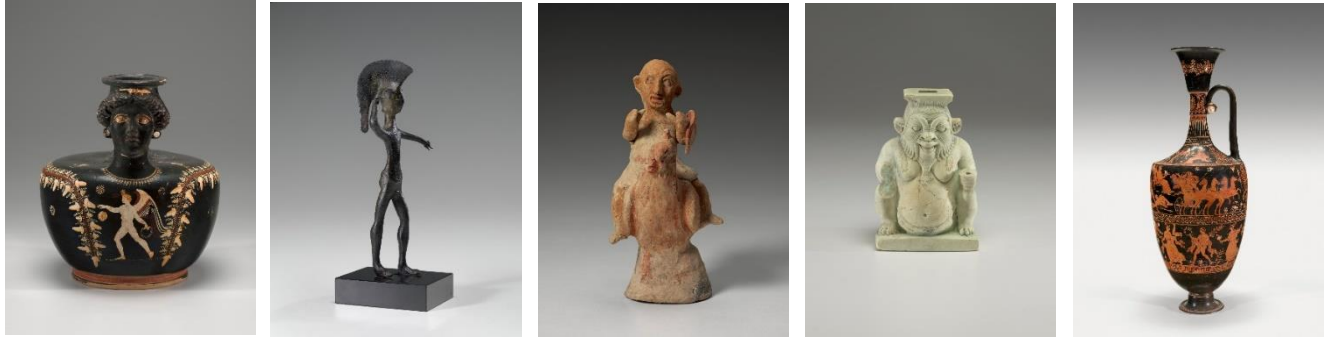


FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts Announces Repatriation of
Ancient Works of Art to Their Countries of Origin**
VMFA Has Returned 44 Works of Art to Italy, Egypt and Türkiye



From left to right: *Gnathian Askos (Wine Flask)*, circa 330 BC, attributed to the Rose Painter, South Italian (Gnathia), terracotta, 11 × 10 × 10 ½ in. (27.94 × 25.4 × 26.67 cm). Photo by David Stover © 2016 Virginia Museum of Fine Arts; *Etruscan, Statuette of a Warrior*, 5th Century BC, bronze, 8 ¾ × 3 ½ × 2 ¾ in. (22.2 × 8.9 × 7 cm). Photo by Travis Fullerton © 2014 Virginia Museum of Fine Arts; *Figure of a Soldier Mime Riding a Rooster from a Funerary Set*, 3rd century BC, (South Italian), polychromed terracotta, 7 ½ × 3 ½ × 5 3/8 in. (19.05 × 8.89 × 13.65 cm). Photo by David Stover © 2017 Virginia Museum of Fine Arts; *Vessel in the form of the God Bes (Cosmetic Container)*, 650–550 BC, Egyptian (Dynasty 26, Late Period), faience, 5 5/8 × 3 25/32 × 3 3/8 in. (14.29 × 9.6 × 8.57 cm). Photo by Katherine Wetzel © 2010 Virginia Museum of Fine Arts; *Red-Figure Lekythos*, 4th century BC, attributed to the Underworld Painter (Greek, South Italian, Apulia), terracotta, 37 ¼ × 13 ½ in. (94.5 × 34.3 cm). Photo by Travis Fullerton © 2016 Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

Richmond, VA — The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts (VMFA) announced today that the museum has deaccessioned and returned 44 works of ancient art following an investigation by the Antiquities Trafficking Unit of the Manhattan District Attorney’s Office and the Department of Homeland Security into the global trafficking of looted or stolen antiquities.

On May 1, 2023, VMFA received a summons from the Department of Homeland Security and the Antiquities Trafficking Unit of the Manhattan District Attorney’s Office pertaining to a group of 28 ancient art objects in the collection that had been identified as possibly looted or stolen. The museum was asked to supply all documents and photographs related to sales receipts, invoices and bills of sale; shipping and storage records; import and export documents; consignment agreements; appraisal documentation; provenance and provenance research; catalogues, brochures and marketing materials; and any correspondence related to these 28 objects. VMFA fully complied with this request and, based on the evidence the museum supplied, another 29 works were added to the summons on June 6, 2023. VMFA then submitted information on another 4 works, added at the museum’s request, bringing the total number of works under investigation to 61.

