

GREEK ART

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ACHIEVED A LEVEL OF SOPHISTICATION
UNMATCHED BY ANY OTHER CONTEMPORARY
CIVILIZATION

CONSIDERED AS A PARADIGM FOR THE ARTISTS
THROUGH OUT THE AGES.

EMPHASIZED ON:

ORDER

HARMONY

BALANCE

FOCUSED ON CELEBRATING AND IDEALIZING
THE HUMAN FIGURE

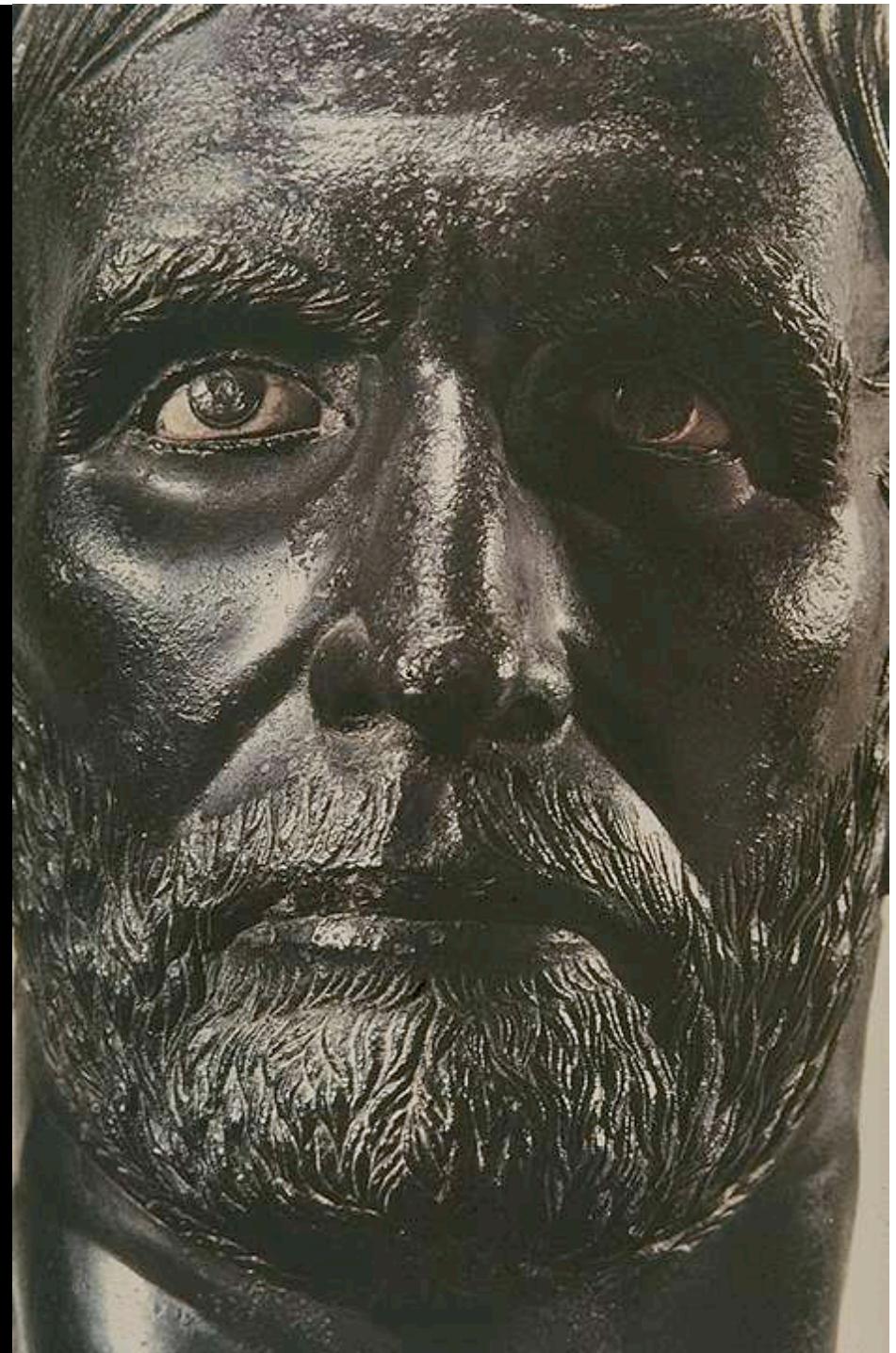
CHIEF CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES:

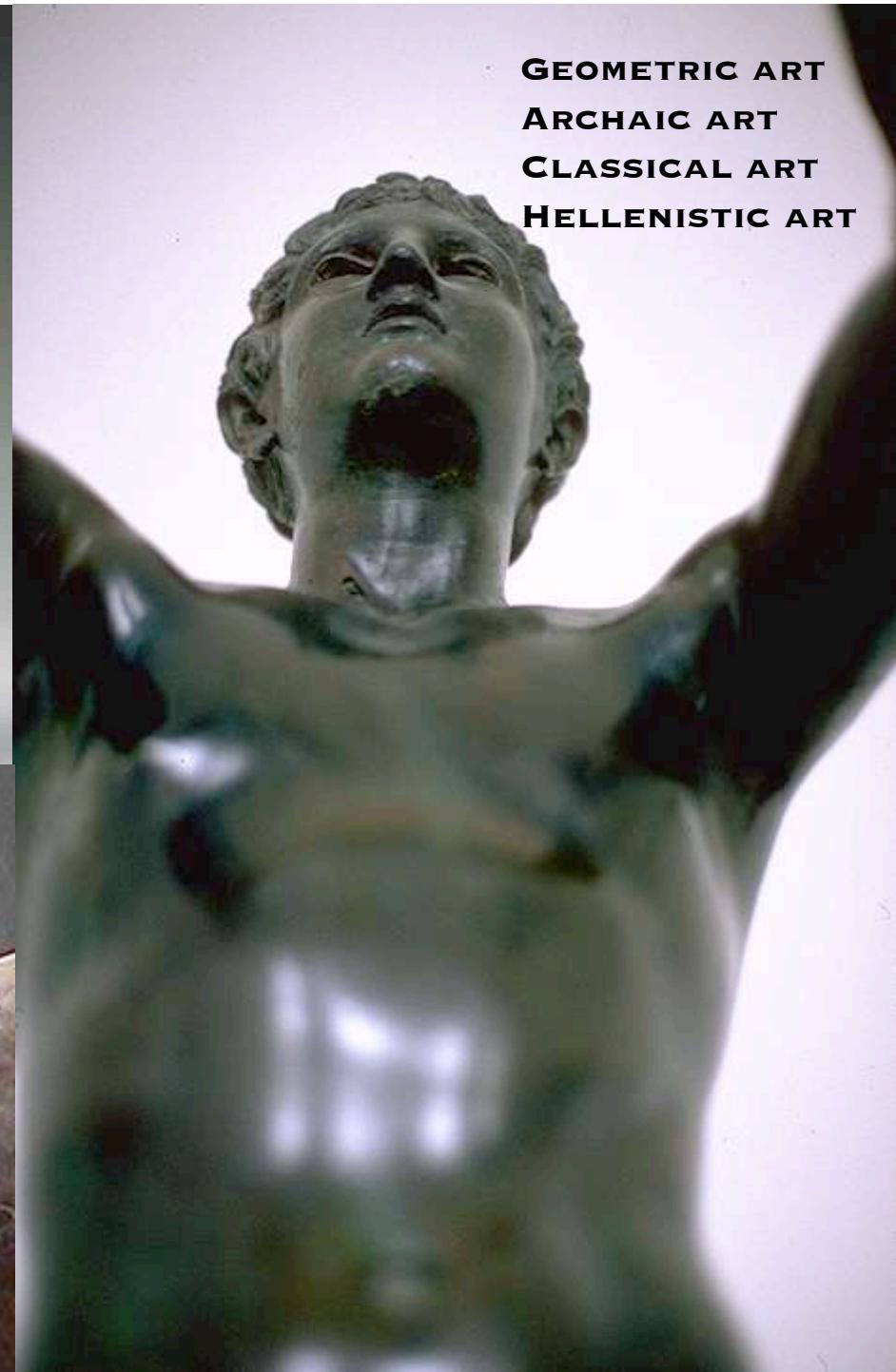
CAPTURED A MOMENT OF BEAUTY,

NEVER MANIPULATED THE ORDER OF NATURE

EMPHASIS ON REALISM - PROPORTIONS,
BALANCE

MENTORS OF THE ANCIENT ROMANS





GEOMETRIC ART
ARCHAIC ART
CLASSICAL ART
HELLENISTIC ART

GEOMETRIC PHASE

1000BC-700BC.

