From Boston to Rome: Reflections on Returning Antiquities

David Gill* and Christopher Chippindale**

Abstract: The return of 13 classical antiquities from Boston’s Museum of Fine Arts (MFA) to Italy provides a glimpse into a major museum’s acquisition patterns from 1971 to 1999. Evidence emerging during the trial of Marion True and Robert E. Hecht Jr. in Rome is allowing the Italian authorities to identify antiquities that have been removed from their archaeological contexts by illicit digging. Key dealers and galleries are identified, and with them other objects that have followed the same route. The fabrication of old collections to hide the recent surfacing of antiquities is also explored.

In October 2006 the MFA agreed to return to Italy a series of 13 antiquities (Appendix). These included Attic, Apulian, and Lucanian pottery as well as a Roman portrait of Sabina and a Roman relief fragment. This return is forming a pattern as other museums in North America are invited to deaccession antiquities that are claimed to have been illegally removed from Italy. The evidence that the pieces were acquired in a less than transparent way is beginning to emerge. For example, a Polaroid photograph of the portrait of Sabina (Appendix no. 1) was seized in the raid on the warehousing facility of Giacomo Medici in the Geneva Freeport. Polaroids of two Apulian pots, an amphora (no. 9) and a loutrophoros (no. 11), were also seized. As other photographic and documentary evidence emerges during the ongoing legal case against Marion True and Robert E. Hecht Jr. in Rome, it is likely that the Italian government will step up its requests for the return of objects that were removed from Italy. However, the initial batch of objects from

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: The authors are grateful for the following for their assistance during the writing of this paper: Malcolm Bell, Ann Copeland (La Trobe University), Tracey Cullen, Colin Hope (Monash University), Andrew Jamieson (University of Melbourne), Ian MacPhee (La Trobe University), Jessica Powers (San Antonio Museum of Art), Sonia Puttock (University of Queensland), Peter Watson, and Karol Wight (The J. Paul Getty Museum).
Boston gives cause to reflect on the collecting patterns that have allowed unprovenanced, or perhaps even falsely provenanced, objects to enter the collections of distinguished museums.

RETURNING ANTIQUITIES FROM MALIBU AND NEW YORK

The Boston return is part of a wider pattern and follows a number of recent cases of deaccessioning. In February 1999 the J. Paul Getty Museum returned to Italy an Attic red-figured cup signed by Euphronios as potter and attributed to Onesimos. The cup was acquired in fragments between 1983 and 1985. Underneath the foot was an incised dedicatory inscription showing that the cup had been dedicated to Ercole (Herakles). Although one of us earlier commented, “We may not know from which Etruscan site these sherds were collected, or even the name of the tombarolo,” the cup almost certainly was found in a sanctuary of Ercole at Cerveteri, which was not excavated until 1993. It is now known that different fragments of the cup passed through different sources before arriving at the Getty: the tondo passed through the Galerie Nefer in Zurich and was said by Frida Tchacos-Nussberger to have originated with Nino Savoca in Munich. Other fragments passed through the Hydra Gallery and were attributed to the Zbinden collection, a designation closely linked to the movement of illicit antiquities in Switzerland. Other pieces were attributed to the S. Schweitzer collection of Arlesheim. However, the clinching piece of evidence was that photographs of the piece were found in the raid on Medici’s warehousing facilities in the Geneva Freeport.

In 2005 it was agreed that the Getty would return the Asteas krater, which was made in Paestum in southern Italy and acquired by the Getty in 1981. The piece was apparently been sold by Gianfranco Becchina of Basel; and photographs were reportedly found in 1995 in the wrecked car of Pasquale Camera, a figure closely linked to the illicit antiquities market in southern Italy. The Asteas krater was returned to Italy with two other antiquities in November 2005. It is reported that some 55 pieces at the Getty are directly linked to Medici or Hecht, presumably identified in part by the appearance of photographic evidence seized during raids in Geneva. These returns are likely to be the first in an extended run of requests, but requests will not be from Italy alone. In July 2006 the J. Paul Getty Museum agreed to return a Boeotian funerary relief of Athanias to Greece; in September 2006 it went on display in the National Museum in Athens.

