



Client. National Trust
Job No. 20078 02
Date. 30/06/2021

Biddulph Grange – Geological Gallery Heritage Statement



CONTROL SHEET

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DOCUMENT APPROVAL

Author	Checked	Approved by
LT	JB	JB

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Report Title: Heritage Statement

Date of First Issue 00-09-21

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1. Introduction

1.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared by TACP Architects Ltd on behalf of the National Trust to support a Listed Building Consent application for the reinstatement of six sculptural fragments and a terracotta roundel within the entrance portico to the Geological Gallery.

1.2 This Heritage Statement is accompanied by a location plan, existing site plan and existing & proposed elevations drawing. These items supporting the Listed Building Consent application.

2. Background

2.1 The Government's 2010 Guidance on Information Requirements and Validation states, "A design and access statement is a short report accompanying and supporting a planning application to illustrate the process that has led to the development proposal, and to explain and justify the proposal in a structured way." The guidance also states that Design and Access Statements should be proportionate to the complexity of the application and need not be long.

2.2 The National Planning Policy Framework requires applicants to provide sufficient information to enable planning authorities to assess impacts on heritage assets. The PPS5 Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide suggests that this information should be included in the design and access statement.

3. Planning Policy Context

a) National Planning Policy Framework 2021

3.2 National planning policies are contained in the National Planning Policy Framework published in 2021. This document states that local planning authorities consider the following points regarding proposals affecting heritage assets:

3.3 In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. (NPPF, Pg. 56)

3.4 Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal. (NPPF, Pg. 56)

3.5 In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. (NPPF, Pg. 56)

b) West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy

3.6 Policy QE1 urges Local authorities to protect and where possible enhance irreplaceable assets such as historic landscape features.

3.7 Policy QE5 seeks to protect, conserve, and enhance the Region's diverse historic environment and manage change in such a way that respects local character and distinctiveness.

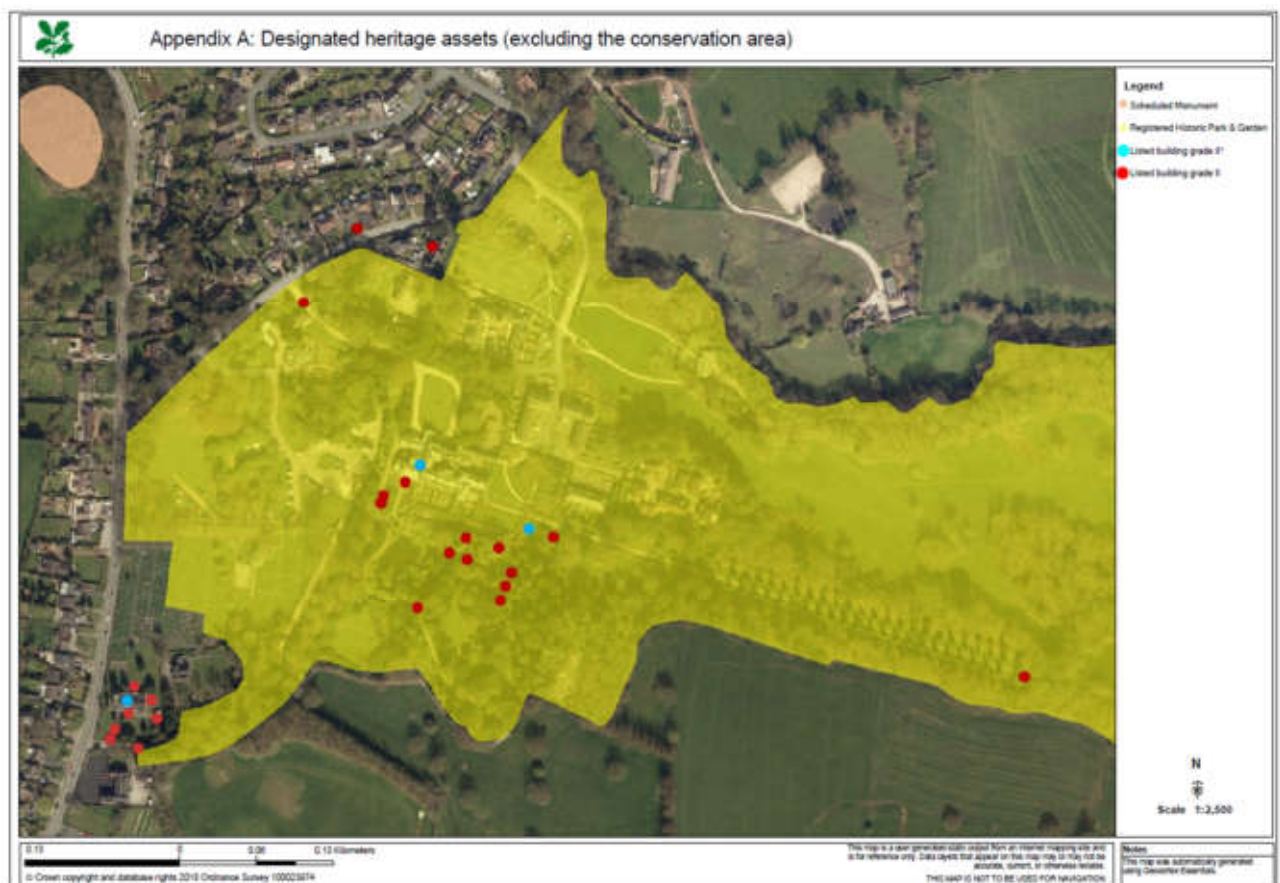
c) Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan – Adopted September 2020

3.8 Policy S07 on support and enhance the tourism, cultural, recreation and leisure opportunities for the district's residents and visitors. (SMLP, Pg. 104)

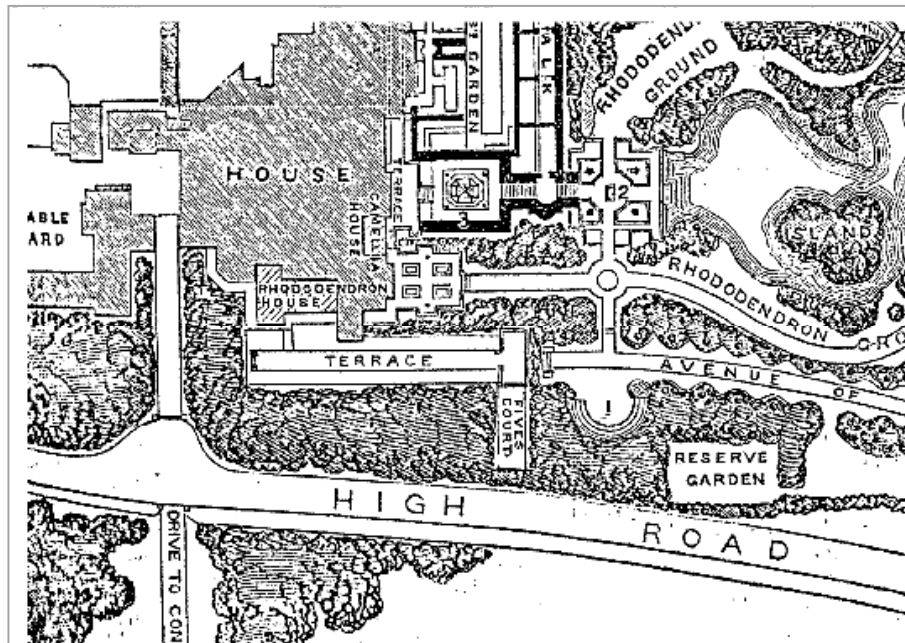
3.9 Policy S08 on promoting local distinctiveness by means of good design and the conservation, protection, and enhancement of historic, environmental, and cultural assets throughout the district. (SMLP, Pg. 104)

4. Context and Historical Development

4.1 Biddulph Grange is a grade II* listed building set within a further grade I listed park and garden. The building itself was listed in 1974 (List Number: 1037835) whilst the park and garden was listed in 1984 (List Number: 1000115). The building, park and garden also lie within the boundaries of the Biddulph Grange conservation area.



Designated Heritage Assets



Edward
Kemp – 1862
Plan of the
gardens

- 4.2 Biddulph Grange was notably the home of the horticulturist James Bateman who from 1840 undertook the alteration and extension of the existing vicarage house present on the site into a yellow brick Italianate mansion. The mansion included within it a Geological Gallery. Biddulph Grange was then subsequently rebuilt after a serious fire in 1896 in the English Baroque style.
- 4.3 The Geological Gallery was created by James Bateman to both display his geological collections as well persuade visitors from its opening to the public in 1862 of theories that incorporated new geological finds with the Christian story of creation.
- 4.4 The gallery would have contained a selection of fossils and geological strata from his collection arranged in a chronological order determined by both mid-19th century geological knowledge as well the Christian story of the Genesis. The display was also further divided into six bays delineated by the roof trusses above. The number of bays being defined by the six days of creation.
- 4.5 Whilst the Geological Gallery has survived to the present day with an interval as a storage room and workshop when Biddulph Grange itself was used as a hospital. The gallery collections have unfortunately not, with the majority of the collection either disappearing or becoming degraded over time. Enhancements works and interpretation works have been undertaken over the last few years with a large amount of research undertaken on the internal collection.
- 4.6 The National Trust took control of the gallery in the late 1990's following on from their purchase in 1988 of Biddulph Grange Garden. The grange itself having been converted to apartments, which are in private ownership.

