

# Story Behind The Lost Baby Statue

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This is Andy, an unofficial name given to this statue of a sleeping boy that was given to the Getty Museum in 1974 by a private collector.



Figure 2

## Analysis

Andy is made from marble and was originally [painted](#).

Andy is in the shape of a baby. Andy's left knee is raised, and his hands are on it to support his resting head. Andy's eyes are also closed, suggesting that Andy is sleeping. Andy has chips, scratches, and wear, causing a rigid texture. Andy's color is tan with spots of white. Spots of brown discoloration are all over Andy.

On the pedestal, there is a bow, a winged insect, and a pencil-like object. The bow, moth, and the baby allude to cupids. The lack of wings on Andy doesn't foil the allusion to

cupids, since cupids are seen wingless too (Lisa, 6). Columns are cylindrical and a flat top, but the pencil-like object is more oval and pointed tip. It's probably an obelisk.

There is a large depression on Andy's back. Upon initial thought, it could've been where the wings were attached, but there need to be two holes. There is a white grainy circle at the center of the depression with striking dark brown discoloration. The damage could've been from poor excavation or smuggling by a pickaxe.

Andy shouldn't be larger than an adult human. Andy's posture casts shadow in the space beneath where he rests his head. Andy was meant to be seen all around.

Behind Andy's pedestal, there is a marking "73 AA BG" in black. This is a recent addition to the statue.



Figure 1: Andy



Figure 3

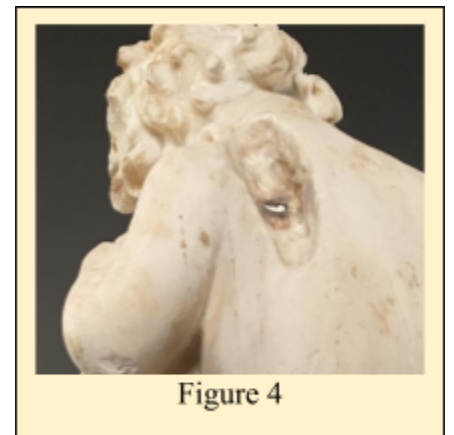


Figure 4

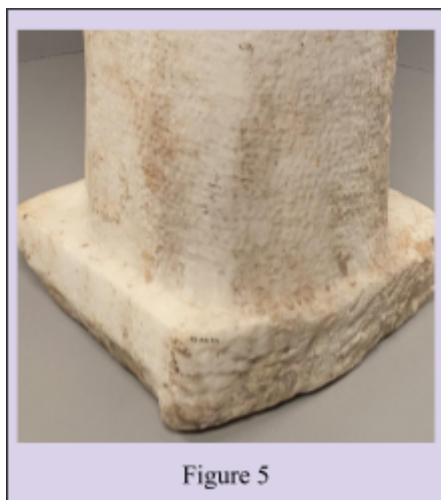


Figure 5



Figure 6: Columns at Trajan's Forum, cylindrical with a flat top



Figure 7: Different Types of Columns, all are cylindrical with flat top

## History

I recall a friend who studies funerary arts saying that Andy reminded her of a story from Suetonius.

The story goes like this: The Roman emperor Augustus had a grandson who died and two funerary statues were made where the grandson dresses as a "minor godling". Augustus gave one to his wife Livia and she took it to the temple of Venus. It represents the child living as one of the gods (Fede, 6).

Initially, I thought that Andy is Augustus's grandson. I arrived at this conclusion from the bow and moth on Andy's pedestal suggests that Andy is "dressed" as a cupid. Although Andy is naked, he is "dressed" as a minor godling by the markings on the pedestal. I learned the art on the subject's clothing or external properties tells a story about them. An example is on the statue of Augustus Primaporta's chest plate.