EVOLVED DURING AN EARLY PERIOD IN THE GREEK ART HISTORY

A DOMINANT ARTISTIC STYLE OF ANCIENT GREECE

WHY WAS THE PERIOD DUBBED GEOMETRIC?

VASE PAINTINGS IN PARTICULAR WERE ADORNED AND DECORATED WITH CURVILINEAR AND RECTILINEAR OR PRECISE GEOMETRIC PATTERNS

THIS PHASE OF GREEK ART LOOKS RATHER HARSH, PRIMITIVE AND RIGID.



DIPYLON VASE (MOURNING OF DEAD), 700-750BC

ORGANIC AND GEOMETRIC ELEMENTS COEXIST IN THE SAME FIELD; DISTINCTION BETWEEN THEM IS OFTEN DIFFICULT.

THE FIGURES REPEATED AT REGULAR INTERVALS, ARE LITTLE MORE THAN ORNAMENTATION OR THAT MIXES UP WITH THE SAME OVER ALL TEXTURE OF DESIGNED MOTIF.

LOZENGES (DIAMOND SHAPED FIGURE)

A CUSTOM IN THE PRIMITIVE SOCIETIES

THE SCENE DEPICTS A DEAD MAN LYING ON HIS BIER AND PEOPLE TO THE RIGHT AND LEFT RAISE THEIR HANDS TO THEIR HEAD IN THE RITUAL LAMENT.

THE SCENES REPRESENTED THROUGH THE FIGURES BECOME STRICTLY PART OF THE GEOMETRIC PATTERNS MEANING THEY DO NOT STAND OUT SHARPLY.



UNDERSTANDING THE MEANING AND SIGNIFICANCE OF DIPYLON

IN ANCIENT ATHENS, THERE WAS A GATE CALLED DIPYLON, WHICH STOOD NEAR AN ATHENIAN CEMETERY. THE MOURNERS PLACED THESE VASES TO MARK THE GRAVES OF THEIR RELATIVES OR DEPARTED LOVED ONES. ULTIMATELY THE NAME OF THE DIPYLON GATE GOT CONNECTED WITH THESE VASES, WHICH WERE CREATED TO SERVE THE FUNERARY PURPOSES THAT WERE EXCAVATED FROM THIS SPOT.

IN ADDITION TO THEIR FUNCTION AS GRAVE MARKERS, THESE VASES WERE USED TO RECEIVE LIBATION (DRINK OFFERED TO GOD). ITS BOTTOM HAS A HOLE THROUGH WHICH THE LIQUID OFFERING COULD FILTER DOWN TO THE DEAD LYING BELOW.

THERE IS NO SUGGESTION OF THE IDEA OF AFTER LIFE AS ITS JUST THE FUNERARY PROCESSION THAT HAS BEEN REFERRED TO IN ALL THESE VASE PAINTINGS

**THERE ARE MEN DEPICTED AS
WARRIORS, WITH THEIR SHIELDS**

**A CHARIOT WITH A GROUP OF HORSES
STANDING IN A ROW AS A PART OF THE
FUNERAL PROCESSION.**



ARCHAIC PHASE 700BC-480BC

AN IMPORTANT ERA IN THE INNOVATION AND ACHIEVEMENT IN THE GREEK ART HISTORY.

DURING THIS PERIOD, THE GREEK ARTISTS INCREASINGLY CAME INTO CONTACT WITH THE IDEAS AND STYLES OF OTHER CIVILIZATIONS.

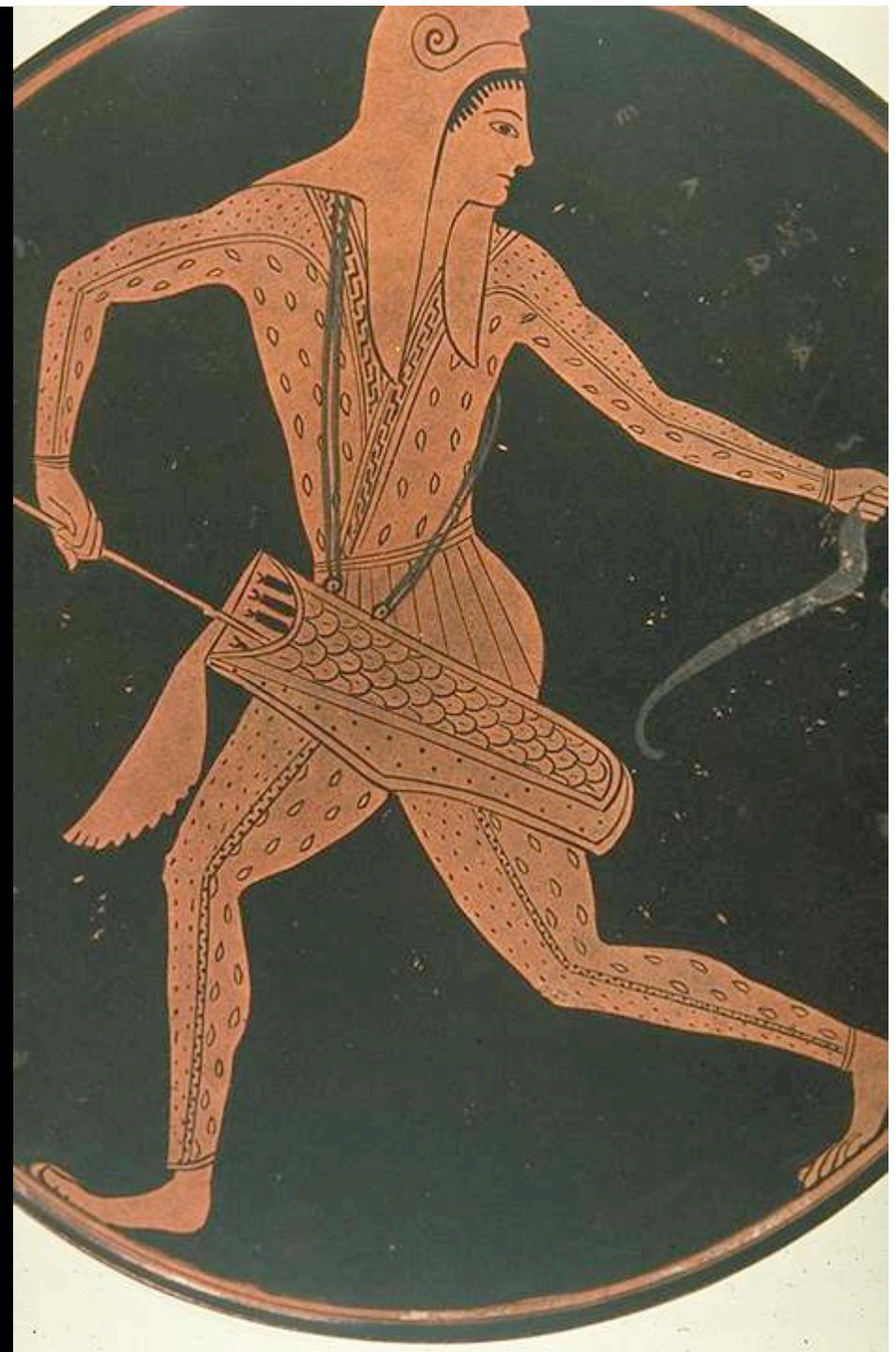
ART WORKS BEGAN REFLECTING GREEK IDEALS.

