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Recent Acquisition: The Hero Meleager

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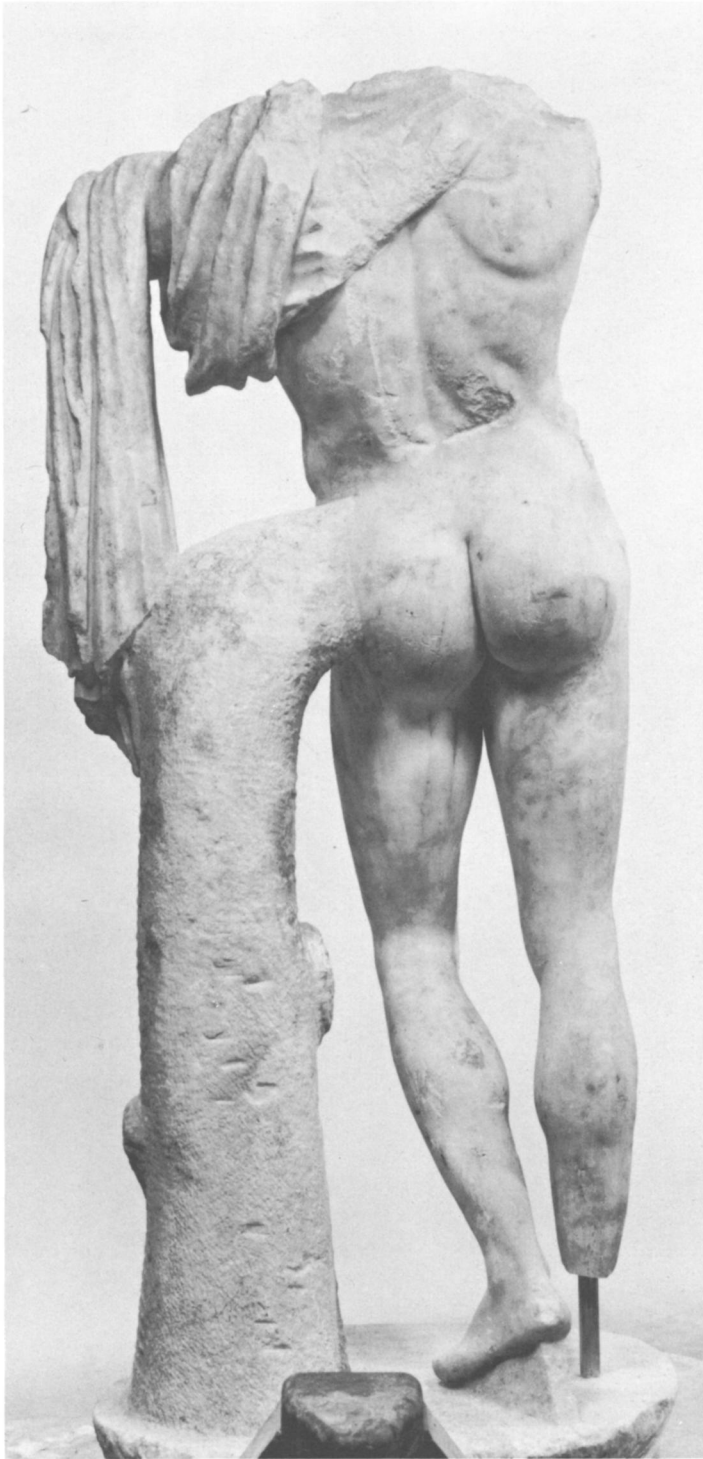
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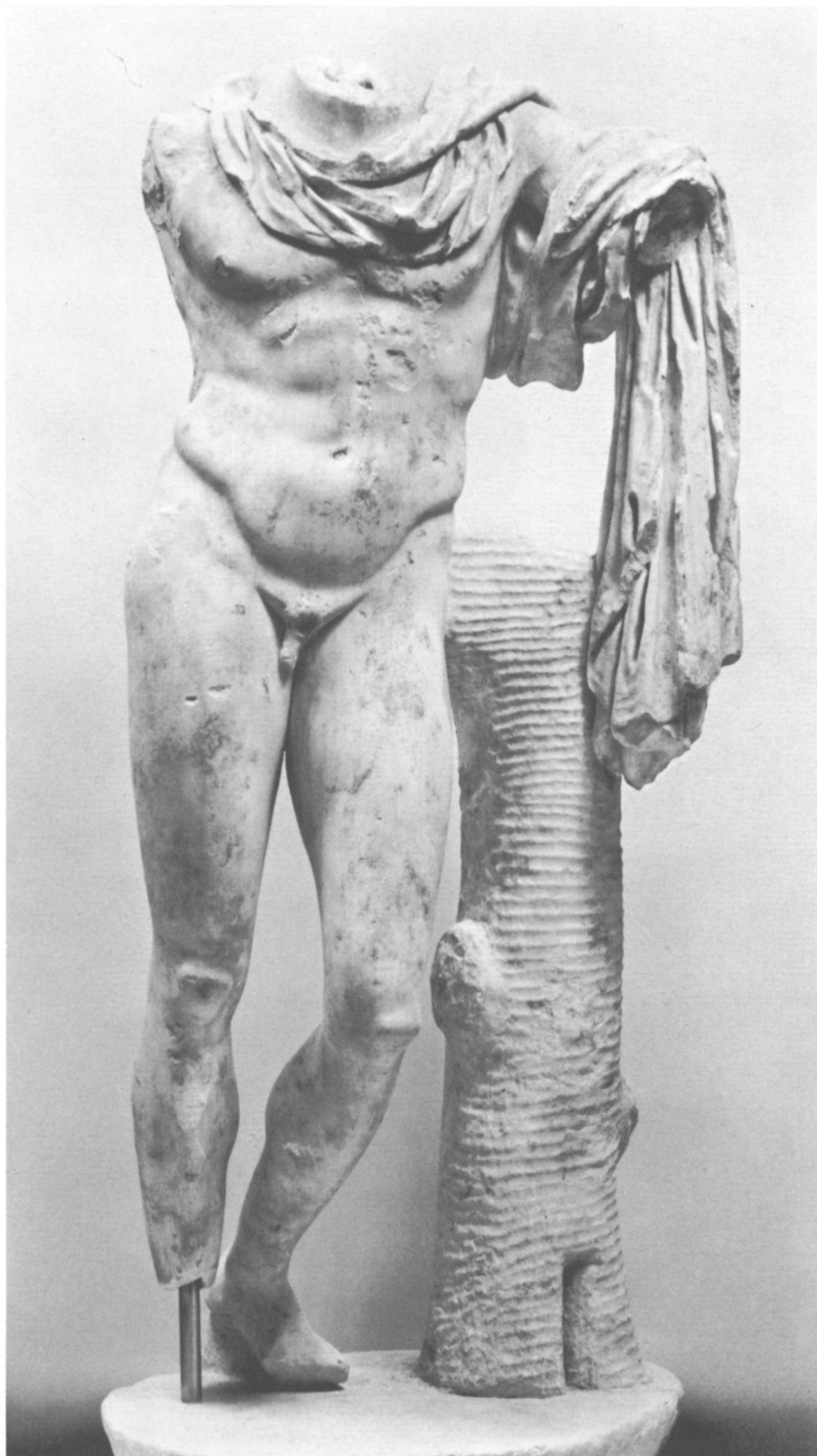
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Recent Acquisition—The Hero Meleager

Meleager, slayer of the fearsome Calydonian boar, was a mythological Greek hero much admired by the aggressive Romans of the Imperial period. This replica in marble of a Greek bronze was one of many copies made to decorate the public buildings and more lavish private residences of Roman cities. Such statuary was enjoyed not only for its intrinsic beauty of form, but also for the memories it evoked of Greek civilization, and not least for the reflected glory it shed upon its Roman patrons.

The proportions and stance of the figure resemble the work of the Greek sculptor Scopas of the 4th century B.C. Presumably it is a copy of a bronze by this master.

The sculpture is remarkably complete, lacking only head and arms. These parts were worked separately and formerly attached by means of iron rods. Traces of these metal pieces, and surrounding ancient mortar, can be seen in the left shoulder. On the garment, the chlamys, are remains of ancient reddish pigment. Originally the hero held a staff in his left hand, while his right hand rested on his hip, a common gesture for this subject.

This example is a particularly handsome one with its subtle modeling, smooth surface, and the warm tone, bestowed by time and wear, of the fine-grained marble.

DEIRDRE STAM

On the cover and left:

Roman sculpture, The Hero Meleager, c. 50 B.C.

Marble, Height 78 in.

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Eugene A. Davidson, 1972.935

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