Antiquities are also returning to Italy from New York. In February 2006 the Metropolitan Museum of Art signed an agreement to return a number of antiquities, including the Euphronios krater and the hoard of silver thought to come from Morgantina. The silver hoard was acquired in 1981 and 1982 with the claim that “this group of fifteen objects, presumably found together a generation ago, represents some of the finest Hellenistic silver known from Magna Graecia.” It has been reported that the hoard passed through Switzerland before being sold to
the Metropolitan for $3 million by Hecht. Among the batch of antiquities to return are an Attic red-figured psykter attributed by Robert Guy to Smikros, an Attic red-figured amphora attributed to the Berlin painter that surfaced in Sotheby’s in London, and an Apulian dinos.

THE BOSTON ANTIQUITIES: DATES OF SURFACING AND THE MYTH OF OLD COLLECTIONS

The deaccessioned Boston antiquities do not form a homogeneous group. They were acquired from a number of different sources between 1971 and 1999 (Figure 1). In November 2005 the MFA deputy director, Katherine Getchell, was unconvinced by Italy’s request; she is quoted as saying, “There’s absolutely nothing we’ve seen or heard that proves anything to us.” Yet less than a year later, the evidence must have been so compelling to allow the museum to speed through the request for the return.

It is striking that some material was claimed to have been in old collections and thus known for some years or even decades before acquisition. The earliest of the 13 objects to be accessioned by the MFA was a Lucanian nestoris (no. 12) acquired in 1971 from Leo Mildenberg; it was reportedly acquired in 1962, on a Bank Leu invoice of January 21, 1971, from the R. Peirere Collection, Madrid. This in itself is significant because 1971 falls before the declared benchmark of December 30, 1973, set by the Archaeological Institute of America in its resolution on the importation of antiquities. This deadline recognized the damage inflicted on the archaeological record and sought to restrict the publication for any object that surfaced for the first time after this date. Was the evidence that this nestoris...
was removed from Italy illegally so compelling? Was this evidence of the Spanish collection fabricated to support the sale? Did this dealer, Leo Mildenberg, supply other museums with equally fabricated histories? It also questions whether objects acquired before December 30, 1973, should be returned. Should the cutoff be placed at 1960 or even earlier?

Other deaccessioned objects are claimed to have been in old collections which predate December 30, 1973. For example, an Attic red-figured pelike (no. 7) was purportedly in the Swiss private collection of Mr. Karl Haug in Basel since 1936; during the 1970s it passed through Palladion Antike Kunst in Basel. Is it significant that the Attic red-figure amphora now in the Getty, but which also passed through Palladion Antike Kunst, was documented as being in the British Rycroft collection in 1890, yet was shown in a Polaroid from Medici’s warehouse still coated with dirt?23 Is this claim as reliable as the one made for the Getty kouros, which was allegedly “in the collection of Dr. Jean Lauffenburger of Geneva since the 1930s”?24 If the MFA pelike was indeed known in the 1930s, why was the MFA so willing to return it? Was this claim unreliable or even fabricated?

An Attic black-figured lekythos (no. 4) was ostensibly found at Selinus on Sicily in the 1960s. It was reportedly acquired from the French numismatist Hubert Herzfelder, who worked in Sicily from the 1930s. The naming of such a collection normally would not have drawn attention and could seem plausible, but it is unlikely correct given the return of the lekythos to Italy. A second piece in the MFA, an Apulian bell-krater, was also said to have come from this source via the Hecht route.25 Apart from these three pieces, all other MFA items surfaced and were acquired after the 1973 watershed and were therefore subject to suspicion.

Other MFA pieces from old collections include the portrait of Sabina (no. 1) (Figure 2), which was claimed to have come from “an aristocratic family collection in Bavaria” which has the ring of the anonymous histories so often seen in sale catalogs “Property of a Gentleman.” Given that the piece appears in the Medici Polaroid archive, this history for Sabina is demonstrably false. Finally, the Apulian bell-krater (no. 10) was noted by A. D. Trendall and A. Cambitoglou as formerly residing in the Holger Termer collection in Hamburg.26 The Termer designation may be little more than stock that passed through the Galerie Neuendorf in Hamburg in 1980 (Table 1).27 The prompt return of these pieces to Italy suggests that some of these old collections have either been fabricated or are little more than a front for objects passing through the market to give them a hint of respectability.