On October 17, 2023, VMFA met with Col. Matthew Bogdanos, the head of the Antiquities Trafficking Unit of the Manhattan District Attorney’s Office, and Robert Mancene, the special agent handling the investigation from Homeland Security Investigations. Col. Bogdanos and special agent Mancene presented the museum with irrefutable evidence that 44 of the 61 works under investigation were stolen or looted and thus warranted repatriation to their countries of origin: Italy, Egypt or Türkiye. These works include a bronze Etruscan warrior that was stolen from Room VIII of the Museo Civico Archeologico (Archaeological Museum) in Bologna, Italy, in 1963. The other 43

works were looted from sites in Italy, Egypt and Türkiye as part of an international criminal conspiracy involving antiquities traffickers, smugglers and art dealers that is being actively investigated by the Antiquities Trafficking Unit of the Manhattan District Attorney's Office and the Department of Homeland Security.

"The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts returns any works in its collection that are discovered to be unlawfully held. The museum takes seriously, and responds to, all restitution claims for works in our collection," said VMFA's Director and CEO Alex Nyerges. "This is not just our policy. It is the right thing to do. We fully support the decision to repatriate these 44 works of ancient art."

"The clear and compelling evidence presented to VMFA left no doubt that the museum does not hold clear title for these 44 works of ancient art," said VMFA's Chief Curator and Deputy Director for Art and Education Michael R. Taylor. "Stolen or looted art has no place in our galleries or collection, so we are delighted to return these works to their countries of origin. The museum has safely delivered the 44 objects to the Manhattan District Attorney's Office, which will facilitate the return of these objects to Italy, Egypt and Türkiye."

From the outset, VMFA worked in collaboration with the Department of Homeland Security and the Antiquities Trafficking Unit of the Manhattan District Attorney's Office. The museum was praised by Col. Bogdanos and special agent Mancene for having been "admirably cooperative with the investigation" and no evidence was uncovered that linked current employees with any criminal activity related VMFA's acquisition of these antiquities, which occurred for the most part in the 1970s, 1980s and early 1990s. The museum was also informed that the other 17 works of ancient art are no longer under investigation and can remain in the museum's permanent collection.

VMFA adheres to the guidelines and standards set by the American Alliance of Museums (AAM) and the American Association of Art Museum Directors (AAMD) regarding the provenance of works of ancient art. To ensure transparency and accountability, the museum has posted 91 new acquisitions of works of ancient art on the AAMD Object Registry since it was established on June 4, 2008, for works lacking in complete provenance before November 1970, the date of the UNESCO convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import and Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property.

Since 2004, the museum has repatriated six other works of art — three European paintings that were stolen during the Nazi era and three works that were returned to the Tlingit tribe in compliance with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA). For more information about VMFA's provenance research practices and policies, visit www.vmfa.museum.

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Editor's Note — An appendix of the 44 returned works and an image key are attached.

About the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts in Richmond, Virginia, is one of the largest comprehensive art museums in the United States. VMFA, which opened in 1936, is a state agency and privately endowed educational institution. Its purpose is to collect, preserve, exhibit and interpret art, and to encourage the study of the arts. Through the Office of Statewide Partnerships program, the museum offers curated exhibitions, arts-related audiovisual programs, symposia, lectures, conferences, and workshops by visual and performing artists. In addition to presenting a wide array of special exhibitions, the museum provides visitors with the opportunity to experience a global collection of art that spans more than 6,000 years. VMFA's permanent holdings encompass nearly 50,000 artworks, including the largest public collection of Fabergé outside of Russia, the finest collection of Art Nouveau outside of Paris and one of the nation's finest collections of American art. VMFA is also home to important collections of Chinese art, English silver, and French Impressionist, Post-Impressionist, British sporting and modern and contemporary art, as well as renowned South Asian, Himalayan and African art. In May 2010, VMFA opened the James W. and Frances G. McGlothlin Wing I after a transformative expansion, previously the largest in its history. A new expansion, the McGlothlin Wing

II, is planned to open in 2028. Comprising more than 170,000 square feet, it will be the largest expansion in the museum's history and will make VMFA the fifth largest art museum in the United States.

