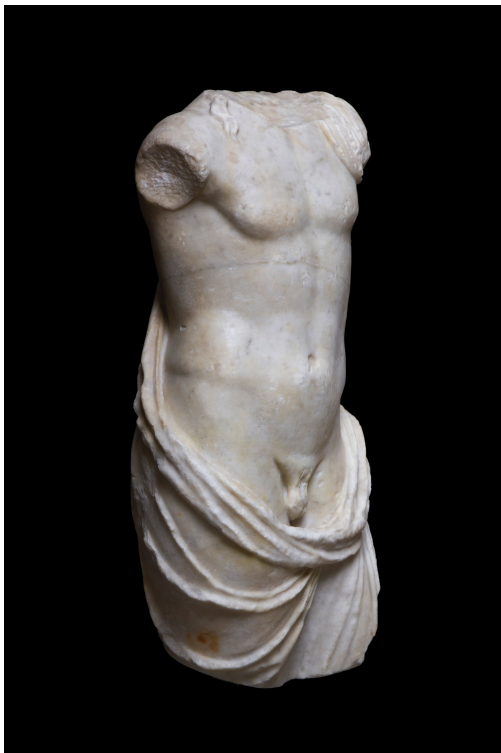
back, covering the buttocks, and spiraling around the hips while subtly revealing the genitals.



A dynamic interplay emerges between the curved folds that follow the body's contours and the vertical pleats that run along the legs. This rhythmic articulation of the fabric closely hugs the anatomical forms, subtly revealing the positioning of the legs beneath: one extended, the other bent. Though the arms are now missing, their original placement can be partially inferred. The right arm, likely slightly raised, may have been engaged in a gesture—perhaps holding an attribute—while the left arm, more relaxed, appears to have hung along the torso. The bust is distinguished by its refined musculature, with prominently defined pectorals and a vertical line extending from



the neck to the navel, accentuating the body's central axis and conveying the youthful athleticism of the figure. The abdominal muscles are finely chiseled, converging towards a delicately sculpted navel. Prominent oblique muscles descend toward the groin, contributing to the sensuality of the form. This torso embodies the classical ideal of male beauty, as conceived in Greek tradition and reinterpreted by Roman sculptors.



In terms of posture, the figure displays a classical *contrapposto*: the weight likely rested on the now-missing right leg, extended, while the relaxed left leg induced a natural torsion of the torso. On the right side of the drapery, two visible indentations suggest that the statue may have been supported by an element such as a tree trunk or decorative structure—common features in Greco-Roman statuary to stabilize *contrapposto* poses. From both stylistic and formal perspectives, this torso fits within the canon of Roman imperial sculpture from the 1st or 2nd century AD. The absence of preserved attributes renders precise

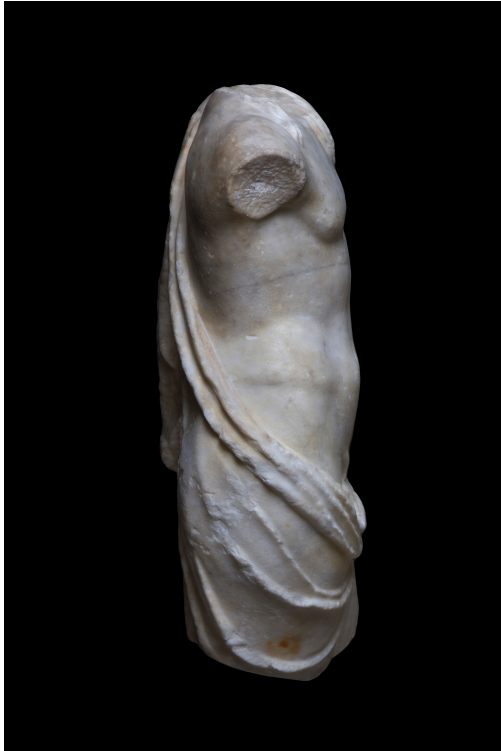
identification challenging. However, several iconographic clues—the presence of the chlamys, the youthful physique, the elegance of the *contrapposto*, and the softness of the modeling—point toward a representation of Apollo or Dionysus. Both deities were frequently depicted as youthful, idealized, beardless men, often nude or semi-nude, wearing only a chlamys and once bearing now-lost attributes such as a lyre, thyrsus, or a wreath of ivy.

The fine-grained, slightly lustrous marble displays a warm patina, a testament to the passage of time.



The treatment of the drapery and torso invites several noteworthy comparisons within the corpus of Greco-Roman sculpture. This work may be likened to the group of Dionysus with a satyr, held in the Archaeological Museum of Burdur (Turkey), dated between 160 and 180 AD (ill.1), or to the example in the Archaeological Museum of Tripoli (ill.2). The sensual modeling of the body, the cascading curls, and the slightly swayed stance of the god all

show clear points of stylistic convergence. Another Dionysian figure from the Albani collection also displays similar characteristics (ill.3).



Turning to Apollonian types, several elements likewise invite comparison: the gentle *contrapposto*, the refined modeling of the torso, and the precise rendering of the musculature are reminiscent of depictions of Apollo, such as the one in the Capitoline Museums (ill.4), or the Roman copies of the *Apollo Citharoedus*, particularly those in the British Museum (ill.5-6).