THE DEALERS, GALLERIES, AND AUCTION HOUSES

The MFA pieces come from a number of different dealers and galleries. Two of the objects passed through Atlantis Antiquities of New York owned jointly by Robert Hecht and Jonathan Rosen.28 An Apulian amphora (no. 9) previously passed through the hands of Fritz Bürki & Son of Zurich (1991); but A. D. Trendall and
A. Cambitoglou referred to it in the possession of Atlantis Antiquities, New York. Bürki was associated with two further pieces in Boston (Table 2): an Attic red-figured hydria attributed to the Berlin painter and purchased on January 11, 1978 (no. 6), and the portrait of Sabina (no. 1) acquired on November 14, 1979, with Hecht acting as the agent (Figure 3). Hecht allegedly purchased an Attic black-figured lekythos (no. 4), purportedly acquired at Selinus in the 1960s, before selling it to the MFA through Atlantis Antiquities. During police raids in 2001, Bürki reportedly admitted that he was a front for Hecht; one of his roles was to conserve and restore antiquities before they were shipped from Switzerland. One of their more important collaborations was the restoration of the Euphronios krater before it was sold to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.
This link between Atlantis Antiquities and Bürki has also emerged from investigations at the Getty concerning a pair of Etruscan antiquities, a tripod and a candelabrum, revealing a close relationship between Giacomo Medici, Bürki, and Atlantis Antiquities. Indeed, it appears that Medici was the seller (and acknowledged as such by Marion True of the Getty); but the antiquities were consigned for shipment by Bürki, and then transferred, once in North America, to Atlantis
Antiquities. A similar Medici–Bürki–Hecht–Atlantis Antiquities route can also be followed for an Apulian pelike showing Andromeda and attributed to the Darius painter and acquired by the Getty in 1987. Medici–Hecht–Atlantis Antiquities apparently proposed a sale of 20 Attic red-figured plates to the Getty in 1987.

Another of the Swiss dealers and galleries through which Boston acquired antiquities was Palladion Antike Kunst of Basel. Pieces from this source include an

Table 2
Antiquities linked to Fritz Bürki in MFA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Acquisition Year</th>
<th>Source</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Roman male portrait head. 1975.2. Said to come from “the greater Rome area.” In possession of Fritz Bürki, Zurich (by 1971); purchased from Bürki by Hecht; purchased by MFA from Hecht, January 30, 1975.</td>
<td></td>
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Source: www.mfa.org.

Antiquities. A similar Medici–Bürki–Hecht–Atlantis Antiquities route can also be followed for an Apulian pelike showing Andromeda and attributed to the Darius painter and acquired by the Getty in 1987. Medici–Hecht–Atlantis Antiquities apparently proposed a sale of 20 Attic red-figured plates to the Getty in 1987.

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![Figure 3](image-url)  
**Figure 3.** Pottery and sculpture which passed through Robert E. Hecht, Jr. and was subsequently acquired by the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.
Attic black-figured hydria (no. 3), an Attic red-figured pelike (no. 7), and an Apulian bell-krater (no. 10), two of which were sold by the gallery in 1976 (nos. 3 and 10). Two Attic Siana cups, which surfaced in Palladion Antike Kunst at the same time, allegedly came from Taranto (Table 3); no other pieces had a history before surfacing in the sale. Other material from this sale includes an Attic black-figured neck-amphora in a Japanese private collection, an Attic black-figured neck-amphora of the Tyrrhenian group that passed through Sotheby’s in London on its way to the Gilbert M. Denman Jr. collection and the San Antonio Museum of Art.

Table 3
Attic pottery that passed through Palladion Antike Kunst

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Black-figured</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5. Siana cup, said to come from Taranto. AK 1976, no. 18.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Siana cup. AK 1976, no. 17.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Little Master cup. AK 1976, no. 22.</td>
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<td>14. Lekythos. AK 1976, no. 27.</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Red-figured</th>
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<tr>
<td>18. Pelike, attributed to Niobid painter. AK 1976, no. 34. Subsequently: Bochum, Rühr Universität, Kunstsammlungen; S1060.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Head vase, woman. AK 1976, no. 37.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Art, an Attic red-figured oinochoe fragment also in San Antonio, an Attic red-figured pelike in Bochum, and an Attic red-figured cup in Kurashiki Ninagawa Museum in Japan. Palladion Antike Kunst, subsequently trading as Palladion Ancient and Fine Art AG of Basel, was run by Ursula ‘Rosie’ Becchina, the German wife of Gianfranco Becchina. Becchina appears to be a rival of Medici, who also supplied Hecht with antiquities.