4.7 The National Trust welcomes between 57,000 and 100,000 visitors per year to the site with opening days and times varying throughout the year.

4.8 Presently the National Trust is spearheading efforts to conserve the gallery of which this application for listed building consent forms part of this endeavour.

5. Statement of Significance

5.1 Significance is defined in the NPPF as:

“The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting.”

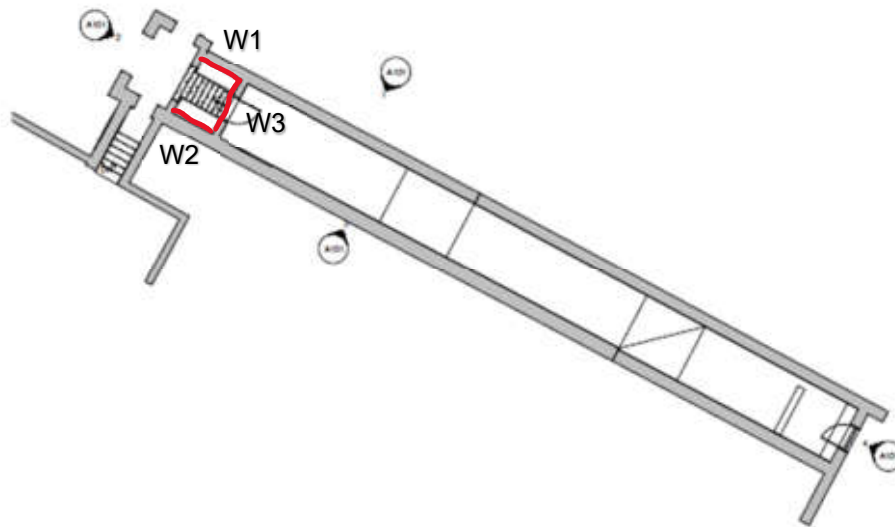
5.2 National guidance for identifying heritage values is set out in Historic England guidance:

“Conservation Principles” 2008, and definitions of heritage interests in accordance with the terminology of the National Planning Policy Framework are included in the government’s Planning Practice Guidance.

a) Historic Interest

5.3 “An interest in past lives and events (including pre-historic). Heritage assets can illustrate or be associated with them. Heritage assets with historic interest not only provide a material record of our nation’s history, but can also provide meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity.”

5.4 The geological Gallery at Biddulph has illustrative historic interest as an individual building in terms of its layout and built form, created by James Bateman to both display his geological collections as well persuade visitors from its opening to the public in 1862 of theories that incorporated new geological finds with the Christian story of creation. There is some residual interest in its relationship to the main house, although the context the gallery reads now as quite divorced from the house, although the surviving connection to the north elevation of the hall provides some degree of connectivity.



Floor plan of
Geological Gallery



01-Head of Goliath
CMS No. 104500



02-Head of Heracles
CMS No. 104501



03-Head of Heracles
CMS No. 104502



04-Head of Heracles
CMS No. 104503



05-Head of Heracles
CMS No. 104504



06-Fragment of Strigilifer
CMS No. 104505

W1 - Proposed wall
elevation, left of door



W3 - Wall elevation to
door to remain as existing



07-Terracotta Roundel
CMS No. 104527

W2 - Proposed wall
elevation, right of door

6. Heritage Impact Statement

6.2 The reinstatement of six casts of sculptural fragments held by the National Trust in the wall to the left-hand side of the entrance door to the Geological Gallery. As well the further reinstatement of a one terracotta roundel again held by the National Trust at high level on the right-hand side wall to the entrance door.

6.3 The sculptural fragments and terracotta roundel were originally placed in the walls as part of James Bateman use of geological finds to convince visitors to the gallery of theories that incorporated new geological finds with the Christian story of creation. While of the original fragments five were craved in the Greco-Roman era, one during the Renaissance period and the roundel may originate from an archaeological excavation in Mexico.

a) Proposed Fixing Methodology by Cliveden Conservation

6.4 The casts would be re-set in the walls into the original pockets/recesses previously cut into the sandstone. There would be a need to remove some of the cement bound mortar in order to give sufficient 'wiggle room' when fitting the casts. The installation of the original objects relied solely on the adhesion of the cement mortar and packing of the void around their perimeter. Given the weight of some of the objects, even as casts, as opposed to original marble, the intention is to provide some form of secondary fixing to support them.

6.5 The process would involve drilling holes into the backs of the facsimiles into which threaded stainless steel dowels could be secured. Corresponding holes, probably a maximum of 12mm diameter would then be drilled into the recess behind the object into which the dowels would be set without any resin or mortar. The object would then be pushed into a 'plastic' lime bound mortar and 'squidged' into place, packed around the perimeter with mortar giving some friction/suction to increase the adhesion to the wall. The mortar would in all likelihood need to have a hydraulic binder or an air lime with a pozzolan to ensure a set behind the object. Sand would be well graded and selected to match the surrounding walls.

b) Conclusion

6.6 We consider that this proposal would not harm the heritage significance of the Geological Gallery. If any harm was considered to arise, we consider that it would be outweighed by the benefits of the proposal in the conservation and appearance of the geological gallery and the interpretation of reinstating the casts into the original pockets/recesses.

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7. Report on Wall left of entrance to gallery (J. Lenaghan 17-02-17)

General statement.

Six sculptural fragments (**1-6**) were carefully set into the wall on the left of the entrance to the Geological Gallery of Biddulph Grange which opened in 1862. The fragments are arranged symmetrically in pairs; **1** is on top, **6** is at the bottom, **2-3** are set respectively on the upper left and right (below of course **1**), **3-4** are set again to the left and right, below **2-3**. The foyer area, the left wall of which they decorated, preceded the gallery. In the gallery, the seven days of Creation were demonstrated one by one, on the wall to the visitor's left, by means of geological evidence, rocks and fossils.

In both the entrance and in the gallery, the objects were set into the wall with deliberate illustrative purpose. In both the entrance and the gallery, the objects are stone and somehow marked, and through their ancient markings demonstrate the truth of the creation story. In the entrance wall, five of the objects (**2-6**) were carved in the Greco-Roman period; the other object was carved later but the creators of the gallery may not have known that.

The objects set into the gallery wall illustrate a geological approach that was intended to confirm scientifically the Christian understanding of creation. The objects set into the entrance were a stone and sculptural re-enactment of the traditional approach to the Christian creation scene which the gallery would confirm scientifically. A glance at the composition of the left side of a triptych by Hieronymus Bosch showing the Garden of Eden (ca. 1500, here pl.1) illustrates a similar disposition of God, Adam, Eve, and animals.

In the Biddulph Grange wall, a bearded paternal figure (**1**) peers out and over a scene below; the actual object, a head of Goliath with Renaissance origins, stands for God the Father. Below him, to the left and right, are male and female heads (**2-3**). The male head is bearded with a lined and tired face, in fact the head probably of Herakles from the Roman period. Herakles, the mortal son of Zeus, who had to struggle through 12 labours to redeem himself and get entry to heaven, is a brilliant choice for Adam. One is left to wonder whether this choice was coincidence or whether the creators of the gallery were extremely well-versed.

The pendant to this male head, Adam, is female head is modestly veiled with symmetrical ageless features; she is intended at Biddulph Grange to be Eve. In reality, she is the head of the ideal woman from a classical Greek tombstone. Again the choice of an image that was made as a representation of the most appropriate qualities of a demure and modest wife for an image of Eve is exceptionally well-conceived. Both of these choices would seem to confirm the longevity of the Christian story; that is, even in societies where the story was not espoused, the fundamental concepts behind it existed.

Below these two human heads, on the left and right, are fragments from Roman sarcophagi which show animals and their natural plight in life. On the left (**4**), a wild boar is hunted by men and on the right (**5**), a noble horse is taken down by a ravenous lion. These are the marvellous creatures which God created and which are in a natural state of conflict with other beings. These images were displayed on Roman sarcophagi precisely because they represented the simplicity of nature, both its natural beauty and cruelty.

At the bottom of the scene, in antithesis to God the Father, is a dark piece of porphyry, carved to represent the mouth and beard of a man. Its interpretation is less clear. It may stand for the solid basis that God created for his creatures. It is a magnificent stone which in its fragmentary state is virtually devoid of animation.

The space of the wall furthermore may have been punctuated by a lamp at the centre of these sculptural fragments. A decorative stone bracket projects from the centre and must have carried some object. A lamp or torch placed on the bracket would have given illuminated the dark passage and represented the light of God.

All of the sculptures are carefully chosen fragments; they each have a specific aesthetic and compositional value. They would seem to have been purchased for this purpose and may even have been broken (with the exception of **6**) into their current shape for this purpose. The composer has selected with attention and each of the fragments (with perhaps the exception of **1**) is attractive and well-carved. Symbolically the reuse of objects from “ancient” cultures suggests the antiquity and venerable veracity of the Creation scene.

ASSESSMENT & VALUE OF GROUP

The probability that the group was assembled as a deliberate composition adds contextual value. These objects were purchased by someone with a fine eye for detail and were re-used carefully in a meticulous and unique display of Creation that combines ancient and Christian heritage. This is a historic value that eschews financial assessment.

1. Head of Goliath on plinth. 16th c–18th c. (Pls. 2-4)

Complete round plinth of under life size statue. H:19 cm, Diam of plinth: 26 cm; H of plinth: 3.6 cm. White marble.

