

GREEK MARBLE DRAPED WOMAN (PUDICITIA)

Greek, Hellenistic, 3rd – 2nd century B.C.

Marble

H: 157 cm

Reference: 15093



Following a Classical sculptural tradition, the richly draped woman is dressed in a chiton, a long tunic, and a himation, or mantle, which wraps her body in voluminous folds of cloth as it hangs down and envelops the chiton beneath. The figure's undraped right arm extends across her body and her gracefully positioned hand holds the drapery of the himation in place. With her left arm and hand she would have supported her head in a gesture commonly found in figures on funerary monuments to indicate sorrow. The himation covers her shoulders and is gathered in a number of swag-like folds extending across the front of her body, draping from right shoulder to left. The lower edge of the himation ends below the knees, below which neatly arranged vertical folds of the chiton are visible as pleats of cloth hanging downward. The gracefully draping folds of the heavier himation, a garment usually made of wool, are contrasted with the delicate vertical folds of the chiton, which would have been made of lighter material such as finely woven linen. While the drapery arrangement effectively clothes the figure, it also exposes the body beneath, as it is drawn tightly across the figure's right side and thus reveals the contours of her upper thigh, knee, and leg. The woman stands upon a base with her weight placed on her left leg, which is concealed by the draping chiton. The right leg bends at the knee and extends forward and to the side. The figure wears sandals and both of her feet are visible from beneath the folds of the chiton that drapes over them.

This statue belongs to a particular type of Late Hellenistic sculpture representing draped female figures, which had a wide range across the Mediterranean region in the Hellenistic and Roman periods. The intended pose of the sculpture, with one arm and hand across the body and the other lifted up toward the face, is ultimately related to mourning female figures on 4th century B.C. grave reliefs and sculpture in the so-called pudicitia pose that may have been intended to convey

the figure's modesty and virtue. The sculpture likely depicts a mortal woman and served as a commemorative or funerary portrait. However, it could have also functioned as a religious or civic dedication since honorific statues of women could be placed in sanctuaries or secular settings. Such draped sculptures of female figures were influenced by a pair of famous Greek originals made about 320 B.C. that represented the goddess Demeter and Persephone. The original works have been attributed to a notable sculptor of the period, possibly Praxiteles or Lysippos.

CONDITION

No restorations or repairs; superficial scratches and chips to the surface; head, shoulders, left arm, part of right hand missing.

PROVENANCE

Ex- European private collection, Germany, prior to 2001

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Christie's, New York, 12 December 2002, lot 153

EXHIBITED

The International Fine Art & Antique Dealers Show, New York, October 2012

BIBLIOGRAPHY

For comparable Late Classical and Hellenistic sculptures of draped

women: N. Kaltsas, *Sculpture in the National Archaeological Museum* (Los Angeles 2002), 207, no. 420, Pentelic marble, ca. last quarter of the 4th century B.C., height 1.55 meters, is particularly close to this sculpture; for the pudicitia pose, 158, no. 310, 168, no. 332, 185, no. 364. Also see R. Smith, *Hellenistic Sculpture* (New York 1991), 83-86, figs. 112-13; J. Boardman, *Greek Sculpture: The Late Classical Period* (New York 1995), 114-16; for the pudicitia pose, no. 119, the gravestone of Demetria and Pamphile, Athens, Keremeikos, ca. 320 B.C.