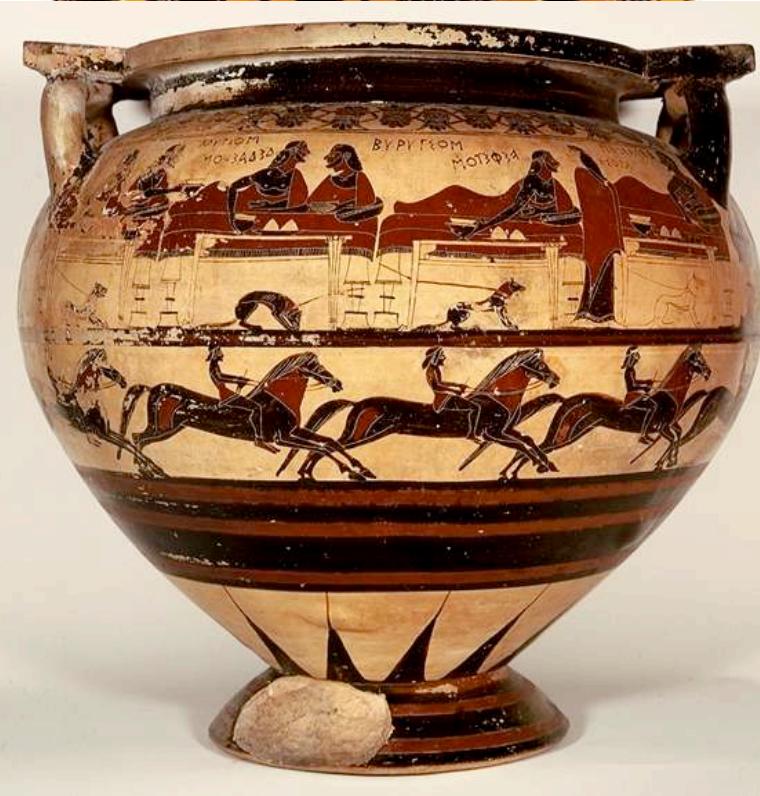
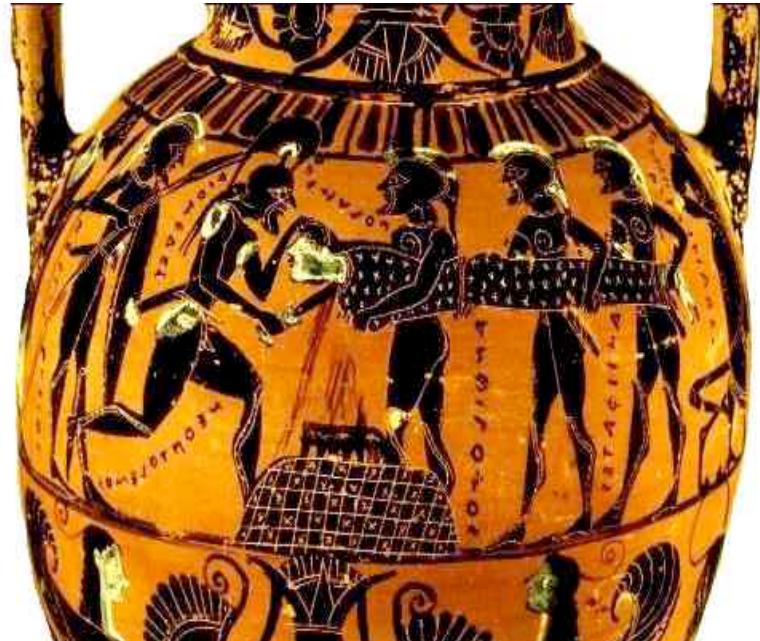
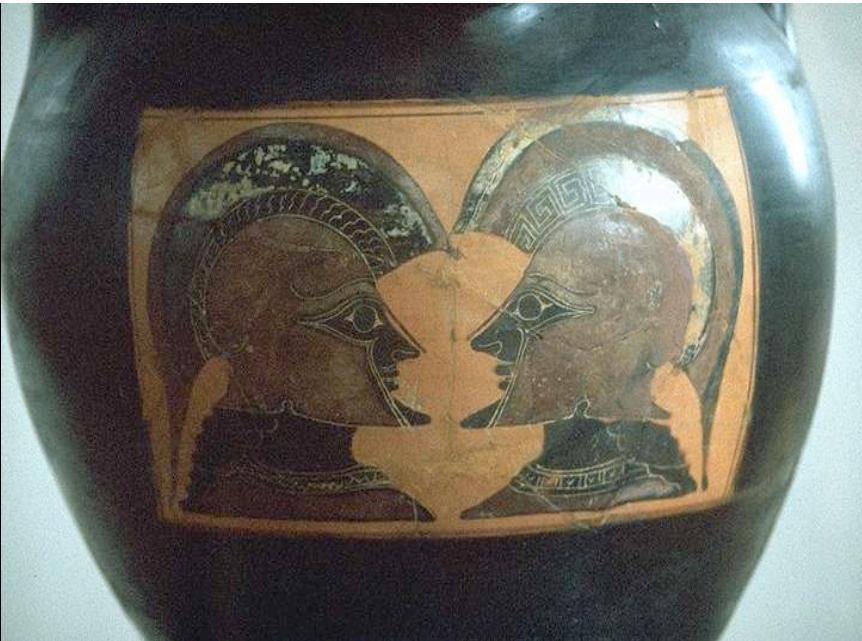
THE PAINTINGS ON VASE DEVELOPED INTO AN IMPORTANT INDUSTRY IN ATHENS.

THE CRAFTSMEN EMPLOYED INNOVATIVE AND NEWER PAINTING METHODS TO THEIR PRODUCTS

A VAGUE IDEA OF THE EARLY GREEK PAINTINGS IS THROUGH THE PICTURES ON THEIR POTTERY.

THE PURPOSE OF THESE PAINTED VESSELS WAS OFTEN TO HOLD WINE.





**ACHILLES & AJAX PLAYING DRAUGHTS
(540BC) CHARACTERS FROM HOMER**

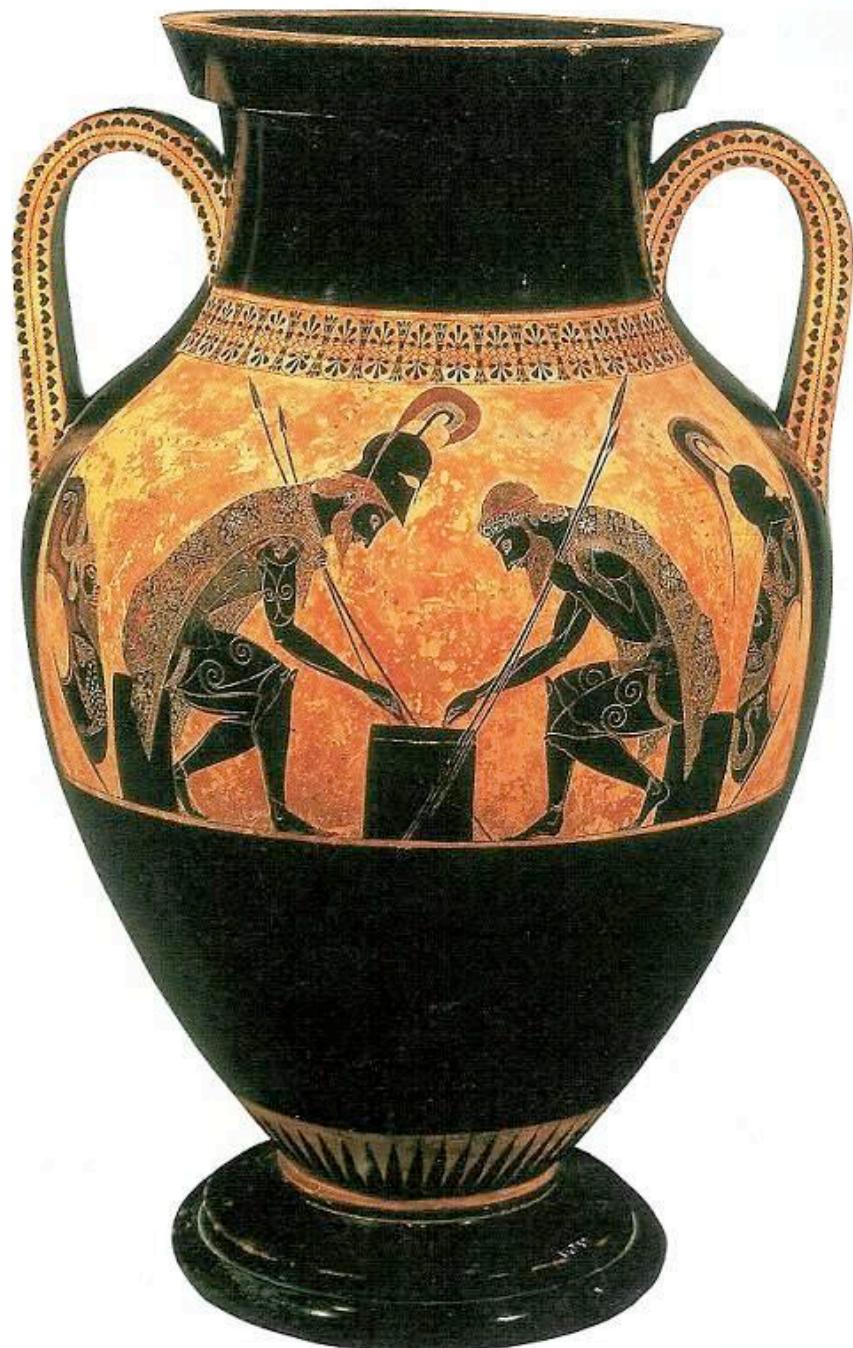
**TRACES OF THE EGYPTIAN PATTERNS
FIGURES SHOWN STRICTLY IN PROFILE WITH
THEIR EYES AS SEEN FROM FRONT.**

