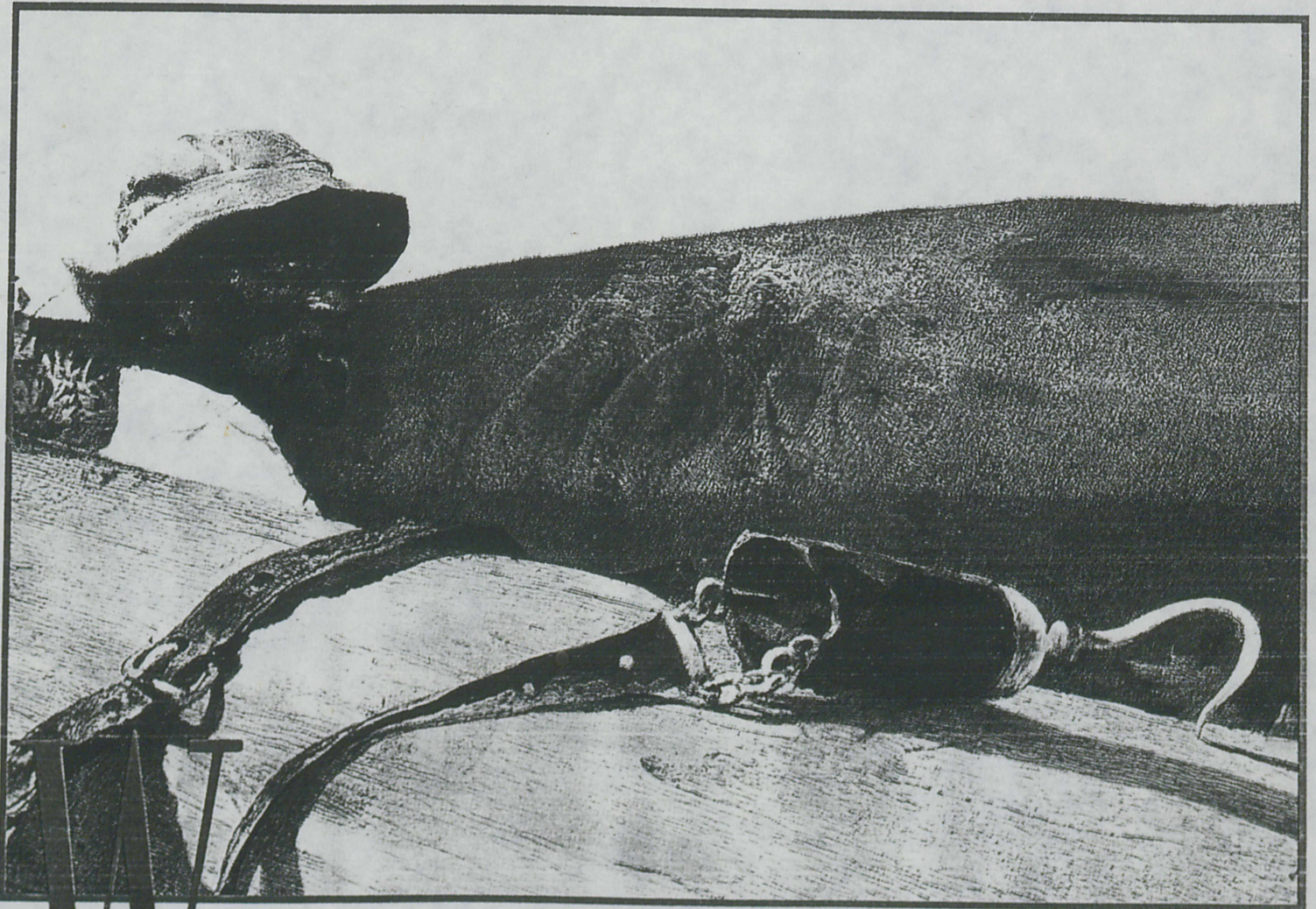


CONNOISSEUR

THE ARTIST HAS PROFOUNDLY CHANGED

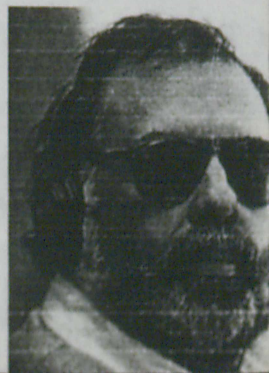


WYETH SINCE HELGA

AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

COPPOLA'S GODFATHER—
LIGHTNING STRIKES A THIRD TIME

AN INDISPENSABLE GUIDE
FOR THE MOZART BICENTENNIAL





"Hot" antiquities keep turning up in the most distinguished places

Caught!

A magnificent fragmentary marble torso of Herakles of circa A.D. 170, the so-called Weary Herakles, is now on show in the collection of the investment banker Leon Levy and his wife, Shelby White, at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art. It is the upper half of a standing Herakles. The lower half is in the Antalya Museum, in Turkey, near where it was found. The fit between them is perfect.

To reunite the upper and lower halves would entail returning the top piece to Turkey, whence it obviously came—illegally. Boston's Museum of Fine Arts would have to be consulted beforehand, since it is part-owner of the Levy Herakles. Cornelius Vermeule, the MFA's curator of antiquities, had a hand in its acquisition; he will surely give his assent. It is not like this distinguished classicist to get involved in contraband antiquities, especially from his beloved Turkey. He might be declared *persona non grata* there, and that would end his frequent visits. Indeed, just last year he was in Perge, where the full statue was originally uncovered (and officially inventoried), in 1980. On the same trip, Vermeule visited the Antalya Museum, a regular haunt of