The round statue plinth is fully preserved and on it is fully preserved bearded male head. Around this head are traces of the feet and lower leg of an under life size figure.

2

The proper right side of the head rests against the lower shin, ankle, and right foot of a nude figure. Behind the shin is the vestige of a statue support in the form of a tree trunk. The statue support has been broken horizontally at the height of the top of the head of Goliath. The upper left foot has been slashed horizontally through four times with a pick and the surface between the slashes is broken. The shin has been broken diagonally downwards. None of the front surface of the leg or foot is preserved. There is, however, the ghost of a pin rising vertically near the uppermost break.

On the proper left side of the head is an area that has been deliberately removed. The surface shows marks of a broad claw chisel and is at a lower plane than the contiguous areas. The removed area runs from above the temple at the side of the head, behind the ear, and almost down to the plinth. It probably corresponds to a left foot, the companion of the deliberately defaced right foot.

The outside of the right foot and ankle as well as the face of the head are fully finished smooth surfaces without tool marks. The furrows of the brow, the naso-labial folds, and the horizontal creases at the bridge of the nose have been made with a broad flat chisel. The deep channels separating hair locks on the head and in the beard at the front are contiguous points of the drill. At the top and back of the head and on the plinth itself, the hair is rendered with shallower channels made mainly with a chisel. The back of the head is noticeably flatter and was not ever intended to be viewed carefully. The locks of hair on the proper right of the head between the leg and the tree trunk support have however been worked out, with a combination of drill and chisel.

The tree trunk has been worked regularly and vertically with a flat chisel on its front, side, and back. The area contiguous to the hair of the right side of the head has horizontal tooling; probably the result of the sculptor working the hair between the leg and support. The support would have been structurally necessary since the slim right leg and a left leg touching at the top of the head would not have been strong enough to support the composition above. In fact, the pin hole in the shin seems to indicate that the statue broken above the ankles and was repaired.

The sides of the plinth have similar traces of a flat chisel applied regularly and here horizontally. The upper surface of the plinth is fully finished. The underside has been hollowed with a large chisel.

The head on a plinth shows a long-haired bearded male who turns to his right. The accompanying figure, whose right foot and lower leg are visible mainly in profile from the proper left, has been deliberately removed. The composition and iconography are characteristic of Renaissance statues which show David and Goliath. In the Biddulph Grange wall, it was probably intended to represent God.

The face of the head is charged with emotion. His brow is creased horizontally and a vertical furrow rises above the nose. The eyes are deep set and their outer corners droop downwards. The mouth is open and its outer corners also droop. The cheekbones project.

The hair is long, thick, and wavy. It springs vertically off the brow. The moustache continues into the beard. The beard locks are intertwined and tumble onto the plinth where they end in snail curls.

The right foot is small and nude. It rests flat on the ground and bore the weight of the figure above it. The area which has been removed at a second moment on the back proper left of the head suggests that the accompanying left foot touched the head in a less firm manner.

The iconography of the head -- a tousle-haired, bearded mature man in distress -- derives ultimately from Hellenistic models which had reached the Renaissance sculptors through the Roman world. The statue of Laocon excavated in Rome in the 16th century and admired by Michelangelo provides the best example (Pl. 5.1).¹ The formulation of a disembodied head was a motif commonly used in the Renaissance and thereafter for sculptures of John the Baptist (pl. 5.2); yet at Biddulph Grange the head was undeniably accompanied by the feet of another figure. In the 15th century in Florence, the story of David and Goliath was promoted by the Medici as a metaphor for the strength of the Republic of Florence against bigger and greater powers. Before Michelangelo's over life-size David, Verrocchio and Donatello had made life-size sculptures of a lithe boy David standing astride the head of Goliath. In the statues of Verrocchio and Donatello, David's right foot is set flatly on the ground and his left foot is raised slightly. The position of head of Goliath of the statue of Verrocchio (1473-1475) (pl. 6) provides the closest parallel to that of Biddulph Grange. The ends of the beard curls on the plinth are distinctive and recall the head of the "Tiber" river god of the Vatican (pl. 5.3) which was a restoration by an early 16th c. sculptor.² It is important to note immediately that the iconographic tradition behind the head of Goliath and the Vatican River God is ultimately the same that is applied by Michelangelo for God the Father in his famous painting on the Sistine Chapel (pl. 7) that shows the creation of Adam.

The Biddulph Grange fragment probably came from a statue created by a sculptor copying the composition of the famous 15th-16th c. Florentine statues of David and Goliath. This sculptor may have been himself loosely contemporary with those statues or may have come afterwards. The statue may have arrived at Biddulph Grange complete and may have been deliberately broken in order to serve a function in the entrance wall to the Geographic Gallery. Given the trace of a pin in the right shin of the missing statue (a sign of a previous repair), it is equally possibly that the statue was acquired already in fragmentary condition.

In the Geological Gallery it was set at the centre top of a wall which was decorated with other sculptural fragments. It was set so that the right foot would have been completely concealed and the head would have looked down and to the right with concern. It would have been as such legible as god the father.

ASSESSMENT & MONETARY VALUE

The fragment probably belongs in the 1500s but a slightly later date cannot be entirely excluded. Because the carving is unfinished and the sculpture in a fragmentary state, it is difficult to assess a subjective financial value. Dealers and collectors of Renaissance art would be interested. Its monetary value is probably £15,000.

¹ Laocon: Musei Vaticani, Cortile Ottagono, inv. 1059, 1064, 1067. Found 1506 on the Esquiline in Rome. R.R.R. Smith, *Hellenistic Sculpture* (London 1998), xx

² G. Lippold, *Die Sculpturen des Vaticanischen Museums*. Vol. 3, 2. *Ingresso. Ambulacro. Ingresso superiore. Atrio dei Quattro Cancelli. Scala. Sala della Biga. Galleria dei Candelabri. Galleria Geografica*. (Berlin 1956), pp. 36-8, no. 600, pl. 23.

2. Head of Herakles. Roman (Pls. 8-10)

Front of head. H:31, W: 23 D: 11 cm. White marble.

The front of the head is preserved from the area of the right ear to left cheek, and from the beard beneath the chin to the top of the head. This face has broken off from a larger sculpture in the round. There are drill holes in the break surfaces that indicate the carving continued around and that the head was not a work in relief. The back surface however is worn smooth; it has the aspect of a pebble. This suggests that for centuries this side of the stone was exposed to the elements. The front surface of the face is also heavily worn. The hair over the brow and the eyebrows are almost completely missing. Pupils and lines on the face and brow have been drawn in recently with a pencil. There is also a dark modern patina over much of the surface.

Traces of fine carving are still preserved. The eyes, asymmetrically set, have fine pointed inner tearducts and crisp eyelids; their deep setting has preserved them. The hair at the top of the head is also well carved and well preserved. Traces of deep drill work are preserved in the beard below the mouth and around the mandible. The hair band is separated from the forehead by deep drill work on the right side of the head; in that drill channel the point of the drill is still visible. The nostrils (two drill holes), mouth (a thin channel), and ear holes (larger area) are also drilled out. There are also traces of the flat chisel in the hair. At the left temple are faint curving lines; these represent all that is legible of the cutting, probably of a flat chisel, that defined short curling locks of hair. On the right side of the brow, above the temple, similar lines are more visible. Fine lines of a flat chisel are also visible in the strands of hair; notice the two locks of moustache hair at the left corner of the mouth. .

The large (over life-size) head depicts a short-haired bearded male of mature age and with a swollen ear. He wears a band in his hair and turns. Originally a work in the round, the front of the head has broken off and probably been used for a long period face down; its back has worn naturally to a flat surface. It was therefore easily re-used as high relief in the wall at Biddulph Grange. Iconographically and technically the head is typical of ancient Roman practice. It was made probably to represent Herakles and loosely followed a model of the fourth century BC. At Biddulph Grange it seems to have been intended to represent Adam.

The head wears a band around its brow. This had some kind of ornament or more probably a twist in material over the right ear; viewed from above the band has an indentation over the right corner of the brow and viewed from the front and side there is a trace of drilling in the surface. The hair is short and curly at the top of the head and around the temples. It may have receded slightly over the centre of the brow. The moustache is long and the beard is full and bushy around the jawline. At the left corner of the mouth, the long moustache locks ends in a round curl that moves away from the mouth and encounters a smaller curl that turns in towards the mouth. The strands of both locks were carefully carved. This area gives a glimpse of the good quality of the original carving.

Nothing remains of the eyebrows, but the eyes are deep set. The deep setting has protected and so preserved the inner corners of the eyes. The nicely-cut tearducts are rounded and curve downward. The carving of the eyes—the fine corners, sharp lids, and lack of pupils or irises—would be in keeping with a date of later first or second century manufacture. The nose is missing but the bridge is broad and the nostrils wide set; both indicate a thick nose. The mouth is a thin line with slightly drooping corners. The brow is lined, and creases run diagonally from the inner corners of the eyes into the cheeks. . The extant right ear is tall and sunken in the middle.

The large scale of the head and the fact that it was carved in the round suggest a subject of importance. The heavy features, low brow, beard, the twisted fillet (hair band) with

decoration at the corners, and the swollen inner (cauliflower) ear are elements of the iconography of Herakles. He was a hard-working hero famous for his brawn rather than his intellect. He was truly of man of the people who fought and got drunk with the same ease as he completed heroic tasks. In the visual culture of the classical world, both his heroic and ordinary aspects were much commemorated.