However, the articulation of the right shoulder on our torso, slightly lowered, suggests that the arm was not raised above the head as in the previously mentioned examples. Its position likely fell into an intermediate gesture—perhaps extended forward or upward—yet without excessive tension. The most compelling parallel is the statue of Apollo discovered in the theatre of Carthage, now housed in the Bardo Museum in Tunis (ill.7). Depicted as a Pythian Apollo, he appears in his role as the

oracular deity who triumphed over the serpent Python at Delphi. The anatomical modeling, the treatment of the drapery, and most notably the posture align closely with this iconographic tradition, suggesting that the present torso likely belongs to a comparable Apollonian type. Finally, the Apollo of the Hermitage Museum (ill.8) offers another pertinent reference: the frontal stance, the controlled *contrapposto*, the elegant drapery clinging to the left flank, and the presence of a structural support extending from the drapery all affirm its place within this same visual tradition.



This sculpture once formed part of the esteemed collection of Jérôme Martin Eisenberg, renowned antiquarian and scholar, and founder of the Royal-Athena Galleries in New York. Active from the 1950s onward, Eisenberg distinguished himself both as a dealer and as editor-in-chief of the archaeological journal *Minerva*. He was also a founding member of the International Association of Dealers in Ancient Art (IADAA), underscoring his pivotal role in the dissemination and scholarly study of

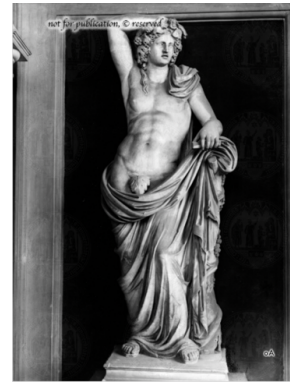
classical antiquities. The piece was sold on July 1st, 1969, at Sotheby's London in the sale titled *Catalogue of Egyptian, Western Asiatic, Greek, Etruscan and Roman Antiquities, also Islamic Pottery and Metalwork*, as lot 108 (ill.9). It was subsequently acquired by the Fort Wayne Museum in Indiana, and later sold at Sotheby's New York on December 17, 1996, as lot 61 (ill.11). It then entered the private collection of Robert Noakes, a celebrated designer whose career spanned over fifty years. Founder of the Robert Noakes Design studio in Toronto, he played a key role in the evolution of contemporary design in Canada and abroad. His interest in ancient art reflects a cultivated aesthetic sensibility and a deep commitment to the preservation of classical artistic heritage.

Comparatives:



Ill.1 Statue of Dionysus in a group with a satyr, Roman, 160-180 A.D., marble, H.: 262 cm. Sagalassos, Burdur Archaeological Museum, Turkey.

Ill. 2 Statue of Dionysus with a satyr, Roman, marble, Tripoli Archaeological Museum, Libya, inv. no. 1107831



Ill.3 Statue of Dionysus, Roman, 3rd century B.C., marble, H.: 164 cm. Albani Collection, Rome, Italy, inv. no. 757



Ill.4 Statue of Apollo, Greek, 2nd century B.C., marble, H.: 229 cm. Capitoline Museums, Rome, Italy, inv. no. 628



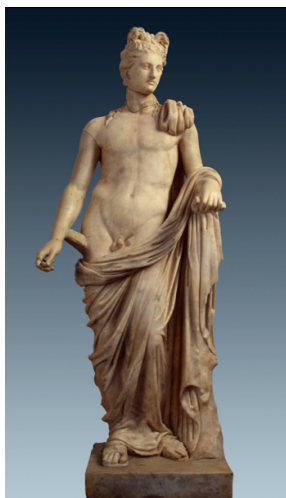
Ill.5 Apollo with Zither, Roman, 175-200AD, marble, H.: 110 cm. Museo del Prado, Madrid, Espagne, inv. no. E000155



Ill.6 Apollo kitharode, Roman copy of a Hellenistic original of about 200-150BC., marble, H. : 228 cm. British Museum, London, inv. no. 1861,0725.1

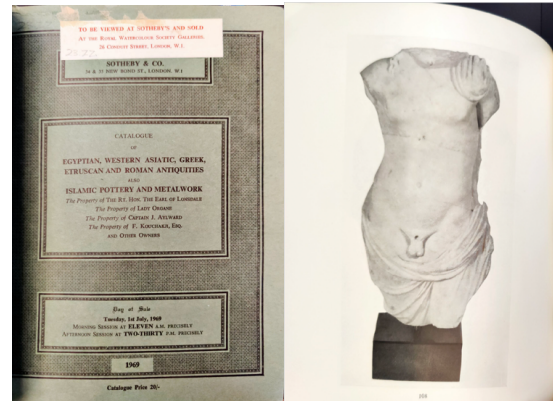


Ill.7 Statue of Apollo from ancient Carthage, Roman, 2nd century A.D., marble. Bardo Museum, Tunis, Tunisia.



Ill.8 Statue of Apollo, Roman, 2nd century A.D., marble, H.: 172 cm. Hermitage Museum, Moscow, inv. no. GR-1747

Provenance:



90	Arcade Gallery	710	984
91	Darhan	400	960
92	Darhan	1500	3600
93	Darhan	500	1200
94	Darhan	500	1200
95	Withdrawn	420	1008
96	Ashmolean Museum	120	288
97	Darhan	170	408
98	Robinson, E.	330	792
99	Darhan	1150	2760
100	Darhan	1600	3840
101	Darhan	1500	3600
102	Darhan	820	1968
103	Darhan	900	2160
104	Darhan	1450	3480
105	Darhan	3400	8160
106	Faulkner, J.	700	1680
107	Arcade Gallery	400	960
108	Eisenberg, J.	1000	2400
109	Eisenberg, J.	880	2112

Ill. 9 Catalogue Sotheby's London, 1st July 1969, 'Egyptian, Western Asiatic, Greek, Etruscan and Roman Antiquities, also Islamic Pottery and Metalwork' - lot 108



Ill.10 Catalogue Sotheby's New York, 17 December 1996 'Antiquities' - lot 61