

and interesting branches of our art. The new generations of artists show a marked preference for familiar American scenes, often transforming subjects that are, in reality, ugly by masterly organization of color and form.

The Museum has prepared a brief check list of the works in the exhibition. In this list will be found the roster of lenders, to

## GREEK ACCESSIONS

## A BRONZE GRIFFIN, A TERRACOTTA VASE, A WAX HEAD

Three objects from Greek antiquity, each of which presents something of a novelty to this collection, have been placed on exhibition this month. They are a bronze socket surmounted by the head of an eagle-griffin,



FIG. 1. BRONZE GRIFFIN. FIRST HALF OF THE VI CENTURY B.C.

whom the Museum owes grateful thanks for the cordial manner in which they have responded to our invitation.

Since no contemporary American water colors from the Museum's permanent collection are included in the exhibition, visitors may be interested in seeing the twenty-six examples which are hung in Gallery C 33, one of the rooms now devoted to contemporary painting. In the adjacent room are the "old masters" of American water color—Winslow Homer, Childe Hassam, Thomas Eakins, George O. Hart, and John Singer Sargent.

HERMANN WARNER WILLIAMS, JR.

a red-figured Athenian krater with a scene in Circe's palace, and a head of a woman modeled in wax.

One of the handsomest of the new styles which the period of oriental influences brought to the expanding bronze industry of Greece is represented by the great caldrons with griffins' heads round the rim. These have been found at many sites in Greece and on the Islands, as well as in Etruria, and are conspicuous among the splendors of the period.<sup>1</sup> What appears to be exactly the same sort of griffin attach-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. H. Payne, *Perachora* (Oxford, 1940), pp. 126 ff., and the bibliography there given; E.

ment was used in the gear of chariot horses.<sup>2</sup> We have now acquired an unusual variant (fig. 1; shown in Case N, Gallery J 2),<sup>3</sup> a griffin head with short neck, provided with a socket to receive a horizontal rectangular beam, suggesting that it was used in wooden construction. It may be a fitting from a piece of furniture.<sup>4</sup>

Whatever its function, its chief interest is sculptural. The head is that of a monster with the face of a screaming eagle. There is a knobbed spike over the forehead, and the ears, those of an animal, are long and erect. The head has a living, animal quality which is not lost in the grandeur of the decorative scheme. The bronze has acquired a mottling of red, purple, and green, from which the incrustation has been removed by mechanical means.<sup>5</sup> The eyeballs, perhaps of amber, are missing. The socket, which received a beam of  $1\frac{3}{8}$  by  $2\frac{5}{8}$  inches, is empty for most of its length, but the extremity, and no doubt the head and neck of the monster, are packed with a hard, gritty mass, a feature common to the caldron griffins and their oriental prototypes. With this core the piece weighs about three pounds. It is said to have been in the possession of Sir Robert Abdy, and before that, in 1913, it figured in the sale of the J. H. Fitzhenry collection in London.<sup>6</sup>

The griffin caldrons apparently did not long survive the seventh century B.C., but terracotta reliefs carry the chariot griffins well into the second half of the sixth. Judging from the style of this head, it would be reasonable to place the newly acquired finial in the first half of the sixth century. It was catalogued in the Fitzhenry sale as

Kunze and H. Schleif, *Jahrbuch des deutschen archäologischen Instituts*, vol. 53, pp. 109 ff.

<sup>2</sup> A. Furtwängler in Roscher, *Lexikon*, s.v. *Gryps*, col. 1767, ill.; L. Kjellberg, *Larisa am Hermos II* (Stockholm, 1940), friezes II, III, VIII, pp. 32 ff., 81 ff., pls. 2 ff., 34 ff.

<sup>3</sup> Acc. no. 41.11.2. Lee Fund. H.  $7\frac{1}{8}$  in. (18.2 cm.).

<sup>4</sup> Cf. the griffin protome with rectangular socket, A. de Ridder, *Bronzes antiques du Louvre*, vol. II, no. 3684.

<sup>5</sup> While still in the vendor's possession. Inside the socket the surface has been left untouched to serve as a criterion of authenticity.

<sup>6</sup> Sale Catalogue (Christie, Manson and Woods, Nov. 18, 1913), p. 70, no. 556.