Two famous images of Herakles were ascribed to the Greek, 4th c. BC, sculptor Lysippos and are recognized in two much copied statue types, the Herakles at the Table and the Herakles Farnese (pl. 11). These fourth century masterpieces,-- the one showing him with a wreath in his hair and drunk, and the other showing him magnificently muscled but tired,-- in turn informed numerous variations in the Hellenistic and Roman periods. In the sculpture of the Roman period Herakles was not only popular as a statue but also on herms, which are both architectural and sculptural. A popular herm variety shows an almost full-figure Herakles dressed in a lion skin (pl. 12).³ Although it is difficult to ascertain because of the fragmentary nature of the head, the asymmetry of the Biddulph head (the deep drilling under the right side of the hair band and the setting of the eyes) suggests that it came from a turned herm or from a statue with an unusual position of the head (see pl. 12).

The Biddulph Grange head was set into the wall below the head of God (1) and across from the veiled head (2). It was probably intended to represent Adam, the first man, who, expelled from Eden, found a life of labours. The choice of Herakles is particularly good.

HISTORICAL ASSESSMENT & MONETARY VALUE

The head appears once to have been a large-scale, well-carved representation of Herakles as a mature man with a wreath. It appears to be of Roman date, probably of the later first or second century AD. It is however heavily weathered and fragmentary and was probably so when it reached Biddulph Grange. Its monetary value is probably ca. £12,000.

³ C. Vorster, "Die Herme des fellbekleideten Herakles. Typenwandel und Typenwanderung in hellenistischer und römischer Zeit," *Kölner Jahrbuch für Vor- und Frühgeschichte*, 21.1988, 7-34.

3. Head of veiled female from a grave relief. 4th c. BC (Pls. 13-14)

Front of head. H:25, W: 22, D: 7 cm. Height of head, chin to crown: 20 cm. White marble (which has weathered to a matte grey.)

The back of the head has been broken off in two different, horizontal planes. The top of the head is unworked. The neck is cut horizontally at the top Pupils have been drawn in pencil. The surface is heavily worn.

The head was fully finished (except for the top). The hair is rendered with a combination of drill and flat chisel but all traces of tooling have been removed.

The head depicts a young full-faced woman who has long hair, wears a veil, and turns to her right. The style, size, and workmanship of the head suggest that it once belonged to an Attic (Greek from the area of Athens) funerary stele of the fourth century BC. These reliefs featured from two to four portrait figures and the finest examples were worked in very high relief. At Biddulph Grange this particular head was assuredly intended as Eve, the counterpart to Adam (2), displayed on the left side of the wall at the same height.

The turn of the head is distinctly visible when one looks from the bottom upward; the curve of the neck and the bulge of the chin are not aligned. This turn of the head is characteristic for a figure in an Attic grave relief; the figures mainly turned to look at another (pl. 15). Other characteristics of the head that are typical of a fourth century relief are the round symmetrical face, the drapery sitting behind the first 10 cm of hair, the centrally parted hair that frames the brow as a triangular gable, and the different direction of the locks of hair on the left and right sides of the face. On the proper left, the locks of hair spring off the face in a fan-like manner and then bend backwards sharply, forming almost a shelf. On the proper right, the side of the head turned away from the viewer and toward the back plane, the locks fall downwards and are pushed backwards more flatly.

The larger and deeper reliefs belong to the second half of the fourth century. These reliefs were an essential part of the visual culture of Classical Athens and made their way as collected items to Italy already during the Roman Empire.

HISTORIC ASSESSMENT & MONETARY VALUE

The fragment probably dates to the fourth century AD. Originally it must have belonged to a handsome and large example of its genre. Its current preservation is poor, and there are many other finer examples preserved. Its monetary value is probably ca. £15,000.

4. Sarcophagus fragment showing a boar hunt. Second half of the third century AD (Pls. 16-18)

Fragment of sarcophagus. H:37, W: 49, D: 7.5 cm. White marble.

The fragment is broken the left, right, and bottom. The front surface is well-preserved.

The front is well carved in relief; the back is roughly picked.. The running drill has been used effectively to create short deep shadows in the hair of the two men and in the fur of the boar. Drill points also delineate the pupils and inner corners of the eyes, and the mouths have been drilled open. Fine flat chisel work has been used to define the iris of the boar's eye, the eyelids of the men, and the facial hair of the men.

This well-carved fragment shows two hunters and a boar in relief and was originally part of a large and fine metropolitan Roman sarcophagus of the third century AD. At Biddulph Grange it was located on the viewer's left below the male head. In the wall its value lay in its representation of the boar and the natural human activity to hunt the boar.

In the second and third centuries AD, numerous large marble sarcophagi were made and decorated variously with scenes from myth or from everyday life. A popular theme for these items (and for funerary items throughout classical antiquity) was the hunt.⁴ Hunt scenes, plausibly real life events, showed the valour of men, and the sadness of the death of a noble, ferocious, and beautiful animal. The Roman sarcophagi of this period show men hunting lions, stags, boars, and even on occasion bears. Beautiful and useful objects with poignant narratives, these sarcophagi were recycled and reused by different individuals for centuries after their original manufacture and were often notably devoid of religious connotations; they were used by both pagans and Christians.

The Biddulph Grange fragment shows two men both moving to the viewer's right and bearing down on a boar who moves the other way. The man at the outer (viewer's left) side of the composition has curly hair, light facial hair, and a large spear. The man next to him has combed back hair, light facial hair, a knife in his right hand, and a round shield on his left arm. Both men wear cloaks pinned with round brooches at their right shoulders. Their mouths are open and eyes focused in concentration. On the far (viewer's) right of the composition is the billowing cloak of another figure. That figure was central to the original composition, probably riding a horse, and probably bearing down on a lion. The composition is standard in Roman sarcophagi. The carving is however careful and highly effective.

The upper border is inscribed DEPOSITA XVII (put to rest on 17th). The feminine of the adjective deposited indicates that this inscription refers to a woman. Its placement and gender might indicate a second use.

The carving finds an astonishingly close parallel in a sarcophagus excavated in 1958 at the Catacombs of the Cimitero Maggiore in Rome; the composition also is clearly related.⁵ The original inscription of the Cimitero Maggiore sarcophagus was erased; yet its second

⁴ B. Andreae (ed), *Die Antiken Sarkophagreliefs. Die Sarkophage mit Darstellungen aus dem Menscheleben. II. Die römischen Jagdsarkophage* (Berlin 1980)

⁵ B. Andreae (ed), *Die Antiken Sarkophagreliefs. Die Sarkophage mit Darstellungen aus dem Menscheleben. II. Die römischen Jagdsarkophage* (Berlin 1980), 158-59, no. 78

inscription dates to ca. 290; and its third inscription dates to AD 364. Thus, the sarcophagus was made and first used before AD 290; it was then re-used on two further occasions.

The motif of two standing men fighting a boar appears on the viewer's right side of the Cimitero Maggiore sarcophagus. In that sarcophagus notably one of the men holds a shield (an unusual detail since hunters, unlike soldiers, did not need shields). In addition, one man holds a spear and the other a sword. Beyond these three distinctive similar choices in compositional details, the technical similarity in workmanship is startling. The rendering of the eyes and facial hair and mouths of the men as well as the eye of the boar are identical (pls. 17-18). The two sarcophagi must have been produced in the same workshop at the same time.

HISTORIC ASSESSMENT & MONETARY VALUE

The fragment comes from a fine third century sarcophagus from the city of Rome. It can be associated with one of the few large sarcophagi excavated in situ in the city of Rome. Thus, it has archaeological value. In addition, it has aesthetic value. Even as a fragment, it is readily legible and appealing. Its monetary value is ca. £ 50,000.

5. Fragment of strigillated sarcophagus showing a lion eating a horse. Third century AD (Pl. 19)

Fragment of corner of sarcophagus. H:40.5,W: 46, D: 5-9 cm. White marble.

The fragment is broken on its sides and bottom. A portion of the curving top edge and the original back are preserved. The front portion of the horse's head is broken as is the last finger of the front right paw of the lion. The carving is good and uses finished drill work as well the flat chisel (visible in details such as the lion's lead or the hairs of the horse's mane). The back is roughly picked.

This well-carved fragment shows a rounded corner (viewer's left) of a strigillated sarcophagus. The corner is decorated with a lion, wearing an ornate lead, that is devouring a horse. At Biddulph Grange it was located on the viewer's left below the male head. In the wall its value lay in its representation of God's animals.

The Biddulph Grange fragment shows a lion who looks outward, turning to his right, and bites the brow, just above the eye, of a horse. The horse is viewed in right profile; its right ear flattens in its horrible moment. The front right leg of the lion wraps around the neck of the horse and the paw rests on its front quarters. The left paw of the lion digs in and scratches the neck of the horse. The claws of the lion's paws are rendered as articulated fingers. The scratch, which the front left claw makes, is carefully rendered, as are details of the manes and facial details of both animals. Interestingly the lion wears a lead, with engraved borders. The strigils of the sarcophagus are broad and flat. The upper border has a complex moulding.

Strigillated sarcophagi were extremely popular in the third century and take their name from the strigil-like device, an almost S-curve, that comprise their principal form of decoration. The strigil motif suggests movement and decorated effectively large spaces; it moreover served to focus attention on the few figural elements of such sarcophagi. The direction and quantity of the strigils and the location of figural decoration have been recorded in fourteen variations (i.e. there were standard layouts)(pl. 20).⁶ The usual location for narrative scenes or inscriptions were at the front corners and at the centre. One of the most popular types in the third century featured lions, often devouring their prey at the corners as in the Biddulph Grange example.⁷ These lions were menacing reminders of death and the fragility of life. The Biddulph Grange example wears a lead; in many examples the lions are held by figures which represent seasons and so again emphasize the cycle of life.