The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts is the only art museum in the United States open 365 days a year with free general admission. For additional information, telephone (804) 340-1400 or visit www.vmfa.museum.

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VMFA Antiquities Restitution Dec 2023 | Appendix – 44 Returned Works of Ancient Art

1. Byzantine, *Solidus* (issued by Leo IV the Khazar), circa 775–780 AD, Bronze, Diameter: 4 ½ in. (11.43 cm).
2. Byzantine, *Histamenon of Theodora* (issued by Theodora), circa 1055–1056 AD, Gold, Diameter: 1 in. (2.54 cm).
3. Byzantine, *Follis* (issued by Justinian I), circa 539–540 AD, Bronze, Diameter: 1 5/8 in. (4.13 cm).
4. Greek (Attic), *Flame-Palmette Finial for a Funerary Stele*, mid-4th Century BC, Marble, 29 × 18 ½ × 4 ½ in. (73.66 × 46.99 × 11.43 cm).
5. Attributed to the Dodwell Painter, Greek (Corinthian), *Olpe (Pitcher)*, circa 600 BC, Terracotta, 7 ¼ × 9 in. (43.82 × 22.86 cm).
6. Greek (Protocorinthian), *Kotyle (Deep Wine Cup)*, 7th century BC, Terracotta, 3 3/8 × 5 5/8 in. (8.57 × 14.29 cm).
7. Etruscan, *Downspout with Woman's Face*, late 6th century BC, Terracotta with traces of polychrome, 11 ½ × 8 ¾ × 24 in. (29.21 × 22.23 × 60.96 cm).
8. Attributed to the Rose Painter, South Italian (Gnathia), *Gnathian Askos (Wine Flask)*, circa 330 BC, Terracotta, 11 × 10 × 10 ½ in. (27.94 × 25.4 × 26.67 cm).
9. Attributed to the Underworld Painter (Greek, South Italian, Apulia), *Red-Figure Lekythos*, 4th century BC, Terracotta, 37 ¼ × 13 ½ in. (94.5 × 34.3 cm).
10. Greek (Laconian), *Aryballos (Oil Bottle)*, 570–560 BC, Terracotta, 2 ¼ × 2 ¼ in. (5.72 × 5.72 cm).
11. Greek (Corinthian), *Aryballos (Oil Bottle)*, 7th century BC, Terracotta, 2 7/8 × 3 in. (7.3 × 7.62 cm).
12. Greek, South Italian (Gnathian), *Gnathian Cup*, 4th century BC, Terracotta, 2 5/8 × 7 × 4 ½ in. (6.67 × 17.78 × 11.43 cm).
13. Attributed to the Underworld Painter (Greek, South Italian, Apulia), *Red-Figure Lekythos*, 4th century BC, Terracotta, 37 ¼ × 13 ½ in. (94.5 × 34.3 cm).
14. Attributed to the Amykos Painter (Greek, South Italian, Lucanian), *Red-Figure Nestoris*, circa 425–400 BC, Terracotta, 15 5/8 × 14 × 12 ½ in. (39.69 × 35.56 × 31.75 cm).
15. Attributed to the Rider Painter, Greek (Laconian), *Kylix (Drinking Cup)*, circa 550–530 BC, Terracotta, 4 × 7 5/8 × 5 ½ in. (10.16 × 19.37 × 13.97 cm).
16. Attributed to Python II Painter (Greek, South Italian, Paestan), *Red-Figure Bell-Krater (Mixing Bowl)*, circa 330–310 BC, Terracotta, 14 × 13 3/8 in. (35.56 × 33.97 cm).
17. Attributed to the Nazzano Painter (Etruscan), *Red-Figure Kalix-Krater (Mixing Bowl)*, circa 370 BC, Terracotta, 19 × 19 ½ in. (48.26 × 49.53 cm).
18. South Italian, *Relief Applique from a Pyxis (Storage Box)*, 4th century BC, Gilded silver, 2 1/8 × 2 ¼ × ½ in. (5.4 × 5.72 × 1.27 cm).
19. Greek (South Italian), *Reclining Actor from a Funerary Set*, 3rd century BC, Polychromed terracotta, 2 ¼ × 6 5/8 × 2 ½ in. (5.72 × 16.83 × 6.35 cm).
20. Greek (South Italian), *Actor as a Slave with a Basket from a Funerary Set*, 3rd century BC, Polychromed terracotta, 5 ¾ × 2 × 2 in. (14.61 × 5.08 × 5.08 cm).
21. Greek (South Italian), *Figure of an Old Man from a Funerary Set*, 3rd century BC, Polychromed terracotta, 5 ½ × 2 ¼ × 2 in. (13.97 × 5.72 × 5.08 cm).
22. Greek (South Italian), *Figure of an Old Man from a Funerary Set*, 3rd century BC, Polychromed terracotta, 5 ¼ × 2 ¼ × 1 5/8 in. (13.34 × 5.72 × 4.13 cm).
23. Greek (South Italian), *Slave Mask from a Funerary Set*, 3rd century BC, Polychromed terracotta, 4 ½ × 3 ½ × 2 3/8 in. (11.43 × 8.89 × 6.03 cm).
24. Greek (South Italian), *Slave Mask from a Funerary Set*, 3rd century BC, Polychromed terracotta, 4 5/8 × 3 ½ × 2 ½ in. (11.75 × 8.89 × 6.35 cm).
25. Greek (South Italian), *Mask of a Young Man from a Funerary Set*, 3rd century BC, Polychromed terracotta, 4 ½ × 3 ½ × 2 ¼ in. (11.43 × 8.89 × 5.72 cm).

