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The Greek Body

Ian Jenkins, Victoria Turner

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More than any other ancient civilization, the Greeks placed the human body at the center of their culture. To them, the sculpted human figure was both an object of sensory delight and an expression of an intelligent mind. In the modern popular imagination, mention of the ancient Greeks is likely to conjure up an image of idealized and naked youth, and it is true that the ideal nude, both male and female, is a striking feature of Greek sculpture. However, in later Greek art, sculptors and their patrons became increasingly interested in human diversity, experimenting with the representation of ethnicity, age, social standing, and character. The marble, bronze, and terra-cotta sculptures presented in this volume--outstanding highlights drawn from over six centuries of artistic production--demonstrate the diversity of Greek figural forms, from the idealized beauty of the Classical era to the individualized portraits of the Hellenistic period. Large, stunning details testify to the artists' skills in portraying cold, hard materials as warm, human flesh.

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