

“GREEN LADY” RETURNS TO GALLERY: AN EXAMPLE OF ANCIENT PORTRAITURE AND MODERN CONSERVATION

On view in the Jan and Frederick Mayer lobby through 2012.

The Yale University Art Gallery is pleased to announce the installation of a recent and important acquisition that showcases portraiture traditions of the late Hellenistic and early Roman era and 21st century conservation methods.



Pre- and post-conservation images of Figure of a Woman, Roman, 1st century B.C.–early 1st century A.D. Marble. Yale University Art Gallery, Purchased with the Ruth Elizabeth White and Leonard C. Hanna, Jr., B.A. 1913, Fund

Acquired in 2007, and affectionately known to Gallery staff as the “Green Lady,” due to the algae that once marred its surface, the statue has undergone extensive cleaning and conservation. A larger-than-life, high-quality portrait statue with idealized features and careful attention to the details of dress and pose, the statue is an example of the *pudicitia* portrait type (from the Latin word meaning modesty), which was meant to make a strong statement about the character of the subject.

The “Green Lady” was displayed as a work-in-progress in the exhibition “*Time Will Tell: Ethics and Choices in Conservation*”, during the summer of 2009. When acquired, the marble statue showed at least two previous major phases of restoration and repair. The most jarring of those was a reconstructed right arm that was inaccurately positioned and inconsistent in scale from the original. Conservators and curators together had to decide how to reverse the damage that has been done (both by the elements and by previous restoration efforts), how to prevent further damage, and how to display the portrait in its best light, without misleading additions. Visitors to the Gallery will see the results of their work.

Yale University Art Gallery

The Gallery’s collections numbers more than 185,000 objects, spanning the globe and ranging in date from ancient times to the present day. Located at the corner of Chapel and York Streets in New Haven, Connecticut, the Gallery is open to the public free of charge: Tuesday–Saturday 10:00 AM–5:00 PM (Thursday until 8:00 PM, September–June); Sunday 1:00–6:00 PM. Closed Mondays and major holidays. For additional information, the public may visit <http://artgallery.yale.edu>, or call 203.432.0600.

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