26. Greek (South Italian), *Head Oinochoe of a "White Face" Mime from a Funerary Set*, 3rd century BC, Polychromed terracotta, $9 \times 3 \frac{3}{4} \times 4 \frac{3}{4}$ in. (22.86 \times 9.53 \times 12.07 cm).
27. Greek (South Italian), *Head Oinochoe of a "Black Face" Mime from a Funerary Set*, 3rd century BC, Polychromed terracotta, $9 \frac{3}{4} \times 3 \frac{3}{4} \times 4$ in. (24.77 \times 9.53 \times 10.16 cm).
28. Greek (South Italian), *Figure of a Winking Mime from a Funerary Set*, 3rd century BC, Polychromed terracotta, $6 \times 2 \frac{1}{8} \times 2 \frac{1}{8}$ in. (15.24 \times 5.4 \times 5.4 cm).
29. Greek (South Italian), *Figure of a Mime Traveler from a Funerary Set*, 3rd century BC, Polychromed terracotta, $6 \frac{1}{2} \times 2 \frac{3}{8} \times 2 \frac{3}{8}$ in. (16.51 \times 6.03 \times 6.03 cm).
30. Greek (South Italian), *Figure of a Mime Dwarf from a Funerary Set*, 3rd century BC, Polychromed terracotta, $4 \frac{1}{2} \times 1 \frac{7}{8} \times 1 \frac{3}{4}$ in. (11.43 \times 4.76 \times 4.45 cm).
31. Greek (South Italian), *Figure of a Soldier Mime Riding a Rooster from a Funerary Set*, 3rd century BC, Polychromed terracotta, $7 \frac{1}{2} \times 3 \frac{1}{2} \times 5 \frac{3}{8}$ in. (19.05 \times 8.89 \times 13.65 cm).
32. Greek (South Italian), *Figure of a Mime as a Donkey from a Funerary Set*, 3rd century BC, Polychromed terracotta, $7 \frac{3}{4} \times 4 \frac{1}{4} \times 2 \frac{1}{2}$ in. (19.69 \times 10.8 \times 6.35 cm).
33. Greek (South Italian), *Vase from a Funerary Set*, 3rd century BC, Polychromed terracotta, $5 \frac{3}{8} \times 2 \frac{1}{2} \times 1 \frac{5}{8}$ in. (13.65 \times 6.35 \times 4.13 cm).
34. Greek (South Italian), *Vase from a Funerary Set*, 3rd century BC, Polychromed terracotta, $4 \frac{1}{2} \times 2 \frac{1}{2} \times 2$ in. (11.43 \times 6.35 \times 5.08 cm).
35. Greek (South Italian), *Vase from a Funerary Set*, 3rd century BC, Polychromed terracotta, $4 \frac{3}{8} \times 2 \times 2 \frac{1}{8}$ in. (11.11 \times 5.08 \times 5.4 cm).
36. Greek (South Italian), *Vase from a Funerary Set*, 3rd century BC, Polychromed terracotta, $4 \frac{1}{4} \times 2 \times 2 \frac{1}{8}$ in. (10.8 \times 5.08 \times 5.4 cm).
37. Greek (South Italian), *Vase from a Funerary Set*, 3rd century BC, Polychromed terracotta, $3 \frac{7}{8} \times 2 \times 2$ in. (9.84 \times 5.08 \times 5.08 cm).
38. Greek (South Italian), *Make Up Palette from a Funerary Set*, 3rd century BC, Polychromed terracotta, $\frac{1}{4} \times 2 \frac{1}{2} \times 2 \frac{5}{8}$ in. (0.64 \times 6.35 \times 6.67 cm).
39. Greek, Late Hellenistic Period, *Statue of a Young Boy*, 1st century AD, Marble, $34 \frac{3}{8} \times 15 \frac{3}{4} \times 9$ in. (87.33 \times 40.01 \times 22.86 cm).
40. Attributed to the Black Thyrsus Painter, Greek, *Red-Figure Bell-Krater*, 375–350 BC, Terracotta, $14 \frac{1}{8} \times 14 \frac{1}{4}$ in. (35.88 \times 36.2 cm).
41. Egyptian (Dynasty 26, Late Period), *Vessel in the form of the God Bes*, 650–550 BC, Faience, $5 \frac{5}{8} \times 3 \frac{25}{32} \times 3 \frac{3}{8}$ in. (14.29 \times 9.6 \times 8.57 cm).
42. Greek (Macedonian), Hellenistic Period, *Portrait Head of a Man*, circa 200 BC, Copper Alloy, $4 \frac{1}{8} \times 2 \frac{1}{2} \times 3 \frac{3}{16}$ in. (10.48 \times 6.35 \times 8.1 cm).
43. Etruscan, *Statuette of a Warrior*, 5th Century BC, Bronze, $8 \frac{3}{4} \times 3 \frac{1}{2} \times 2 \frac{3}{4}$ in. (22.2 \times 8.9 \times 7 cm).
44. Roman, *Actor*, 2nd Century AD, Bronze, $5 \times 2 \times 3 \frac{3}{4}$ in. (12.7 \times 5.08 \times 9.53 cm).