his. Knowing as much as he did about the Herakles' upper part—he wrote the Levy catalog description of it—how could he fail to notice the connection between it and the lower part of the statue on prominent display in the Antalya Museum? But apparently he did.

The rest of the Levy-White antiquities exhibition, entitled "Glories of the Past," is solid, thorough, and a mite predictable. There is little that we have not seen before: lots of earthenware pots, tiny bronze

REUNITED HERE
ARE THE TWO PARTS
OF THE SPLENDID
"WEARY HERAKLES":
THE TOP PART IS NOW
ON DISPLAY AT
THE MET.



THE LOWER PART
IS IN THE ANTALYA
MUSEUM. THE WHOLE
STATUE, DATED
TO A.D. 170, IS A COPY
OF A FAMOUS WORK
OF 330 B.C.

oxen, metal belt plaques, and diminutive figurines, giving way to Greek vases and Roman busts and statues, and culminating in migration-period buckles. The cumulative effect is that of a minor museum.

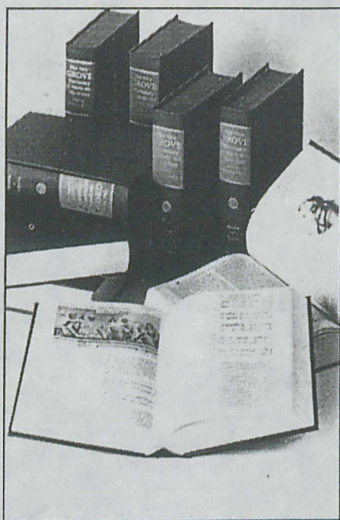
If the collection were bequeathed to the Met, much of it would enrich the storage areas—and the Met's lawyers, no doubt, if the Turks note that other pieces are from Turkey, from such sites as Hacilar and Alaca Hüyük, which have been massively looted in recent decades. The catalog is remarkably candid about provenance. A large bronze of the Roman emperor Lucius Verus, avowedly from Bubon, in south central Turkey, is almost surely part of a group that was smuggled out in the midsixties. The collection contains few pieces that are really extraordinary, but go and see them anyway. It may be your last opportunity in this country.