HISTORIC ASSESSMENT & MONETARY VALUE

The fragment comes from a fine third century sarcophagus, probably from the city of Rome. It has time-honoured aesthetic value; one need only consider the house of Lorenzo Manilio, 1468, in Rome (see pl. 21).⁸ Its monetary value is ca. £ 45,000.

⁶ Koch and Sichterman, 73-76, fig. 2 have identified at least 14 variations on the arrangement.

⁷ J. Huskinson, *Roman strigillated sarcophagi: art and social history* (Oxford 2015), 22.

⁸ Compelling and well-known testimony of the longstanding appeal of this motif, a very similar fragment was walled into the façade Manilio's house at 1-2 via del Portico di Ottavia in the Jewish quarter of Rome.

6. Fragment of the lower face from the handle decoration of a porphyry *labrum*. Baths of Caracalla. 3rd c. AD (Pl. 22)

Front of head. H: 22, W: 24, D: 7cm. Porphyry.⁹

The head is broken from the proper right jawline up to the middle of the left cheek. The back is also broken. However, the worked surface – the face – curves upward and outward from the bottom of the beard. The lower beard is therefore tucked under the mouth. This indicates that the head was in relief and attached to a curving surface. There are minor chips in the corkscrew curls of the beard.

The face is fully finished. The hair is beautifully worked with chisels and drill; note the drill hole at the centre of the curl at the end of the moustache.

The fragment of porphyry (red marble from Egypt) shows the mouth, a portion of cheek, and a full long beard. Its curving surface, size, and material make him unmistakably a head from a large shallow vessel (*labrum*) of ancient Roman date. It forms a pair with a similar head (now in Geneva), and both probably decorated different sides of one *labrum*, fragments of which have been recognized elsewhere.¹⁰ At Biddulph Grange this porphyry beard fragment seems to have been intended to represent the primary essence of the earth and God's most natural creation.

The beard has four distinguishing characteristics:

- 1) The locks that contiguous to the cheeks are short and gently wavy;
- 2) The lock on each corner of the moustache is long and ends in a circular curl with a drilled centre;
- 3) eight (if not nine), long, vertical corkscrew locks comprise the thick main part;
- 4) between the two central vertical locks is a parting that is filled with a vertical wavy lock.

The mouth is short from side to side and slightly open. The lips are shapely and project.

These exact characteristics appear on another porphyry head, now in the Musée Barbier Mueller, Geneva, inv. 204-12 (pl. 23).¹¹ The size and scale of the two heads is also comparable. The Geneva head was previously in Schloss Gleincke (purchased by Prince Frederick Leopold of Prussia) and before that in Palermo at the Villa Altichiero.¹² Heads such as these decorated porphyry basins (*labra*) which were located in the grand public spaces in ancient Rome. The most elaborate extant examples of *labra* are now in the Naples Archaeological Museum;¹³ they were found in the Baths of Caracalla, were part of the Farnese collection, and were sketched by Piranesi. One of these is mainly complete (pls. 24-25); the other consists of 15 fragments. The mainly complete example shows two bearded heads in high relief at the point of attachment for fantastic handles that imitate metal work and are decorated with snakes.¹⁴ Already in 1932 R. Delbrueck noted the similarity of the Naples

⁹ The porphyry is dark purple. It compares well to the examples from the Lepsius district of the quarry: D. del Bufalo, *Porphyry. Red Imperial Porphyry. Power and Religion* (Turin 2012), 231, fig. 6

¹⁰ See below.

¹¹ D. del Bufalo, *Porphyry. Red Imperial Porphyry. Power and Religion* (Turin 2012), 104, H20. Or <http://www.barbier-mueller.ch/collections/antiquite/arts-grec-hellenistique-et-romain/?lang=fr>

¹² R. Delbrueck, *Antike Porphywerke* (Berlin 1932), 173, pl. 82.

¹³ Ambrogi classifies these elaborate labra as Type VIII; A. Ambrogi, *Labra di età romana in marmi bianchi e colorati* (Rome 2005), 80-93. For Naples examples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli, inv. 6021: see Ambrogi, 182-187, nos. L 8- L 9 and C. Gasparri, (ed.), *Le sculture farnese. III. Le sculture delle Terme di Caracalla. Rilievi e varia* (Rome 2010), 103-105, no. 37 and 106, no. 39.

¹⁴ Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli, inv. 6021. C. Gasparri, (ed.), *Le sculture farnese. III. Le sculture delle Terme di Caracalla. Rilievi e varia* (Rome 2010), 103-105, no. 37

heads to the ex-Schloss Gleinicke head.¹⁵ In 2005 A. Ambrogi connected various fragments and the ex-Schloss Gleinicke head and considered it possible that all the fragments belonged to one *labrum*, similar to those now in Naples.¹⁶ In 2010 in a catalogue entry devoted to yet another such bearded head in Vicenza which was found in 1824 in the Baths of Caracalla (and there is one more at Vico Equense), M. Cadario has suggested that there were probably four large elaborate *labra* in the Baths of Caracalla.¹⁷ Thus, the Biddulph Grange and ex Schloss Gleinicke head almost certainly decorated the space under the handles of one and the same *labrum* and other fragments, which remain in the Kleine-Gleinicke, probably also belong to that same *labrum* (which might even be the second fragmentary one in Naples.)¹⁸ The *labrum*, to which they originally belonged, was the most elaborate form known in antiquity. The heads themselves have been interpreted as possibly river gods (the Nile?), Asclepius, or the Egyptian divinity Sarapis.

At Biddulph Grange this beard fragment was placed at the bottom of the composition. It is an exceptional piece of stone which in its carving bears the traces of a previous civilization. As such it functions in this Biddulph Grange Creation scene, made of older pieces, as a fantastic primordial ground element; proof of the capacity of God to create natural wonders, as well as humans and animals.

ASSESSMENT & MONETARY VALUE

The fragment is a finely carved example in a prestigious marble. It has significant archaeological value. It demonstrates the breadth of the Roman marble market, the skill of the Roman period sculptors in Egypt, belongs with another artefact, and comes from a glorious monument of the city of Rome. It also has a secondary historic value. That fragments of the same object are dispersed throughout Europe testifies to a significant trend in the history of western collecting.

For these reasons, its monetary value should be high. At auction it would probably bring £45,000.

¹⁵ R. Delbrueck, *Antike Porphywerke* (Berlin 1932), 173, pl. 82.

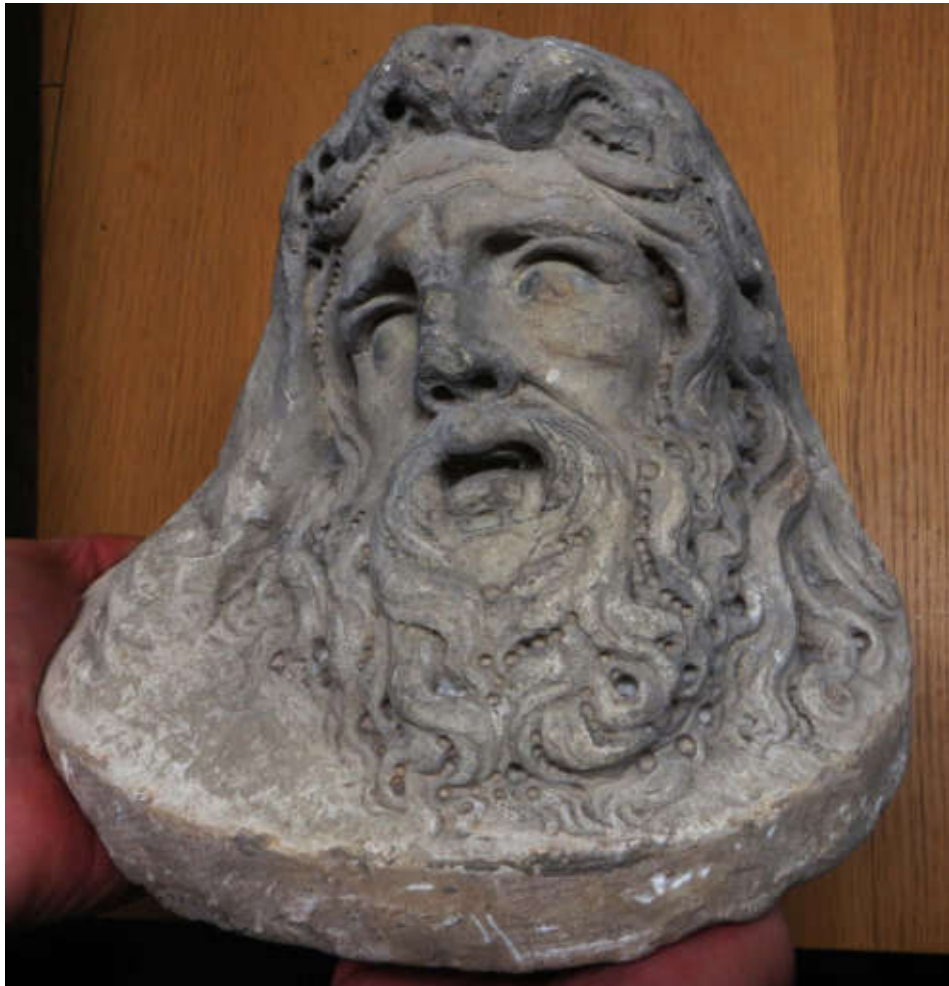
¹⁶ A. Ambrogi, *Labra di età romana in marmi bianchi e colorati* (Rome 2005), 175-176, no. L 3, associated three fragments of a porphyry *labrum*, now in Schloss Klein-Glienicke, with the head. Ambrogi also noted that the *labrum* from which all these pieces derived was similar to that in Naples from the Baths of Caracalla.