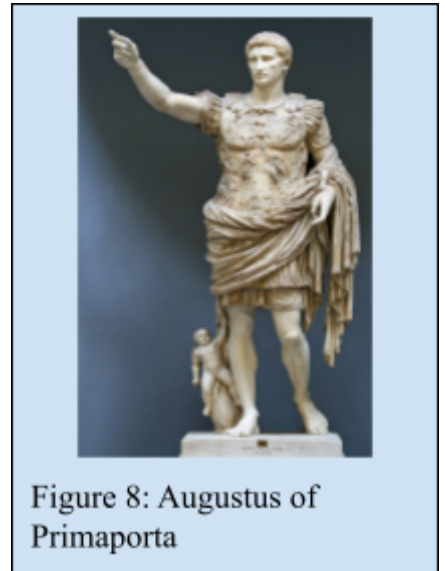


Figure 8: Augustus of Primaporta

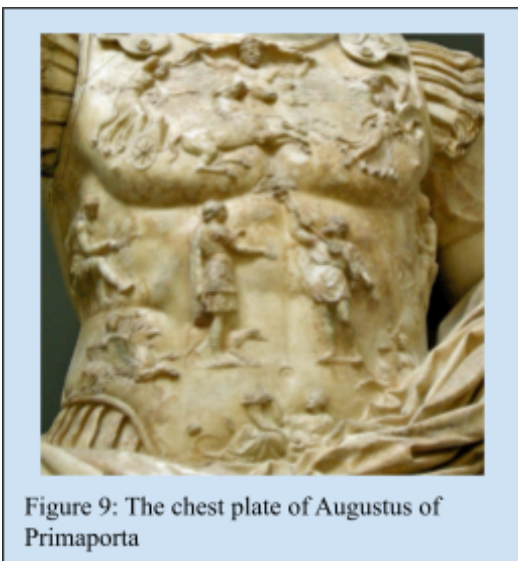


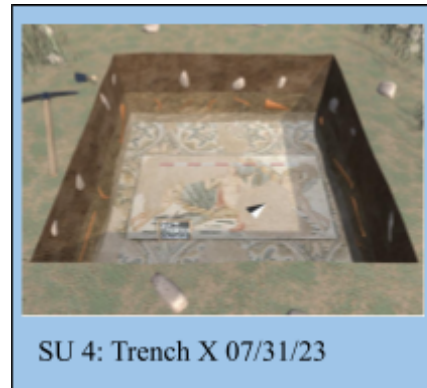
Figure 9: The chest plate of Augustus of Primaporta

We can see at the center of his chest plate, that we can see a man on the right handing over an eagle scepter over to a Roman soldier on the left. This is alluding to the time Augustus captured Parthian--modern day Iran. Above the two men is an image of the gods. Below is a man holding a cornucopia. This suggests the prosperity that Augustus can provide to Rome (Lisa 6). Not only does the art convey the subject's story, but it also shows the gods.

For Andy, the baby, bow and winged insect, points to Cupid. Although Andy doesn't have wings, the wings on the insect are sufficient to support the allusion. In addition, it was said that Andy was dug up near Casavenera, "House of Venus".

Therefore, Andy must be Livia's statue of Augustus's grandson. However, this is not quite true!

During my excavation at Andy's provenience, I was able to dig up some art that refutes the previous theory.



I was working with my advisor, Hannah, to conclude that since these artworks are painted, they would belong to someone's villa, rather than a temple.

If Andy was Livia's grandson statue – the one she put in “House of Venus”, then it wouldn't make sense for a Roman person to smuggle a statue of an emperor's grandson back to their home. Therefore, while Andy's allusion to cupid is true, its connection to Augustus's grandson is not.

Finally, there is another statue with a similar motif to Andy. This is the **Sleeping Eros**, a sleeping cupid baby-like Andy. It was said sleeping cupid statues were often “found in gardens of rich people” (Fede, 2). Because of this detail, the likelihood that Andy is a garden statue that belonged to a rich Roman person's garden is much higher than Augustus's grandson. Therefore, I conclude that Andy was an ancient Roman garden statue that belonged to a rich Roman villa.



## Repatriation

To determine if Andy should be returned to Italy, I will be using the [1970 UNESCO](#) date. During my time in Italy, I was handed a collection of excavation journals from 1966 to 1974 with a list of lost artifacts. I found that the "Statue of the boy who sleeps" was on that list. I remember that the boss at Getty Museum believes that Andy was either dug up near or at my site. This suggests that the lost statue is Andy.

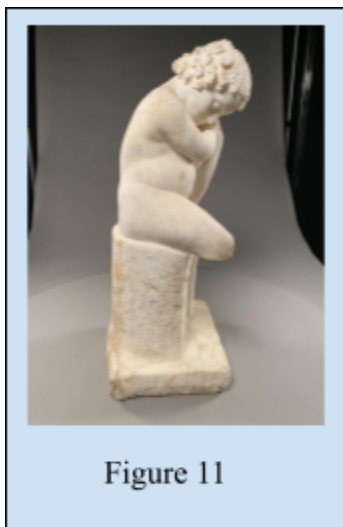
Anyhow, the likelihood that Andy was dug up before 1970 as opposed to after is different by 1 year. This means that there is about a 57% chance that Andy was dug up before 1970, which is not enough to conclude anything.

Let's assume that Andy was dug up before 1970 and the worst-case scenario where Andy was dug up in 1966. If Andy was smuggled and sold, then it would be seven years or less before getting to the private collector. Conversely, if Andy was dug up after 1970, then there would be a three-year period before it gets to the private collector. We should also consider the reason why the private owner decided to give Andy away. I was told that the private owner "wanted the public to be able to see and experience the sculpture [...]" (Josie, 1).

In the first scenario, seven years of ownership should be long enough to justify getting rid of the statue because there are many variables that could influence the change in the private owner's desire to keep Andy.

For example, [if nobody doesn't know anything about art, its value is lowered.](#)

This could lessen the desire to keep Andy since it doesn't have a known provenance. From this, we can speculate that the owner may have overlooked its beauty and gave it up, hoping that the museum would find the story behind it.



In contrast, if Andy was dug up after 1970 then it would take less than 3 years to travel from Italy to the private collector and to the Getty Museum. This is unlikely to be the case because the three years is too short for so much activity to happen. If a private collector was buying a statue from Italy, it should take more time for them to admire it before giving it away. It's possible that the owner bought it as a gift to the Getty Museum, but this is unlikely. If the private collector gives a museum a statue, then they should know better than to buy a statue with an unknown provenance and risk buying from smugglers.

Finally, since we don't know Andy's provenance, if it had multiple previous owners then the seven years theory should allow time for the transfer of ownership from many private owners to happen. The three year theory is too tight to allow for this. Therefore, I conclude that Andy was dug up before 1970. By the 1970 UNESCO, Andy doesn't have to be returned to Italy.

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