"Roman," which might imply an Italian provenance. Since it does not correspond functionally to a known series it is not clear whether it is Greek or Etruscan.

A red-figured Athenian calyx krater with scenes in two rows (figs. 3, 4; shown in Case K, Gallery J 6)<sup>7</sup> is the gift of Miss Amelia E. White. The subject, Odysseus and his companions in the house of Circe, has not hitherto been represented in our collec-



FIG. 2. HEAD OF BEESWAX  
HELLENISTIC PERIOD

tion of vases. Below are pictures of youths and women. The upper row tells the story. Odysseus has arrived at the palace to rescue his companions, who have been transformed into animals by a drug which Circe has put into their drink. She has set out a chair now for Odysseus himself, given him the potion, and confidently ordered him off to the sty<sup>8</sup>; but he is proof against her, having eaten

<sup>7</sup> Acc. no. 41.83. H.  $14\frac{1}{4}$  in. (36.2 cm.). Published: *Sale Catalogue of the V. Everit Macy Collection*, American Art Association, Anderson Galleries, Jan. 6, 7, 8, 1938, no. 284, ill. For calyx kraters with two rows cf. P. Jacobsthal, *Metropolitan Museum Studies*, vol. V (1934-1936), pp. 117 ff.

<sup>8</sup> *Odyssey* x.320.

the herb provided by Hermes. So we see him draw his sword and threaten the sorceress, who drops her cup and stirring rod. There is panic among her four ladies, who flee to the right and to the left. The objective of their flight, a king with a scepter, is a figurehead with no place in the story. Two of the companions of Odysseus share the agitation, running in supplication to their chief. Though they have been pig and ass for some time, they are drawn with human



FIG. 3. RED-FIGURED ATHENIAN CALYX KRATER. THIRD QUARTER OF THE V CENTURY B.C.

bodies, for the painter had to make clear, by his means, what the poet could say in words, namely that these are changeling creatures. The Homeric story includes no ass but only swine among the actual companions of Odysseus, though the victims of past cruelties were loose in the forest in the forms of wolves and lions. But the vase paintings in general show a greater variety of creatures, and Apollodoros relates that the companions became wolves, swine, asses, and lions.

A calyx krater in the Museo Civico in Bologna<sup>9</sup> is strikingly similar. Here the

<sup>9</sup> G. Pellegrini, *Catalogo dei vasi greci dipinti delle necropoli Etrusche* (Bologna, 1900), no. 298; F. Müller, *Die antiken Odyssee-Illustrationen* (Berlin, 1913), pp. 57 ff., fig. 6. In answer to a

painter duplicates Circe, showing first her transformation of the companions and then her failure with their chief. Four of the figures are nearly identical on the two kraters.

The third object is a great rarity. It is a head of a woman, somewhat under half life size, modeled in beeswax (fig. 2; shown in Case W, in Gallery J 7).<sup>10</sup> The style is Hellenistic, and the provenance is given as Alexandria. The eyes are drawn as dotted ovals, and there is dark paint on the hair. The rest of the color scheme is uncertain, for there are a dark mottling of the surface and a reddish stain over one side which seem to be accidental. Except for a chip from the neck and a blurring of the whole surface the piece is intact, a head without means of suspension and roughly flattened off at the back, where it is covered with a hard, limy incrustation. It may have been part of a larger composition.

Beeswax had manifold industrial uses in antiquity, and it has survived, as a substance, for instance, on wax writing tablets. Wax shawabti figures have been found in Egyptian tombs of the Dynastic period, and an Etruscan chamber tomb yielded wax masks, presumably of the deceased. But in general wax sculpture has fared even worse than wooden in the matter of survival, though in antiquity it was a commonplace. Wax-modeling lay at the heart of the bronze industry, since every piece produced by *cire perdue* implied a wax prototype. Parallel to the koroplasts, or makers of terracotta statuettes, were the keroplasts, or modelers in wax, mentioned by Plato and later writers. Their wares included statuettes for votive or household use, children's toys, pawns for table games, decorative fruits, human figures for use in magic spells, and so forth. Wax death masks were part of the funerary gear in common use under the Roman Republic. So the newly acquired head belongs to what was once a numerous class, now almost entirely gone.