Two MFA pieces passed through Auktion 51 Münzen und Medaillen in Basel (but one was subsequently acquired by Fritz Bürki) in March 1975 (nos. 6 and 8). This gallery was run by Herbert A. Cahn, who was convicted of handling antiquities in Italy in 1976. Although the present location of many of the pieces from this sale is unknown, two of the lots are now in the Reiss-Museum in Mannheim.

A Lucanian nestoris (no. 12, see previous text) was sold to the MFA by Leo Mildenberg through Bank Leu of Zurich. Although he did possess a personal collection of antiquities relating to animals in ancient art, the MFA piece was purchased against a Bank Leu inventory. Does this bring into question the history of other pieces acquired through Mildenberg? This collector is known for possessing the other half of a terra-cotta antefix, which appears to come from a sanctuary at San Biagio in southern Italy.

There is a London connection to the MFA pieces. Bruce McAlpine purchased the Attic black-figured hydria (no. 3) from Palladion Antike Kunst before selling it to Boston. McAlpine was also selling Greek pottery to other museums at exactly this time. The role of Sotheby’s in London was also significant. A Lucanian nestoris (no. 13) surfaced for the first time in the auction on December 13–14, 1982, lot 298 (Figure 4). It was then on loan to the Borchardt Library at La Trobe University (1988–1994), the university closely associated with A. Dale Trendall, one of the great authorities on South Italian pottery; the lender was Graham Geddes of Melbourne. Geddes runs Graham Geddes Antiques and Antiquities of Armadale, Victoria, Australia, and is currently an approved valuer of Greek and South Italian pottery for the Australian Government’s cultural gifts program. Sources for the Attic pottery in what is termed as the Geddes collection (but it is unclear if this is stock from the gallery) include Münzen und Medaillen in Basel and Sotheby’s London. Pots loaned or formerly in his collection appear in several Australian and New Zealand collections: the Classics and Archaeology Collection, University of Melbourne; the Antiquities Museum, University of Queensland; the James Logie Memorial Collection, University of Canterbury, Auckland, New Zealand. Other Attic and South Italian pots from the Geddes collection were on display in the Borchardt Library at La Trobe University in 2006. Egyptian antiquities from the collection have been loaned to Monash University and appeared in the exhibition “From the Sands of the Sahara: Ancient Kellis and its Texts” (1998). Moreover, a set of antiquities entitled “The Graham Geddes Collection” was sold at Christie’s (Melbourne) on October 15, 1996.
One MFA piece that surfaced in Sotheby’s was an Apulian loutrophoros (no. 11), which was sold on December 10, 1984, lot 366. This was sold one year before the meeting between Peter Watson and Brian Cook of the British Museum when they discussed the growing number of Apulian pots appearing on the London market.\textsuperscript{59} Indeed, R. J. Elia has suggested that around 30\% of the previously unknown Apulian pots surfaced through Sotheby’s from 1980 to 1992.\textsuperscript{60} Subsequent revelations have shown that many of the pots in the period between December 1983 and December 1986 were consigned by Serge Vilbert or Christian Boursaud accounting for some 248 objects worth £640,880.\textsuperscript{61} The most recently acquired of the deaccessioned MFA objects, an Attic bell-krater (no. 5), surfaced through Sotheby’s in London on December 14, 1995, lot 95.

In New York two of the Apulian pieces, the bell-krater (no. 10) and the loutrophoros (no. 11), were sold by the Royal-Athena Galleries owned by Jerome Eisen-
Eisenberg draws attention through his gallery website to the fact that the MFA was a good client. Eisenberg is a member of the International Association of Dealers in Ancient Art (IADAA). One code of conduct for members of the IADAA is, “The members of the IADAA undertake not to purchase or sell objects until they have established to the best of their ability that such objects were not stolen from excavations, architectural monuments, public institutions or private property.” In spite of this, there seems to have been sufficient evidence to convince MFA trustees to return to Italy two pieces sold by Royal-Athena Galleries. Eisenberg has deflected criticism by suggesting in a September 2006 interview with the Boston Globe, “None of these are monumental works of art, and what fuss are [Italian audiences] going to make about this vase? . . . Far more people will see it at the MFA.” Yet, simultaneously Eisenberg was featured in the History Lost exhibition at the Benaki Museum in Athens. Eisenberg purchased an Attic Band Cup at the Christie’s New York auction in December 1997 that was stolen from the Corinth Museum and reported in the International Foundation for Art Research Bulletin.