—Özgen Acar and
Melik Kaylan

After being caught

If museums sometimes return contraband antiquities to countries of origin, galleries never have—until now. On September 18, Torkom Demirjian, the proprietor of Ariadne Galleries, in New York, in a swirl of publicity handed back a Roman mosaic head of Medusa originally discovered on the floor of an A.D. third-century villa in Sparta, Greece. It had been stolen from the Sparta museum and sold at Sotheby's London in late 1987. Demirjian, the buyer, expressed surprise at having acquired "hot" goods from such a reputable auction house. Sotheby's, after all, is signatory to a code of practice forbidding trafficking in "stolen antiques and works of art." Demirjian naturally asked for his money back

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from Sotheby's. But so far, well . . .

Readers of the October issue of *Connoisseur* will recall that the cover story identified, as smuggled out of Turkey, a waist-high marble statuette of Marsyas being flayed on a tree (after losing a musical competition to Apollo). On display for sale at Atlantis Antiquities, in Manhattan, it was originally found in the ground by a farmer in Turkey. He sold it for \$7,000 to the suppliers of the smuggler Fuat Üzülmöz. It next turned up at Atlantis, whose principals, Robert Hecht and his senior partner, Jonathan Rosen, put it on the market for \$540,000. Hecht told us that if presented with solid documentation—the photograph of the piece in the farmer's house seems solid enough—they would return the piece. Meantime, the partners signed an agreement with Turkey's New York lawyers that they would not dispose of the Marsyas until the issue was settled.

The "Smugglers" story in the October issue also revealed that a glorious, monumental Roman sarcophagus, on loan to the Brooklyn Museum, was smuggled from Turkey. The owner of the piece, Damon Mezzacappa, a general partner of the investment bank of Lazard Frères, denied the claims made in our story and complained about innuendos being spread by people slighted by the museum. When the museum's director, Robert Buck, was asked what he intended to do about the sarcophagus, he simply said over and over, "I don't know, I just don't know."

Of course, in the end, the buck does not stop with him. The piece is merely on loan. Even so, the returning of a three-ton marble monster to a private owner raises all sorts of problems. How, for example, would Mezzacappa transport it? Still, Robert Buck can scarcely let the museum keep showing it, especially when he finds out (and he can check for himself) that it came via Nev-

zat Telli, the notorious smuggler and convicted narcotics racketeer mentioned in our October story. Interestingly enough, the middlemen in the sarcophagus deal were Jonathan Kagan, also of Lazard Frères and a member of Brooklyn's antiquities council, and Jeffrey Speir, a London-based archaeologist. Both were participants in another smuggling scandal, involving a hoard of ancient coins—the so-called Decadrachm Hoard—and both are being sued for that by Turkey.

The *Connoisseur* story has caused some red faces at the San Antonio Museum of Art, too. Officials there intended to put on display, as a component of the much vaunted new Halsell Wing, a six-foot-six-inch-tall first-century marble statue, which Hecht says is of the empress Domitia. This statue is on an anonymous loan to the collection of more than sixteen hundred pieces. There is a reason: the owner is, yes, Fuat Üzülmöz, named in our October issue as the most active of the Munich antiquities mafiosi. The massive statue was air-cargoed unnoticed through the Istanbul airport to Munich. In the United States, Fuat struck a deal with Robert Hecht and Jonathan Rosen, of the Atlantis gallery, selling them half of the statue's ownership. Later, he bought it back and this time let the Acanthus gallery, of 24 East Eighty-first Street, New York, run by Brian Aitken, in on the deal. Fuat loaned the piece anonymously to San Antonio. Why? Probably because he had been unable to sell it through Rosen and Hecht. He might well have felt that a good display in a public museum, with all the attendant scholarly publicity, would raise its value (it is insured for \$1.8 million). Such Machiavellian schemes are in the nature of Fuat's business, of course. The question is why a respectable public institution like the San Antonio museum should play his dupe.

—O.A. and M.K.

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