**GREEK IDEALS OF REALISM BEGIN TO APPEAR
BODIES NO LONGER DRAWN IN THE EGYPTIAN
FASHION NOR ARE THEIR ARM AND LEGS SET
OUT SO CLEARLY AND RIGIDLY.**

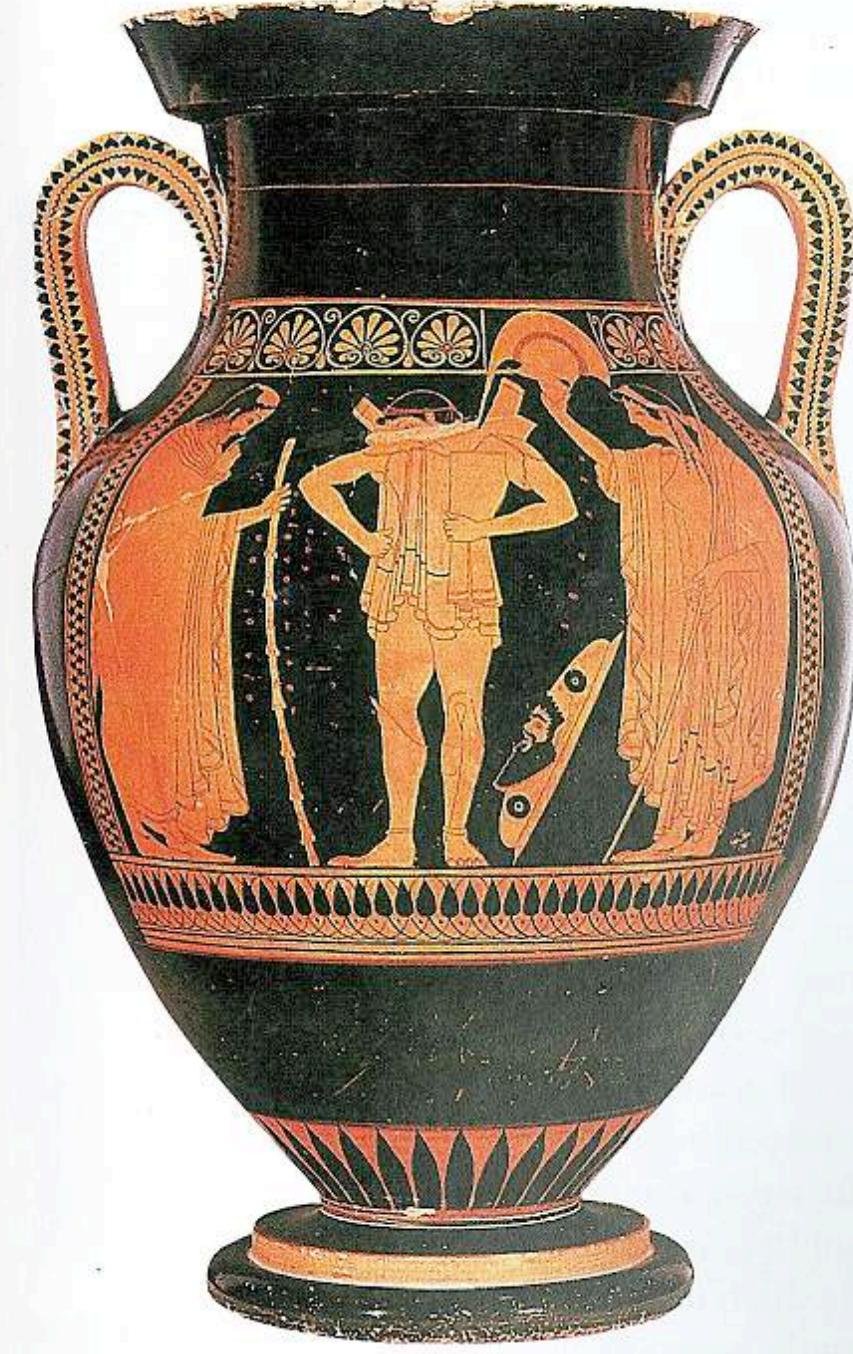
**THE PAINTER TRIED TO IMAGINE HOW IT LOOKS
WHEN TWO PERSON ARE SITTING TOGETHER
FACING EACH OTHER.**

**ONLY A SMALL PART OF ACHILLES' LEFT HAND
IS SHOWN AND THE REST IS BEING HIDDEN
BEHIND THE BODY.**

**THE ARTIST NO LONGER THOUGHT THAT EVERY
THING HE KNEW TO BE THERE MUST BE SHOWN.**



**ONCE THIS ANCIENT RULE WAS BROKEN AND THE ARTISTS BEGAN TO RELY ON WHAT HE
SAW HE DISCOVERED SOME THING NEW; IN THE PAINTINGS OF ALL THE ANCIENT CULTURES
NOTHING OF THIS KIND HAPPENED BEFORE**



THE WARRIOR TAKING LEAVE (510BC)
(POINTS TO OBSERVE)

**THE RIGHT LEG OF THE FIGURE IS IN PROFILE
BUT THE LEFT FOOT HAS A FORE SHORTENING.**

TOES LIKE A ROW OF FIVE CIRCLES.

**IMMEDIATELY BESIDE THE WARRIOR'S LEFT FOOT
IS KEPT THE SHIELD SEEN FROM SIDE AS IF IT'S
LEANING AGAINST A WALL. FRONTAL EYES NO
LONGER PLACED ON PROFILE FACE**

**ARTIST NO LONGER AIMED AT INCLUDING EVERY
THING IN THE PICTURE IN ITS MOST CLEARLY
VISIBLE WAY BUT TOOK ACCOUNT OF THE ANGLE
FROM WHICH HE SAW AN OBJECT**