THE DONORS

The deaccessioned antiquities represent a number of significant donors, which reflects the complexity of the network of dealers and supporters of museums. Among the well-known collectors were Shelby White and Leon Levy, who gave an Apulian amphora (no. 9) in 1991 supported by funds derived from the Jerome Levy Foundation (named in honor of Levy’s father). An earlier study of part of their collection exhibited at the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art suggested that 84% of the items surfaced for the first time after 1973. These suspicions about the collection are seemingly well-founded: several pieces in the New York exhibition apparently feature in the Polaroids found in Medici’s warehouse.

An interesting blend of donors who supported the acquisition of an Apulian bell-krater (no. 10) in 1988 included several collectors and dealers (Figure 5). Among them were Barbara and Lawrence Fleischman; a study of their own collection suggests that 91% of objects surfaced after 1973. Like the White-Levy collection, a significant number of the Fleischman antiquities appear in Polaroids from Medici’s warehouse. There are two London-based antiquities dealers in the list of donors for the bell-krater: Bruce and Ingrid McAlpine and Robin Symes, whose role in the London antiquities market is well documented. The association of the krater with Jonathan H. Kagan is perhaps significant because he was linked with William Koch and Jeffery Spier, the OKS Partnership, in the Dekadrachm Hoard scandal; Cornelius C. Vermeule III of the MFA purportedly authenticated the coins. Other donors toward the acquisition of the krater included Alfred Ajami, Esther Anderson, Edith Bundy, Robert S. Czachor, Josephine L. Murray, and Catherine C. Vermeule.
Some of the donors of the deaccessioned material are closely linked to the museum. Cornelius C. Vermeule III was the Curator of Classical Art at the MFA from 1957 to 1996. He and his wife Emily, a Harvard professor respected for her research on the Late Bronze Age Aegean, donated three of the deaccessioned items: an Attic red-figured lekythos (no. 8), an Attic red-figured hydria (no. 6), and a Roman candelabrum shaft (no. 2). Vermeule has been linked to several objects that have surfaced in suspicious circumstances, most (in)famously the weary Herakles in Boston that seems to fit a fragment excavated at Perge in Turkey during the 1980s.73

Peter Aldrich, one of the donors of deaccessioned material, was a trustee of the MFA. He and his wife Widgie purchased and donated two of the deaccessioned items, an Attic bell-krater (no. 5) and a Lucanian nestoris (no. 13). Peter Aldrich is also responsible for gifts of other antiquities to MFA.74 He appears to have a close relationship with Leon Levy because he was a former governor of the Jerome S. Levy Economics Institute of Bard College.
This small selection of antiquities, which has made its way back to Rome for public display, allows a small glimpse into the murky world surrounding the acquisition of cultural artifacts from the Mediterranean world. The short time between the Italian government’s request and the deaccessioning of the objects suggests that the evidence was overwhelming. Yet, is this but the tip of the iceberg? Have the present resting places of all the objects identified in Medici’s Polaroid library been identified? Can we expect more returns?

The route by which some of the Boston antiquities traveled through the market suggests that more deaccessioning can be expected. A key figure in the process was Robert E. Hecht Jr. Of more than 1000 objects in the MFA reportedly handled by Hecht, all are under suspicion for having been looted. It is suggested that 22 items in Boston have been identified during the Hecht trial in Rome. Putting aside the coins acquired through Hecht, there is a substantial list of ancient sculptures, figure-decorated pots, and other antiquities associated with his name. For example, the Apulian situla, which was purchased by the MFA in 1992, surfaced in the Summa Gallery in Los Angeles by 1978 before being purchased by Atlantis Antiquities, which is part owned by Hecht. Was it residing in an undisclosed private collection until 1978? Or was it removed from a cemetery in Apulia along with so much Apulian material during the 1970s? Moreover, 61 of the 71 classical objects acquired between 1985 and 1987 apparently have no previous history, suggesting that they may have been illegally removed from archaeological contexts.