VMFA Antiquities Restitution Dec 2023 | Image Key

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Gnathian Askos (Wine Flask), circa 330 BC, attributed to the Rose Painter, South Italian (Gnathia), terracotta, 11 × 10 × 10 ½ in. (27.94 × 25.4 × 26.67 cm).
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Etruscan, Statuette of a Warrior, 5th Century BC, bronze, 8 ¾ × 3 ½ × 2 ¾ in. (22.2 × 8.9 × 7 cm). Photo by Travis Fullerton © 2014 Virginia Museum of Fine Arts



Figure of a Soldier Mime Riding a Rooster from a Funerary Set, 3rd century BC, (South Italian), polychromed terracotta, 7 ½ × 3 ½ × 5 3/8 in. (19.05 × 8.89 × 13.65 cm). Photo by David Stover © 2017 Virginia Museum of Fine Arts



Vessel in the form of the God Bes (Cosmetic Container), 650–550 BC, Egyptian (Dynasty 26, Late Period), faience, 5 5/8 × 3 25/32 × 3 3/8 in. (14.29 × 9.6 × 8.57 cm).
Photo by Katherine Wetzell © 2010 Virginia Museum of Fine Arts



Red-Figure Lekythos, 4th century BC, attributed to the Underworld Painter (Greek, South Italian, Apulia), terracotta, 37 ¼ × 13 ½ in. (94.5 × 34.3 cm). Photo by Travis Fullerton © 2016 Virginia Museum of Fine Arts