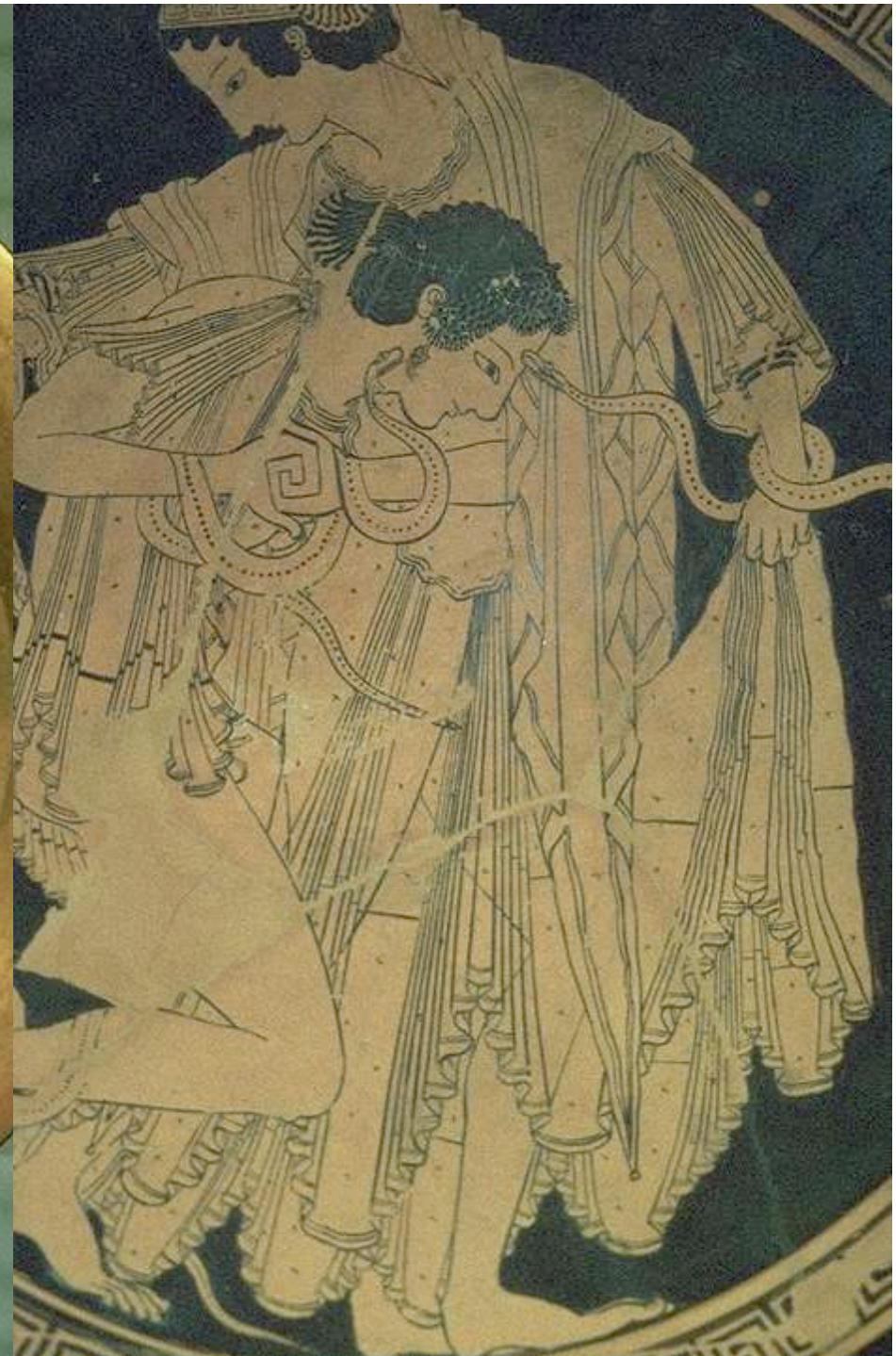
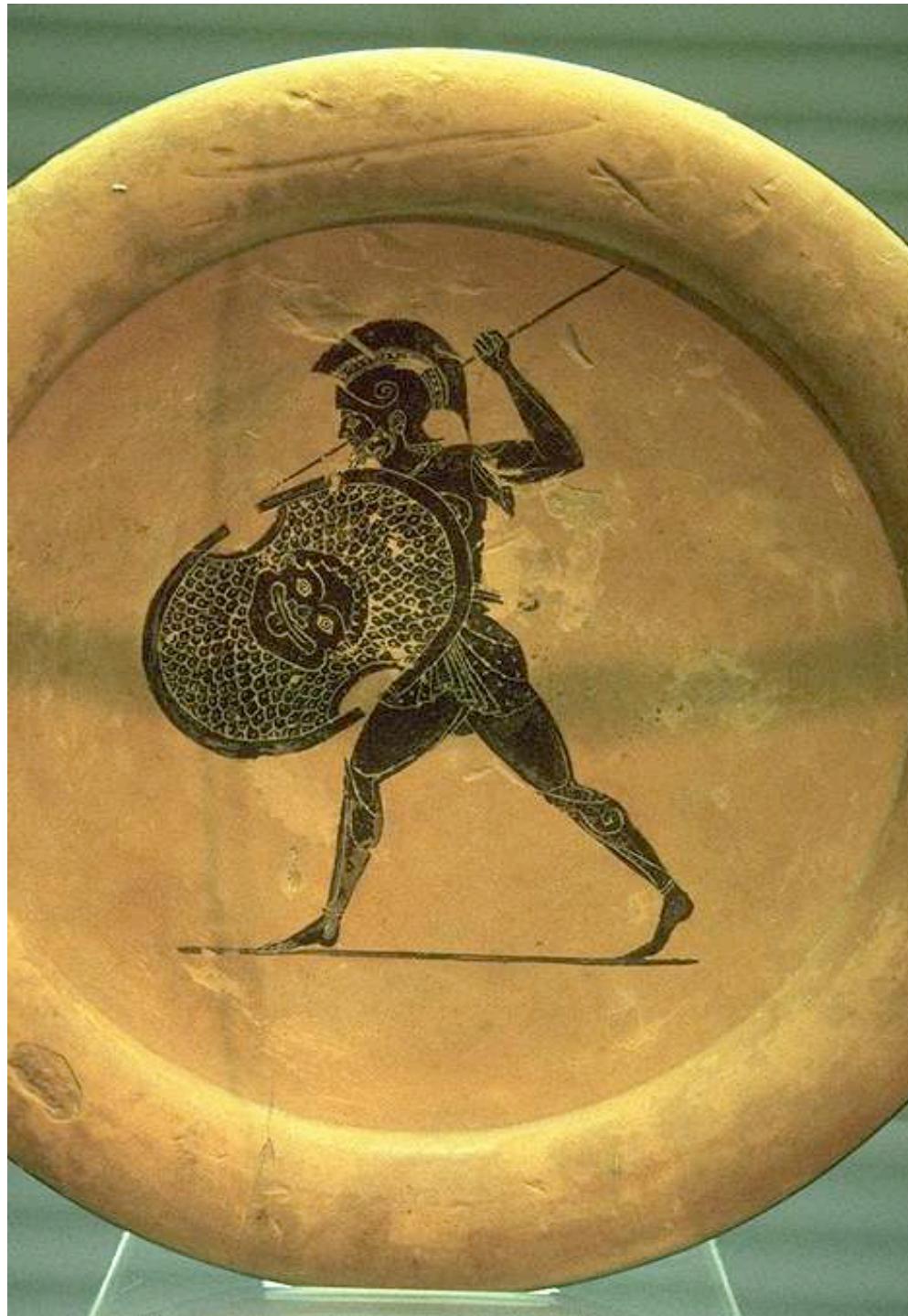
TWO MAJOR STYLES:

RED POTTERY

BLACK POTTERY



WOUNDED SOLDIER 500 BC, BLACK POTTERY



KORE AND KOUROS 650BC-600BC

KOUROS (STANDARD TERM USED FOR MALE GREEK STATUES)

KORE STATUE (FEMALE FIGURE)

SIMILARITIES - GREEK AND EGYPTIAN MODELS

POSITION OF THE ARMS IN THE SIDE WITH CLOSED FIST AND LEFT LEG PUSHED FORWARD (REFER EGYPTIANS STATUES)

THE RENDERING OF THE KNEECAPS SUGGESTS AN EGYPTIAN INFLUENCE.

FORMAL WIG LIKE TREATMENT OF THE HAIR AND THE CLOSE FITTING GARMENT SHOWN BY SOLID UN-DIFFERENT MASS FROM WHICH ONLY THE TOES PROTRUDE OUT IN THE KORE STATUE (FEMALE FIGURE) WITH RAISED ARMS ARE FURTHER POINTS OF RESEMBLANCE.

JUDGED BY THE EGYPTIAN STANDARDS THE ARCHAIC STATUES SEEM SOMEWHAT PRIMITIVE, RIGID AND OVERSIMPLIFIED.



AT THE SAME TIME QUALITIES OF GREEK SCULPTURES CANNOT BE MEASURED IN THE EGYPTIAN TERMS.

TRULY FREE STANDING HAVING BEEN SET FREE FROM THE BLOCK OF STONE.

THERE ARE NEVER ANY HOLES IN THE EGYPTIAN STONE FIGURES (AND THAT IS THE REASON WHY THEY ARE NOT RANKED AS SCULPTURES BUT AS EXTREME CASE OF HIGH RELIEF)

THE GREEK CARVERS ON CONTRARY CUT AWAY EVERY BIT OF DEAD MATERIAL.

THEY SEPARATED THE ARMS FROM THE TORSO AND THE LEGS FROM EACH OTHER.