¹⁷ M. Cadario et al. *Statue romane della collezione di Girolamo Edgilio di Velo dei Musei Civici di Vicenza* (Vicenza 2010), 87-97.

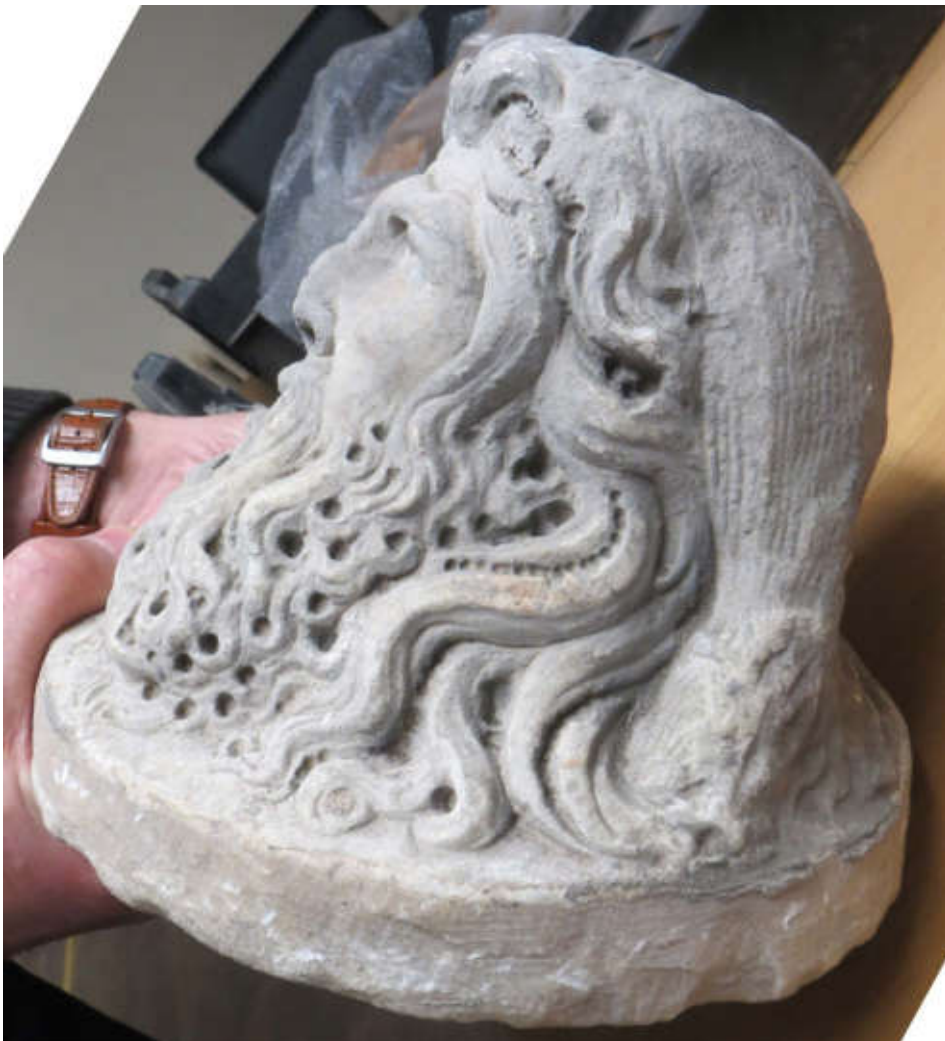
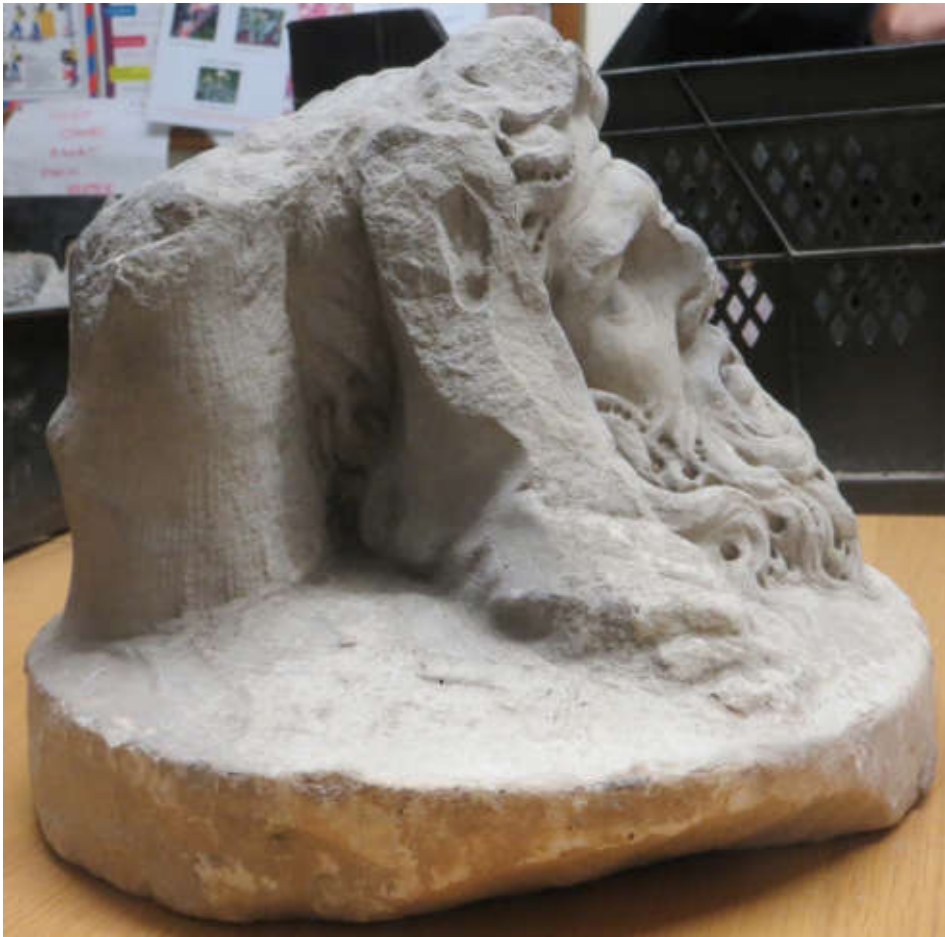
¹⁸ That all the fragments might belong to the second fragmentary *labrum* in Naples is discussed with references in C. Gasparri, (ed.), *Le sculture farnese. III. Le sculture delle Terme di Caracalla. Rilievi e varia* (Rome 2010), 104, fn. 2.



Hieronymus Bosch, Garden of Earthly Delights. ca. 1490-1510.
Museo del Prado, Madrid.



1. Head of Goliath on plinth. 16th c–18th c



1. Head of Goliath on plinth. 16th c–18th c



1. Head of Goliath on plinth. 16th c–18th c



Head of Laocoon. Hellenistic - Roman



St. John. Renaissance or later



Head of River god. Renaissance restoration

Comparanda for head of Goliath on plinth



David by Verrocchio, ca. 1475

Comparanda for head of Goliath on plinth



God the Father. Michelangelo Sistine Chapel.