Hecht was not just selling antiquities to the MFA; he was known for his association with a cup attributed to Euphronios ostensibly found with the Sarpedon krater. He was also involved in the sale of an Attic black-figured Nikosthenic amphora reputedly from Orvieto. What is the basis of the find-spot Orvieto? Was it invented? Or was Hecht more open in the 1960s about the locations of his operations? Hecht’s name has also been linked to part of the terra-cotta Düver frieze looted from Turkey.

Yet, it is the seizure of the Polaroid photographs in the Geneva Freeport that will probably bring about the identification of objects removed from their archaeological contexts by tombaroli. Material in six North American museums, including the Cleveland Museum of Art, the Princeton University Museum, and the Toledo Museum of Art, has been identified. In Europe the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek in Copenhagen and the Antikensammlung in Munich have been noted as receivers of material from Hecht, and in Japan the Miho Museum near Kyoto has the same reputation.

There is sadly little to celebrate over the return of these antiquities. The 13 antiquities now back on Italian soil represent 13 destroyed archaeological contexts, scientific knowledge lost forever; and the best scholarship cannot retrieve this information. The MFA’s reputation was tarnished, but its trustees should be commended for coming to such a speedy decision to return the objects to Italy; and
hopefully, any other requests for the return of antiquities will be met with similar alacrity. Is there an expectation that no further requests will be made by the Italian authorities? Where does this new policy leave antiquities such as the Weary Herakles, which is claimed by Turkey? Should trustees remain in office if they are identified as donors of material that has had to be deaccessioned? Perhaps there will be a move toward more rigorous and ethical acquisition policies that recognize the realities of the antiquities trade. Where does it leave the antiquities residing in private collections? No responsible museum curator is likely to want to accept a gift or bequest of objects that could be the subject of a formal claim by a foreign government; and museum trustees will want to avoid adverse publicity. Should collectors like Shelby White seek to offer their antiquities to appropriate national governments? The energetic calls for the repatriation of antiquities, however justified, should be better spent in calling for the protection of archaeological sites. Perhaps this sorry tale of the Boston material shows the cynical acceptance of archaeological destruction by local communities, dealers, gallery directors, museum trustees, the academics who have helped to attribute freshly surfaced objects, and the museum curators who have been all too ready to accept fresh finds to swell their collections and perhaps personal reputations.

POSTSCRIPT

On November 21, 2006 it was announced that the J. Paul Getty Museum had indicated to the Italian Government that it intended to return 26 antiquities. At least 5 of the objects had formed part of the Barbara and Lawrence Fleischman collection. Source: www.getty.edu/news/press/ (accessed on 7 December 2006).

APPENDIX 1: ANTIQUITIES RETURNED BY BOSTON (OCTOBER 2006)

List based on (www.mfa.org). All were deaccessioned on September 21, 2006.

A. Sculpture


B. Pottery

Attic

Atlantis Antiquities, 40 East 69th Street, New York, NY 10021; purchased by MFA from Atlantis Antiquities, November 29, 1989.


7. Attic red-figured pelike, 1979.40. By 1971: with Palladion Antike Kunst, Rennweg 51, 4052 Basel, Switzerland (said to have been in the Swiss private collection of Mr. Karl Haug in Basel since 1936); purchased by MFA from Palladion Antike Kunst, February 14, 1979.


Apulian


Lucanian

12. Lucanian nestoris, 1971.49. By 1971: with Dr. Leo Mildenberg, Bank Leu AG, Bahnhofstrasse 32, Zurich, Switzerland (on the Leu invoice, dated January 21, 1971, was the following provenance: acquired in 1962 from the R. Peirere Collection, Madrid); purchased by MFA from Dr. Leo Mildenberg, February 10, 1971.

ENDNOTES

1. For relevant press releases and images, see http://www.mfa.org/press/ (accessed on October 25, 2006). For pottery from Italy in the MFA, see Padgett, Vase-Painting in Italy.

2. Silver, “Rome Prosecutor Asked Convict to Accuse the Met.” It is reported that perhaps some 4,000 to 5,000 Polaroids were seized during the raid; Watson and Todeschini, The Medici Conspiracy, 22.

3. Edgers and Celeste, “Case in Italy Suggests MFA Received Stolen Art.” It is reported that some of the Polaroids came from a raid on Hecht’s flat in Paris in 2000.