DEVELOPMENT IN THE ARCHAIC PHASE OF GREEK ART THROUGH A COMPARISON OF THE EARLY KOUROS WITH TWO LATER SCULPTURES CALLED “THE DYING SOLDIAR” AND “HERAKLES”, 490 BC

SWELLING CURVES INSTEAD OF SHARPLY CONTOURED, ABSTRACT PLANES OF THE OLDER STATUES

BODIES DISPLAY GREATER AWARENESS OF VOLUMES AND ELASTICITY

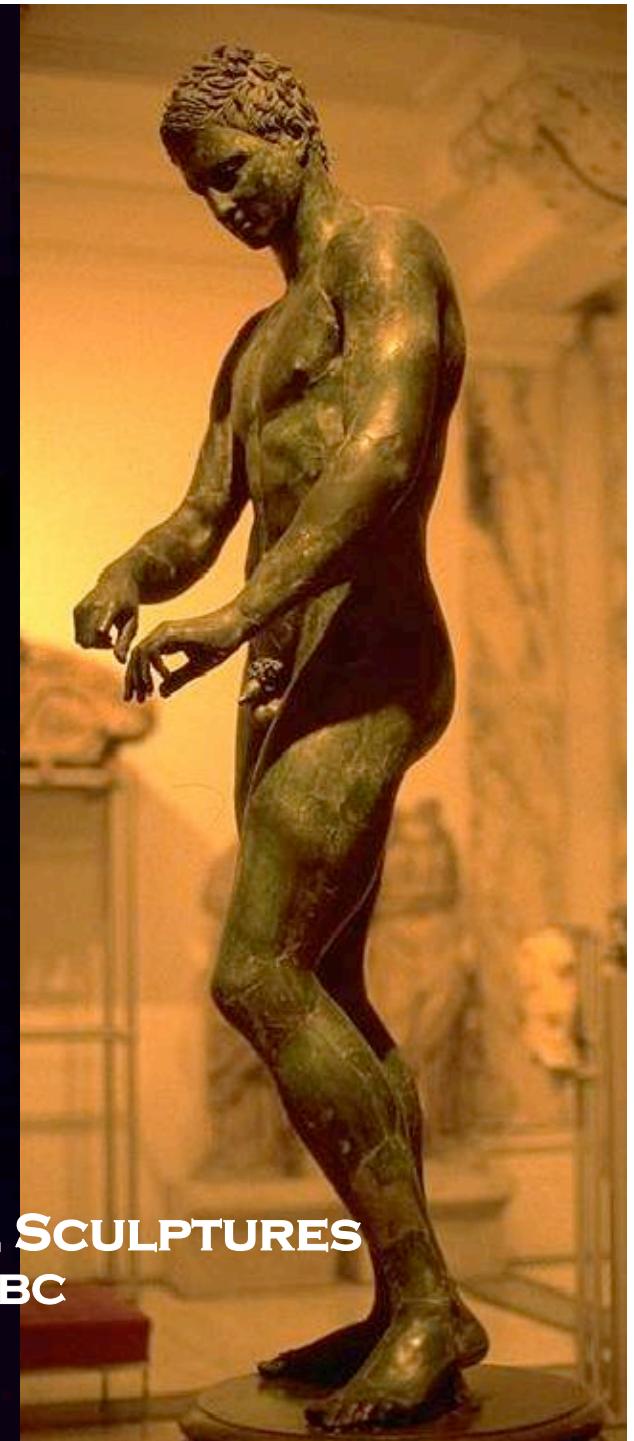
ANATOMICAL DETAILS MORE FUNCTIONALLY RENDERED

LEAN, MUSCULAR FIGURES WITH BODIES MORE FUNCTIONAL AND ORGANIC

ADMIRABLE COMMAND OF THE HUMAN FORMS IN ACTION

REPRESENTATION OF SPIRIT; DIGNITY IN THE AGONY OF DYING OR IN AN ACT OF KILLING COMMUNICATED BY THE FIRM REPRESENTATION.





CLASSICAL SCULPTURES
480 BC - 400BC

DORYPHORUS (SPEAR BEARER, 450-440BC) BY POLYCLITUS

A FAMOUS KOUROS STATUE. ROMAN COPIES OF THE CLASSICAL SCULPTURES

INSTRUCTIVE COMPARISON WITH THE ARCHAIC KOUROS FIGURES.

DORYPHORUS STANDS IN A TRUE SENSE OF WORD.

NOT ALONE IN UPRIGHT POSITION; THE ARCHAIC GESTURE IS AN ARRESTED WALK WITH THE WEIGHT OF THE BODY RESTING EVENLY ON BOTH THE LEGS.

DORYPHORUS ALSO STANDS WITH ONE LEG PLACED FORWARD BUT NOT STANDING STILL.

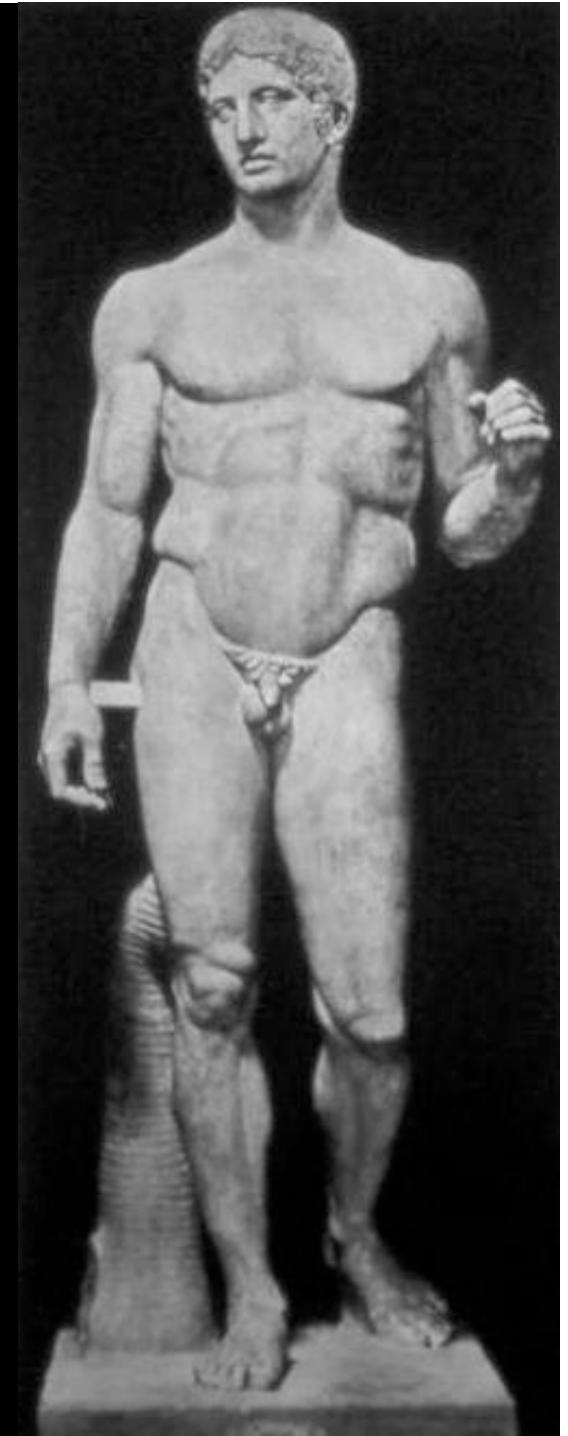
ON COMPARING THE RIGHT AND LEFT HALF OF THE BODY FOR WE DISCOVER THE STRICT SYMMETRY OF THE ARCHAIC KOUROS GIVING WAY TO A CALCULATED NON SYMMETRY:

THE KNEE OF THE LEFT LEG LOWER THAN THE RIGHT

THE LEFT HIP THRUST DOWN AND INWARDS WHILE THE RIGHT HIP IS UP AND OUTWARDS.

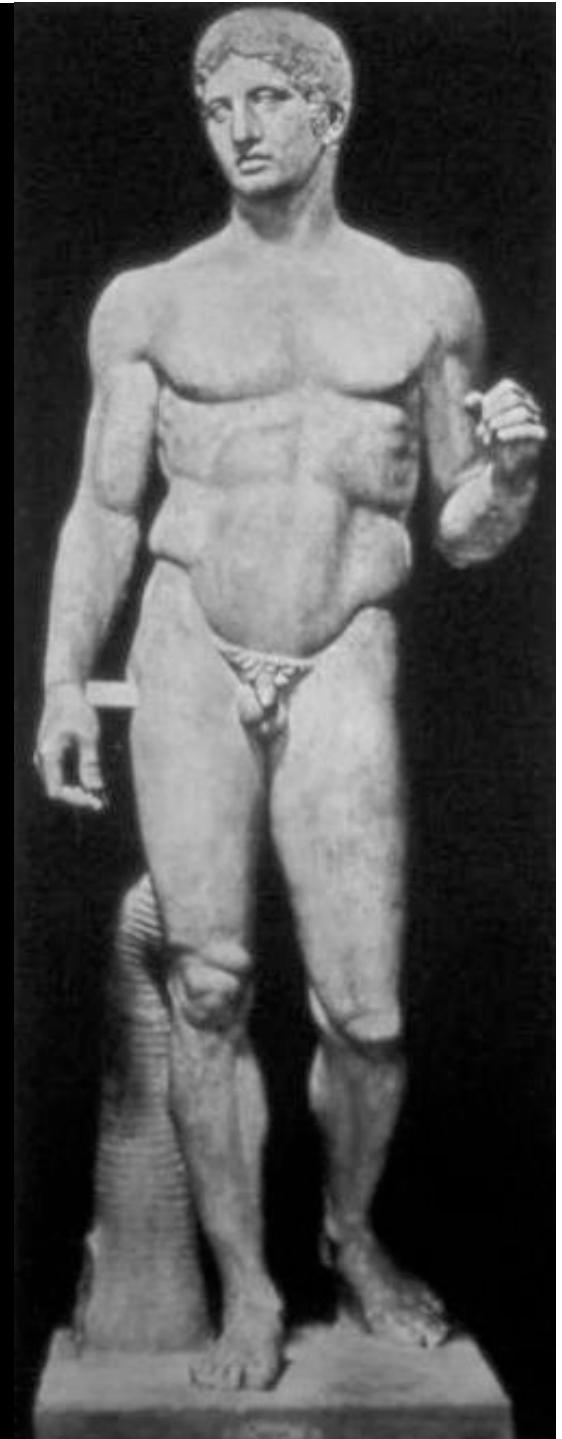
AXIS OF THE BODY, NOT A STRAIGHT VERTICAL LINE BUT HAS A FAINT S LIKE CURVE.