Comparanda for head of Goliath on plinth



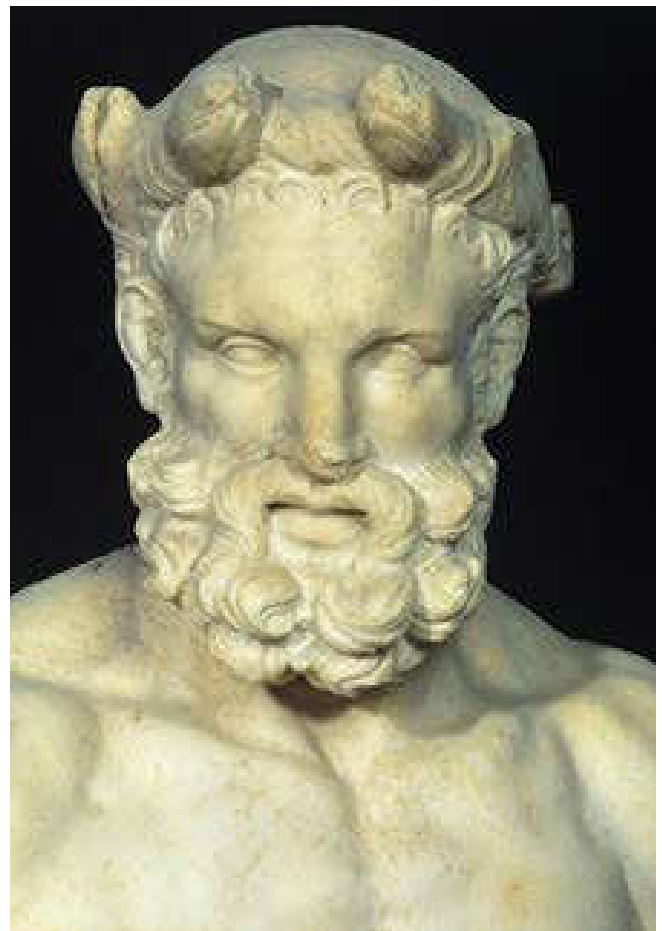
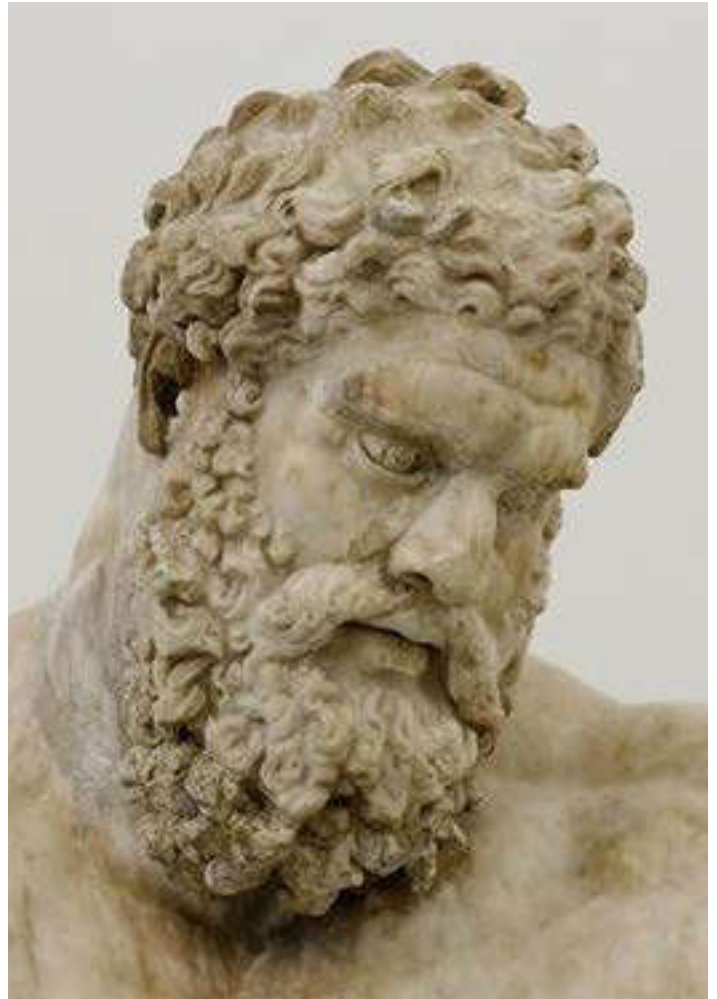
2. Head of Fisherman in "Rome-New York" type. Roman



2. Head of Fisherman in "Rome-New York" type. Roman



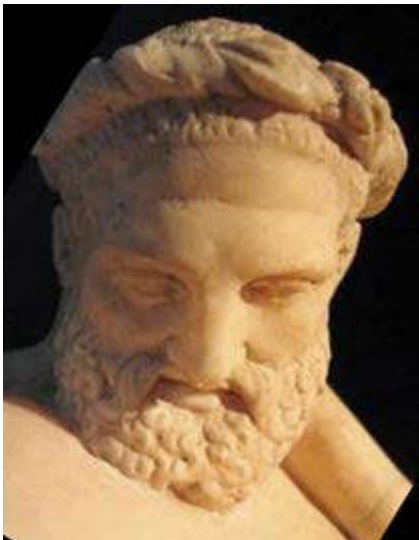
2. Head of Herakles. Roman



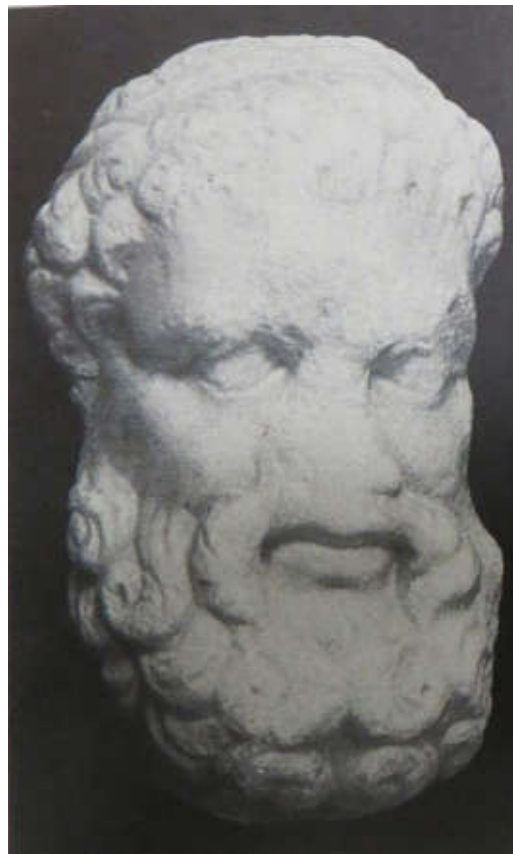
Comparanda for 2. Head of Herakles. Roman



Herm of Herakles, Musei Capitolini, from Rome



Head of Herakles from statuette showing Drunken Herakles urinating. Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale. Note the twisted band in his hair with drill channel and indentation where material twists



Head of Herakles with twisted band in hair, from a herm. Valletta Archaeological Museum.



3. Head of veiled female from a grave relief. 4th c. BC



3. Head of veiled female from a grave relief. 4th c. BC



Demetria Pamphile from the Athens Kerameikos Cemetery, ca. 325-310 BC



Attic grave relief, ca. 350 BC, Metropolitan Museum of Art, inv. 59.11.27

Comparanda for 3. Head of veiled female from a grave relief. 4th c. BC



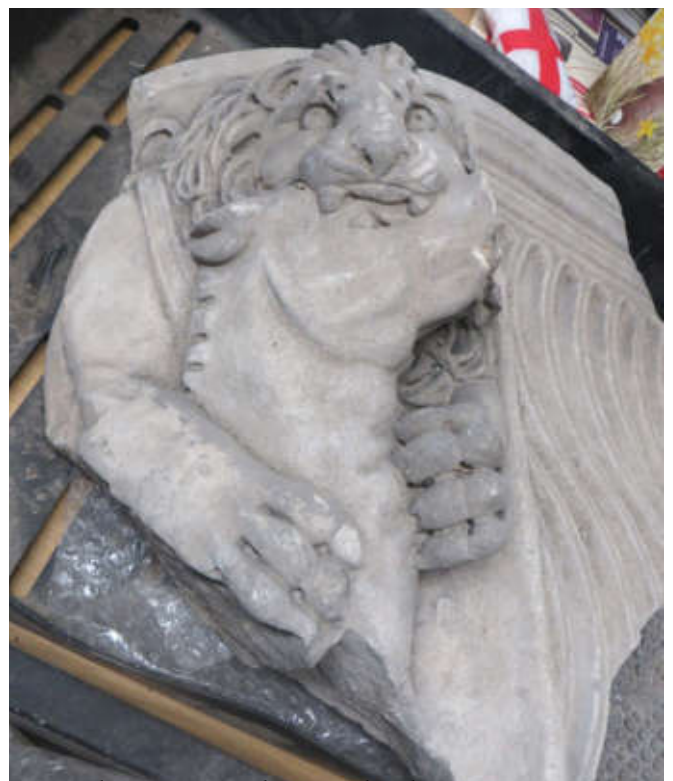
4. Sarcophagus fragment showing a boar hunt. Second half of the third century AD (above) and Hunt Sarcophagus from Cimitero Maggiore, Rome (below)



Heads from 4 Sarcophagus fragment showing a boar hunt. First half of the third century AD (left) and heads from Hunt Sarcophagus, Cimitero Maggiore, Rome (right)



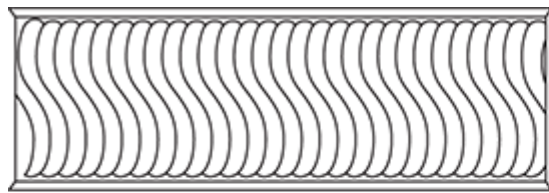
Boar from 4. Sarcophagus fragment showing a boar hunt. Second half of the third century AD (above) and boar from Hunt Sarcophagus, Cimitero Maggiore, Rome (below)



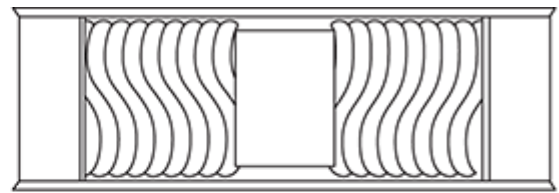
5. Rounded corner of strigillated sarcophagus showing a lion eating a horse. Third century AD.