4. Malibu 83.AE.362 (Galerie Nefer), 84.AE.80 (Dietrich von Bothmer), and 85.AE.384 (Hydra Gallery). Williams, “Onesimos”; Towne-Markus, Masterpieces, 38–39. We are grateful for Karol Wight, Acting Curator of Antiquities, J. Paul Getty Museum at the Getty Villa, for supplying us with the information about the sources.

5. Heurgon, “Graffites étrusque”; Spivey, Etruscan Art, 84–85, fig. 67.


12. Silver, “Rome Prosecutor Asked Convict to Accuse the Met.”

13. Malibu 93.AA.47. Towne-Markus, Masterpieces, 50–51. See also Gill, Review of Masterpieces of the J. Paul Getty Museum: Antiquities. Seen by Gill in Athens September 2006. The stele was presumably unearthed illegally in Boeotia before 1993. The agreement to return the pair of reliefs was signed on August 22, 2006. The other relief was from Thasos and had been stolen from excavation storerooms on the island.

14. Watson and Todeschini, The Medici Conspiracy, 327. In November 2005 it was reported that eight pieces in the Metropolitan Museum of Art were linked to Hecht or Medici and were under investigation: Silver, “Smuggling Ring Used Sotheby’s 110 Times.” For the official press release, see www.metmuseum.org/press_room. The return of the pieces has been delayed so that they can be displayed in the new galleries for classical art. For donors to this project, see Eakin and Kennedy, “Doubts on Donors’ Collection Clouds Met Project.”

15. von Bothmer, A Greek and Roman Treasury, 54–60, nos. 92–106. Other silver (The Lydian Hoard), which appeared in the same publication, has subsequently been returned to Turkey: Özgen and Öztürk, The Lydian Treasure.

16. Watson and Todeschini, The Medici Conspiracy, 106. For the full story, see Bell, “La provenienza ritrovata.”


20. Edgers and Celeste, “Case in Italy Suggests MFA Received Stolen Art.”

21. Edgers and Pinto, “MFA Agrees to Return Disputed Art to Italy.” The agreement was reached in July 2006.

22. 1973 is the benchmark that we have used in previous studies to tabulate information: Chippindale and Gill, “Material Consequences of Contemporary Classical Collecting,” 471. A code of ethics addressing these issues was passed by the AIA on December 22, 1997. For text of resolution and code, see www.archaeological.org.


recalls that Jeffery Spier “had finally found the piece of evidence that would prove [the] kouros to be a fake.”

25. Boston, MFA 1976.144. This was said to have been purchased from Herzfelder in 1962.
27. Termer, _Kunst der Antike_.
32. Watson and Todeschini, _The Medici Conspiracy_, 84–86.
33. Malibu 87.AE.23. Watson and Todeschini, _The Medici Conspiracy_, 89–90. The pelike had clearly been struck with a single blow which shattered the pot which was reconstructed from a large number of fragments. In November 2006 the J. Paul Getty Museum announced that this pelike would be returned to Italy.
34. Watson and Todeschini, _The Medici Conspiracy_, 95–98.
35. Sale catalog nos. 24, 43.
39. Bochum, Ruhr Universität, Kunstsammlungen S1060.
40. Simon, _The Kurashiki Ninagawa Museum_, 80–83, no. 34.
41. Watson and Todeschini, _The Medici Conspiracy_, 291–293.
42. Watson and Todeschini, _The Medici Conspiracy_, 78–79.
44. Mannheim, Reiss-Museum CG342, CG343. Lots 125 and 129. The fact that these pieces passed through Münzen und Medaillen does not necessarily imply that they were removed from their archaeological context illicitly.
45. Such as the Attic Little Master cup: Cleveland (OH), Museum of Art: 1993.111.
46. Shefton, “A Greek Lionhead.” On Mildenburg’s death, both pieces were reunited in Newcastle upon Tyne.
47. Pieces that passed through their hands included the Attic red-figured cup attributed to the Kodros painter acquired by the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge (inv. GR.2.1977) in 1977: Gill, “Fitzwilliam Museum,” 292, no. 20. Other pieces include an Attic Black-figured amphora: Hobart, Univ. of Tasmania, John Elliot Museum: 70; an Attic red-figured neck amphora: Ann Arbor (MI), University of Michigan, Kelsey Museum: 77.7.1.
48. Watson, _Sotheby’s_. See also Gill, “Sotheby’s, Sleaze and Subterfuge.”
49. The MFA nestoris returned to Sotheby’s on 10 December 1996, lot 191.
50. I am grateful to Ian McPhee of LaTrobe University for informing me that Geddes made the loan though he may not have been the owner of the nestoris.
52. _Kunstwerke der Antike_ 63, June 29, 1983, no. 43.
54. Connor and Jackson, _Ian Potter Museum of Art_. Andrew Jamieson indicates that four pieces were purchased from Geddes: an Ionian cup (1983.0105; cat. no. 14), a column-krater (1998.0007; cat. no. 48), a Pagenstecher lekythos (1990.0020; cat. no. 57), a lekanis (1990.0019; cat. no. 65). The column-krater, attributed to the Comacchio painter, is known as the Peter Connor Memorial Vase; this surfaced in Christie’s December 16, 1982, lot 296. Nine other loan items were returned to Ged-
des in July 1993. This loan included 5 Apulian pots, including a volute-krater the name vase of the Geddes painter, and a Lucanian pelike.