WEIGHT OF THE BODY RESTS MAINLY ON THE RIGHT LEG AND THE LEFT LEG ABOUT TO RISE KEEPS THE BALANCE.



CONTRAPPOSTO:

AN ITALIAN WORD FOR COUNTERPOISE; DESCRIBES THE BALANCED NON-SYMMETRY OF THIS RELAXED, NATURAL POSE. THE LEG THAT CARRIES THE MAIN WEIGHT IS CALLED THE ENGAGED LEG, THE OTHER THE FREE LEG.



**DISCOBOLOUS (DISCUS THROWER) 450BC. BY
MYRON**

MOMENTARY EXPRESSION OF THE BEAUTY OF THE HUMAN FORM

FIGURE SHOWN BENT DOWN AND SWINGING AN ARM BACKWARDS SO AS TO BE ABLE TO THROW WITH GREATER FORCE.

THE VIOLENT TWIST OF THE TORSO FURTHER INDICATES THE NEED TO SPIN ROUND AND THROW WITH THE TURN OF THE BODY.

A SEQUENCE OF MOVEMENTS CONDENSED INTO A SINGLE POSE WITHOUT FREEZING.

(THE GESTURE LOOKS SO CONVINCING THAT THE MODERN ATHLETES HAVE TAKEN IT FOR A MODEL AND HAVE TRIED TO LEARN FROM IT THE EXACT GREEK STYLE OF THROWING THE DISCUS)





HELLENISTIC PHASE
400 BC - 50 BC

HELLENISTIC ERA

CHARACTERISTICS

A CHARACTER OF GRACE AND EASY MARKS THE SCULPTURES.

CHANGE OF TASTE TOWARDS DELICACY AND REFINEMENT IS FEATURED.

MORE SUBTLE, MOMENTARY MOVEMENTS

A FACTOR OF DRAMA AND EMOTIONAL EXPRESSIONS THROUGH NARRATIVES WERE ALSO MORE ELABORATELY ADDED AND EXPLORED

AN EPIC OF REALISM



HERMES HOLDING THE YOUNG DIONYSIS
330-320BC, BY PRAXTELES

**AN ENORMOUS DISTANCE TRAVELED BY GREEK
ARTISTS IN A FEW HUNDRED YEARS.**

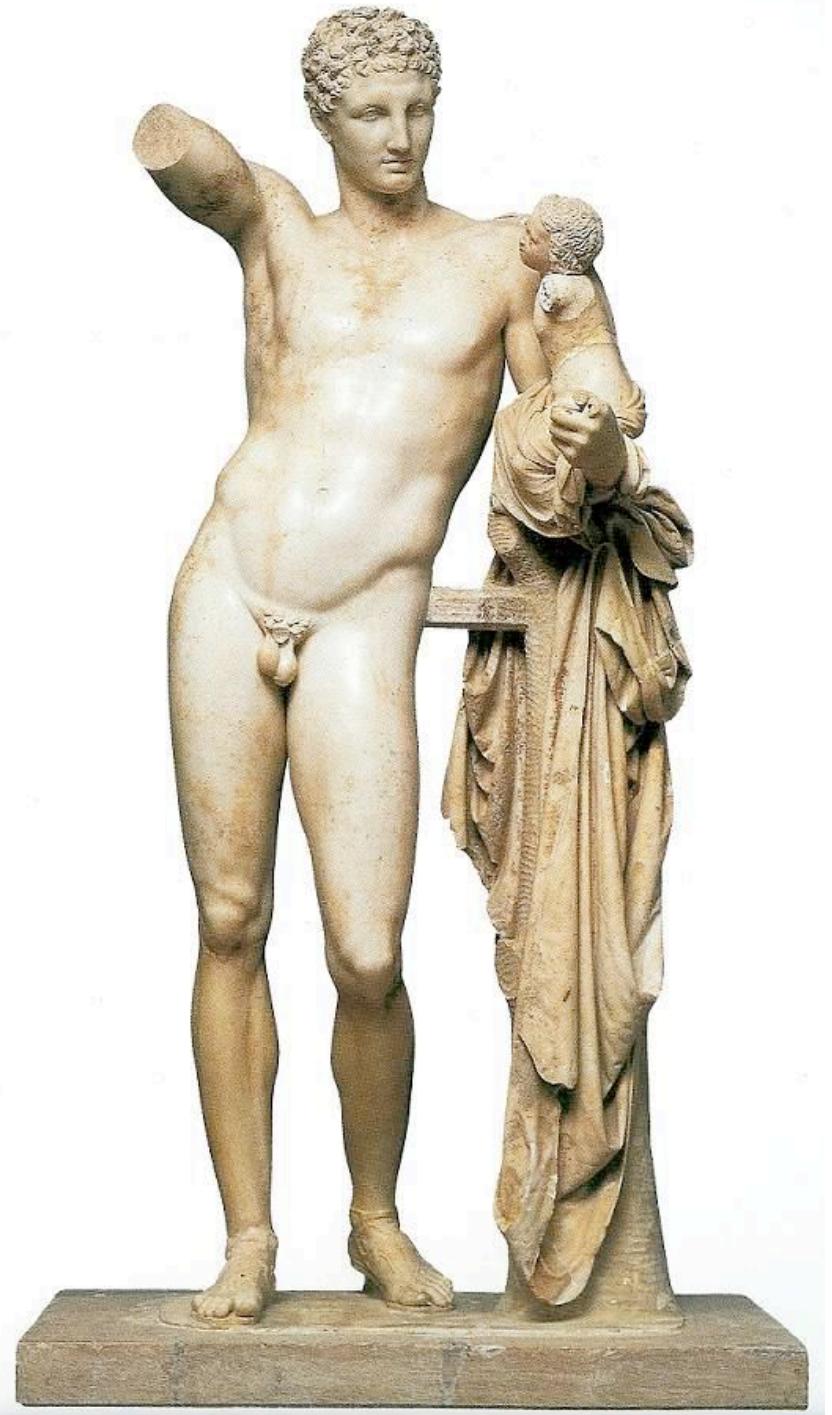
NO TRACES OF RIGIDITY IN FORMS.

**THE GOD STANDS IN A RELAXED POSE; DOES NOT
IMPAIR HIS DIGNITY.**

**THE PLAY OF GENTLE CURVES, THE SENSE OF
COMPLETE RELAXATION, THE FAINT SMILE**

**THE MELTING SOFT (VEILED) MODELING OF
FEATURES IN MARBLE SHOWS ARTIST'S
SUCCESSFUL ACCOMPLISHMENT.**

**TRIES TO CAPTURE EVERY DETAIL CLOSE TO
REALISM IN TERMS OF LIGHT AND SHADE AND 3-D
PERSPECTIVE.**



LAOCOON AND HIS SONS 175-50BC

THE PAINFUL EXPRESSION AND THE PHYSICAL DISPOSITION (ARRANGEMENT) ARE WELL SYNCHRONIZED.

THE MUSCLES OF THE ARMS AND THE TRUNK, CONVEYS THE EFFORT OF STRUGGLE.

THE EXPRESSION OF PAIN IN THE FACE OF THE PRIEST, THE HELPLESS WRIGGLING OF THE TWO BOYS AND THEIR SUFFERING CONVEYS THE HORROR OF THE SCENE

ALL THIS TURMOIL AND MOVEMENT ARE FROZEN INTO A PERMANENT GROUP OF 95 AND HALF INCHES.