CHRISTINE ALEXANDER.

query, J. D. Beazley wrote that the New York and Bologna kraters were not by the same hand, in spite of the similarity of the central scene.

<sup>10</sup> Acc. no. 41.11.3. H. 4 $\frac{1}{8}$  in. (12.4 cm.). For wax sculpture cf. H. Blümner, *Technologie und Terminologie*, vol. II (Leipzig and Berlin, 1912), pp. 151 ff. and references there given.

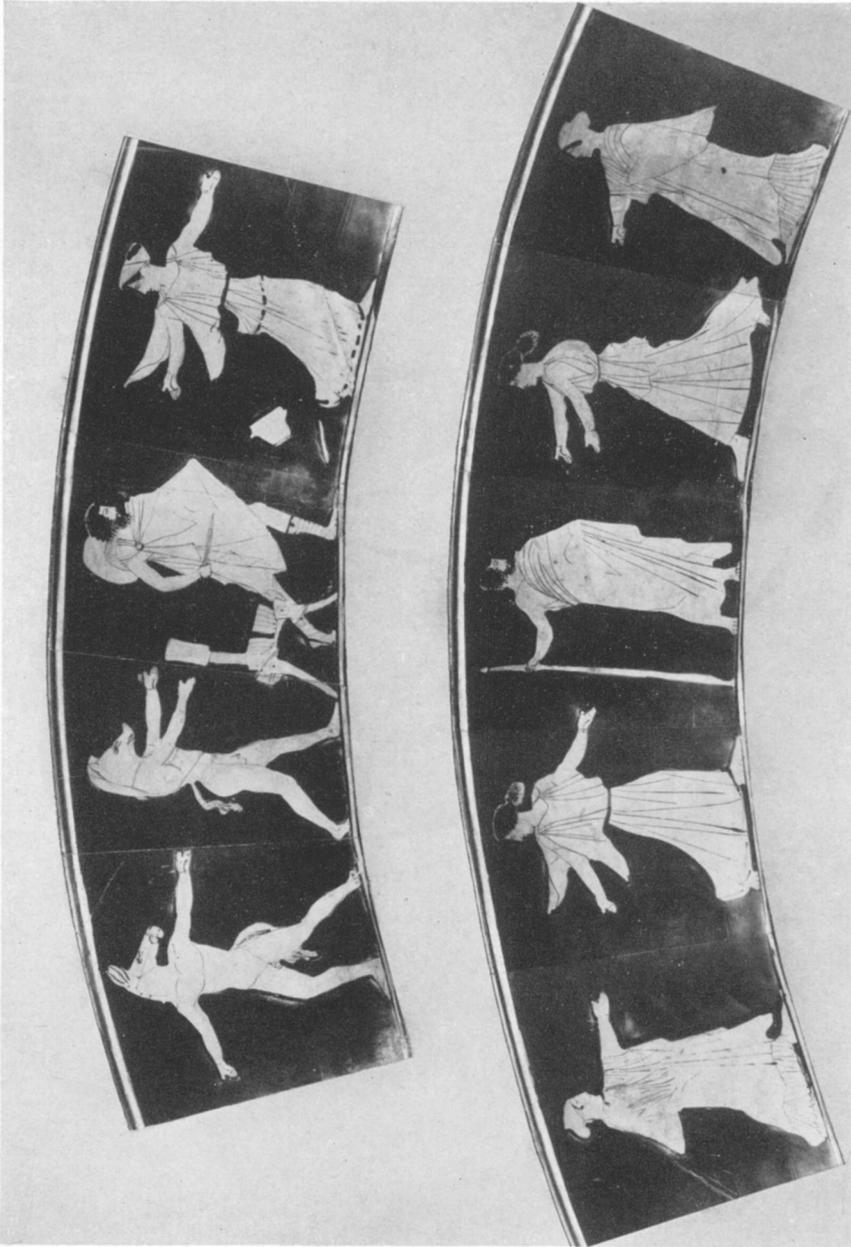


FIG. 4. SCENES FROM THE KRATER SHOWN IN FIGURE 3  
ODYSSEUS AND HIS COMPANIONS IN THE HOUSE OF CIRCE