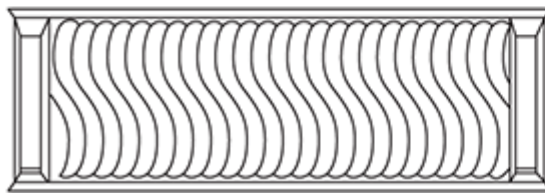
Strigillated sarcophagus with lions at ends. AD 260-270



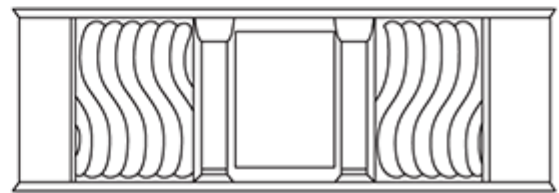
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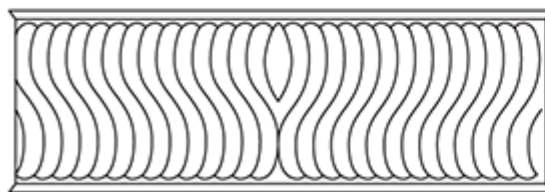
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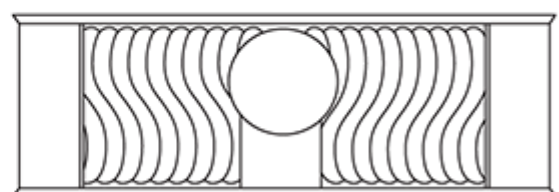
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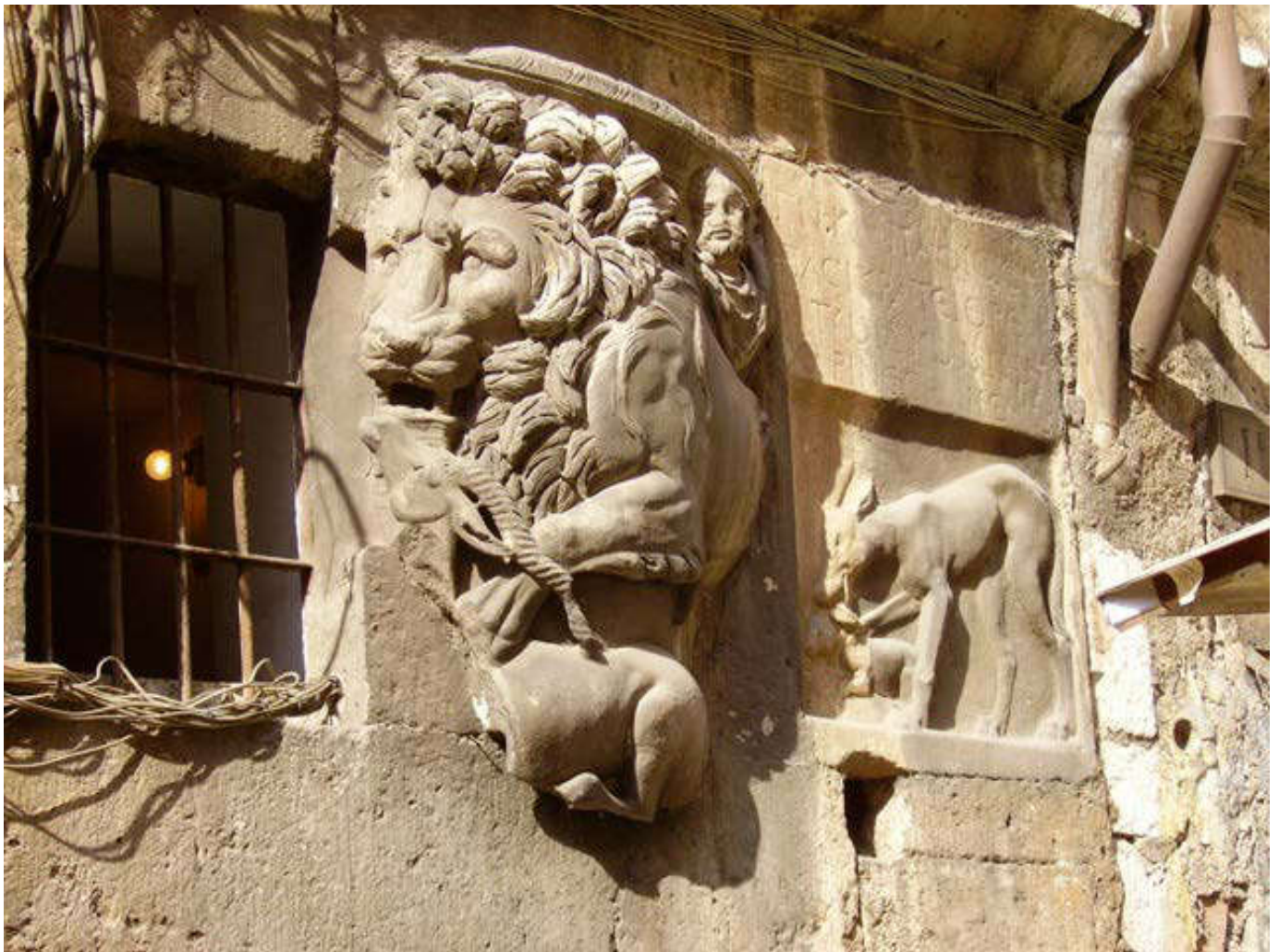


10

Some of various strigillated sarcophagi patterns



Sarcophagus of 3rd c. AD showing lion (with lead and saddle) eating horse. Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum

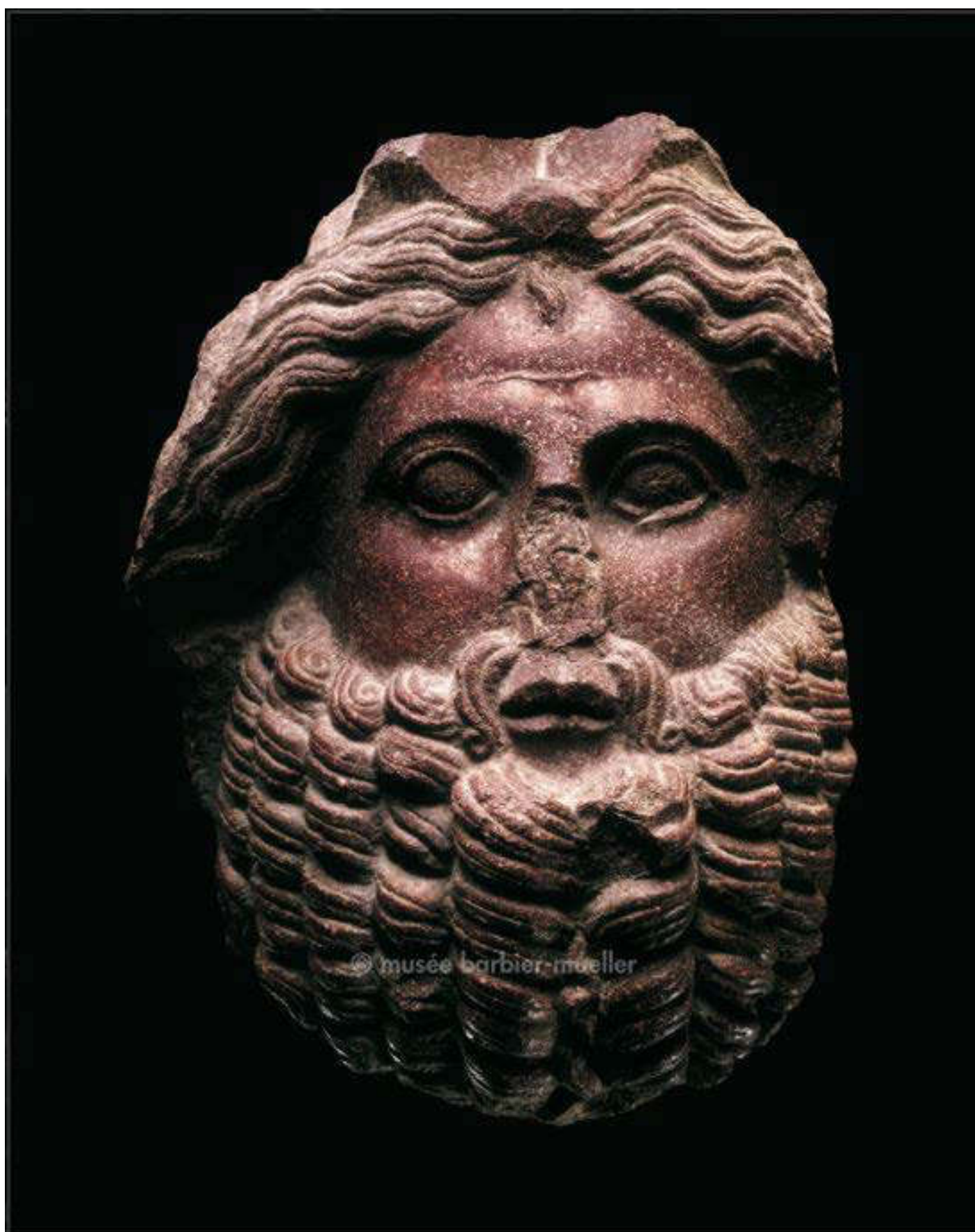


House of Lorenzo Manilio (1468) at 1-2 Via del Portico di Ottavia, Rome.

Comparanda for 5. Corner of strigillated sarcophagus showing a lion eating a horse. Third century AD.



6. Fragment of the lower face from the handle decoration of a porphyry labrum. Baths of Carcalla. 3nd c. AD



Head from beneath under handle of labrum, Musée Barbier Mueller, Geneva, inv. 204-12

Comparanda for 6. Fragment of the lower face from the handle decoration of a porphyry labrum



Labrum, Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli, inv. 6021

Comparanda for 6. Fragment of the lower face from the handle decoration of a porphyry labrum



Labrum, Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli, inv. 6021

Comparanda for 6. Fragment of the lower face from the handle decoration of a porphyry labrum