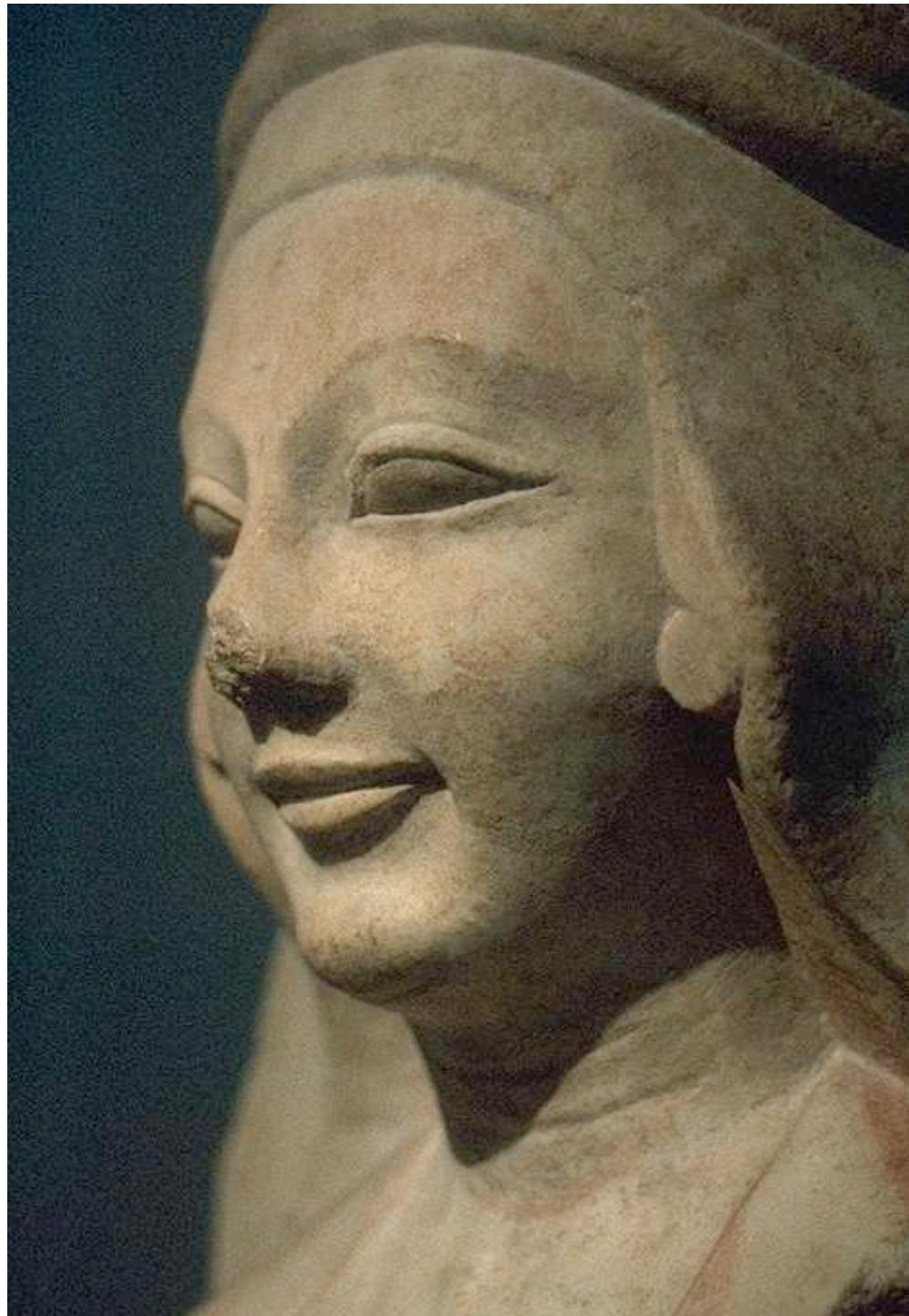
GREEK ARTISTS ACHIEVED THIS BEAUTY THROUGH THEIR KNOWLEDGE.

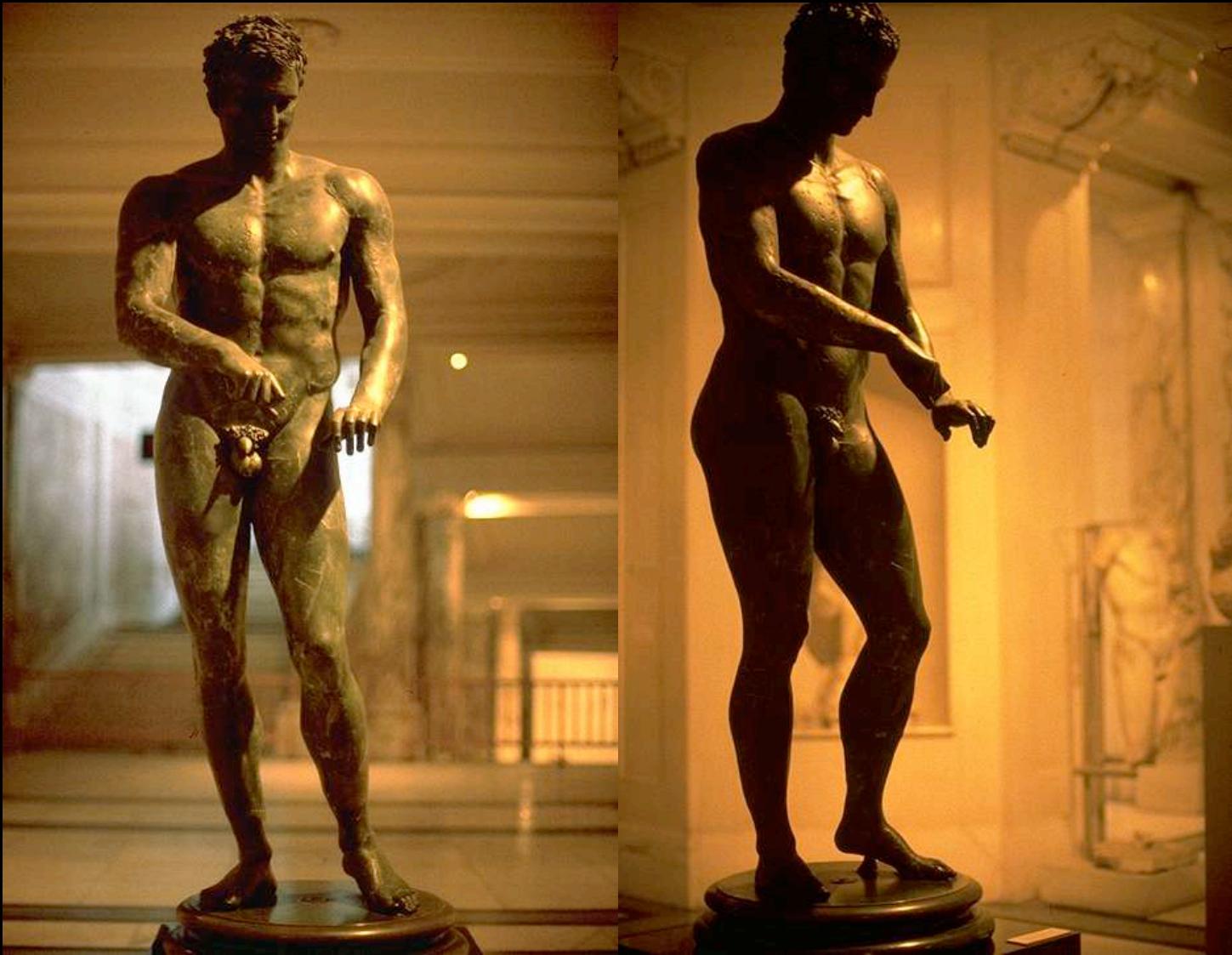


THERE IS NO LIVING BODY QUITE AS SYMMETRICAL, WELL BUILT AND BEAUTIFUL AS THOSE OF THE GREEK STATUES.

GREEK SCULPTORS STARTED BY CAREFULLY COPYING THE APPEARANCE OF A REAL MAN AND THEN BEAUTIFIED IT BY OMITTING ANY IRREGULARITIES OR TRAITS THAT DID NOT CONFORM TO THEIR IDEA OF A PERFECT BODY.







THROUGH ALL THESE CENTURIES, THESE ARTISTS WERE CONCERNED WITH INFUSING MORE & MORE LIFE INTO THE FORMS (A SENSE OF BREATH AND MOVEMENT INTO THE FORMS). UNDER THE HANDS OF THE SKILLFUL SCULPTORS THEY STAND BEFORE US LIKE REAL HUMAN BEINGS AND YET BEING FROM DIFFERENT, BETTER WORLD.