55. Sonia Puttock informs us, “Most of the objects in our collection were purchased from Graham Geddes but we did have some objects which are on loan from him.”

56. Inv. 177.94; Loan. Cohen et al., Mother City and Colony, nos. 1, 6 and 9.

57. We are grateful to Ann Copeland for this information. The pieces have been on loan since at least February 2005.

58. Attic pottery included lots 229, 230 (Lord Kinnaird collection), 231, 232, 233, 234 (first surfaced in the Bolla collection, Lugano, Switzerland). An Attic red-figured bell-krater attributed to the Komaris painter was offered by Jerome Eisenberg’s Royal Athena Galleries around 2000 as ex Graham Geddes, Australia; see also Bonham’s, London September 21, 1999, lot 147.


61. Watson, Sotheby’s, 118.


63. www.iadaa.org (accessed on October 9, 2006). For Eisenberg’s view on antiquities, see Eisenberg, “Ethics and the Antiquity Trade.”

64. Edgers, “MFA Returns Art to Italy.”

65. September 13–October 22 2006. See Apostolidis, Archaikapaxilia.

66. Apostolidis, Archaikapaxilia, 269–301, and esp. pl. 45.


68. Watson and Todeschini, The Medici Conspiracy, 353–54. Catalog entries, von Bothmer, Glories of the Past: e.g. nos. 87 (purchased from Symes, 6 months before the exhibition), 102 (purchased from Symes), 104 (Sotheby’s, London, July 17, 1985, lot 313), 106 (Sotheby’s, London, December 9, 1985, lot 132; purchased from Symes), 107, 117 (purchased from Symes).


70. Watson and Todeschini, The Medici Conspiracy, 349–52, and see also 121–23.

71. Watson and Todeschini, The Medici Conspiracy. See also Watson, “The Fall of Robin Symes.”

72. Meier, “The Case of the Contest Coins”; Meier, “Turkish Government.” The Apulian krater was acquired four years after Vermeule is said to have been contacted over the coins. For Kagan’s continuing research links with Spier, see Spier and Kagan, “Sir Charles Frederick.”

73. Boston, MFA 1981.783. von Bothmer, Glories of the Past, 237–38, no. 172. Surfaced in Frankfurt/Main and purchased from Mohammad Yeganeh; claimed to have been in his mother’s collection and purchased from a German dealer about 1950. Acquired with the support of the Jerome Levy foundation, Shelby White, and Leon Levy.


75. Edgers, “Objects of Inspection.”

76. Silver, “Rome Prosecutor Asked Convict to Accuse the Met.”


78. Edgers, “Objects of Inspection.”


81. Nicholls, “Fitzwilliam Museum,” 1970/1, 75–76, no. 25. For reports of the looting, see Melinki, “Archaeology in Asia Minor,” 159. For other fragments, some of which passed through Sothe-

82. Silver, “Rome Prosecutor Asked Convict to Accuse the Met”; Silver, “Smuggling Ring Used Sotheby’s 110 Times.” The Princeton pieces are reportedly the Attic red-figured psykter attributed to the Kleophrades painter (inv. 1989.69), and an Apulian loutrophoros. There are reported to be eight pieces in Cleveland; see also Mazur, “Italy Will Contest Medea Vase.”

83. Silver, “Smuggling Ring Used Sotheby’s 110 Times.”

84. See for example the comments in Sotirakopoulou, The “Keros Hoard”.

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