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JUNO'S JOURNEY

MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON, ACQUIRES LARGEST CLASSICAL SCULPTURE IN THE UNITED STATES AND PREPARES FOR HER ARRIVAL AND CONSERVATION



Juno (Roman, Imperial Period)

BOSTON, MA (March 12, 2012)—The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (MFA), is preparing to welcome the goddess *Juno*, who will make the Museum her final stop on a more than century-long journey from Rome. Measuring 13 feet tall and weighing 13,000 pounds, this colossal work is the largest classical statue in the United States. It is dated to the Roman Imperial Period and likely graced a civic building or temple in Rome. Upon her arrival at the MFA on March 20, *Juno* will be brought in by crane through a skylight. Beginning April 9, she will be on view to the public in the George D. and Margo Behrakis Wing for Art of the Ancient World, in the gallery also bearing the Behrakis name. To support the conservation of this statue and other works of art, a public appeal for funding will be launched at the Museum with the unveiling of *Juno*.

Although the date of *Juno's* discovery is unknown, the statue was recorded as early as 1633 in an inventory of the renowned Ludovisi Collection, one of the most significant holdings of antiquities and paintings in 17th-century Rome. It was assembled by Cardinal Ludovico Ludovisi, an important patron of the arts. He also built Villa Ludovisi, a grand Roman estate comprising buildings and gardens filled with antiquities such as *Juno*. Much of the painting collection was dispersed after

the Cardinal's death, but many of the antiquities remained on the site until the end of the 19th century, as documented by the statue's appearance in an 1890 photograph of the gardens. When the Ludovisi family dismantled the estate in the late 1890s, *Juno* was purchased in 1897 by Bostonians Charles Franklin Sprague and his wife, Mary Pratt Sprague, granddaughter of shipping and railroad magnate William Fletcher Weld, and a relative of former Governor William Weld. The statue was shipped across the Atlantic, and upon its arrival in Boston, was transported by a team of oxen in 1904 to Faulkner Farm, the Spragues' estate in Brookline (later known as the Brandegee Estate after Mrs. Sprague's marriage to Edward Deshon Brandegee). *Juno*

was placed in the Spragues' Italianate garden, designed by Charles Platt, where it remained as a centerpiece until she was acquired for the MFA in 2011 through the generosity of an anonymous donor and the William Francis Warden Fund.

"The MFA's acquisition of *Juno* provides a unique opportunity for everyone in the Museum family to be involved in the conservation of the largest Roman statue in the United States," said Malcolm Rogers, Ann and Graham Gund Director of the MFA. "Visitors will be able to observe the detailed process needed to return her to her former glory and can also support the effort through the MFA's public appeal."

Juno's journey to the MFA has been organized using state-of-the-art conservation methods and modes of transport. To ensure her safe arrival at the Museum, she was encased in a specially built protective cradle, and because of her size, the statue and her cradle will be lifted by crane, then lowered through a skylight into the Museum. She will be moved through the MFA's Italian Renaissance Gallery— part of which has been deinstalled to accommodate *Juno's* size—and a wide base will be constructed to properly distribute the weight between the floor beams. The sculpture will reside in the Behrakis Gallery, which will be temporarily closed until *Juno* is properly in place. On April 9, the gallery will reopen, revealing the goddess to visitors who will be able to observe conservators treating the sculpture in situ as part of the Museum's "Conservation in Action" program. In the future, she will be the focal point of a gallery devoted to the gods, goddesses, and heroes of ancient Greece and Rome.

"You would have to travel to Rome to see such a monumental and impressive marble sculpture. As in ancient Rome, MFA visitors will be awestruck by the physical presence of the gods and the power of the empire," said Christine Kondoleon, the MFA's George D. and Margo Behrakis Senior Curator of Greek and Roman Art. "We are delighted to welcome *Juno* to the MFA, where she will be an outstanding addition to the Museum's Greek and Roman collection, among the finest holdings in the world."

Conservation



The conservation process entailed removal of old grout along the joint connecting head to body. The marble of head and body appears to be of a different type. It is unlikely that this head is original to the sculpture.

The conservation of *Juno* actually began in December 2011, when the statue was analyzed and prepared for a move indoors as a crucial first step in her long-term preservation. More than 100 years of exposure to the harsh New England climate have degraded her marble surface and caused some cracking, especially at the waist level, which renders the figure unstable. Biological growth has been extensive despite various cleaning efforts through the years. Sometime near the end of the 19th or beginning of the 20th centuries, *Juno* underwent extensive repairs. She was given a new nose and lips, as well as toes—all of which have since been damaged or removed. Her head and left lower arm, which had broken off, were reattached at an unknown point in time.

In preparation for *Juno's* move, examination by gamma-radiography and ground penetrating radar was conducted to assess the extent of existing metal pins, and a three-dimension model of the figure was created. The cracked torso required structural stabilization, and after finding the most suitable access points, core drilling allowed the setting of anchors and an eight-foot-long vertical metal rod was inserted through the length of the body. A massive steel armature was constructed to cradle, protect, and immobilize the statue, and the head and arm were removed temporarily to prevent damage during transport. The head, weighing some 380 pounds, is most likely not original. Analysis of cross sections from the head and body indicate that they are carved from different marbles. Kondoleon surmises that the statue, dating from the Roman Imperial Period (1st century BC to 1st century AD) may have been headless upon discovery in the 17th century and was given another Roman head (from a later period, possibly the 2nd century AD) to complete her, as was the custom during this time. There is also physical evidence that the head had been reset several times. To prepare *Juno* for transport, her head was removed to prevent damage to her thin neck. Old grout was chiseled out along the joint between her head and body, and flat diamond saw blades of increasingly larger diameters were used to sever the head and the iron pin connecting the lower neck.

Once in the gallery, *Juno* will be mounted on a large steel-reinforced pedestal, and the steel frame which protected her during transport will be disassembled. Conservation treatment will then address surface condition, reattachment of the head and arm, and other aesthetic issues. Further analysis could help to identify the type of marble and possibly even the quarry from which the stone originated.

To follow *Juno's* journey, you can watch a video on the MFA's channel on YouTube at <http://www.youtube.com/mfaboston>, and to learn more about the detailed conservation of the statue, please visit the Museum's website at http://www.mfa.org/collections/conservation/conservationinaction_juno.

***Juno* as Goddess**

The statue *Juno* is recognized as the goddess because of her crescent crown, drapery, and facial features. What she wears reveals much about her style, establishing her place in a long line of similarly clothed female statues throughout Greek and Roman art. Revered by the Romans as guardian of marriage and childbirth, Juno was also protector and special counselor of the state. She is the daughter of Saturn, sister and wife of Jupiter, and mother of Mars and Vulcan. She was worshipped as part of the Capitoline triad (Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva), the three most important gods of the Roman state religion. Her Greek counterpart was Hera, wife of Zeus.

Public Appeal —Saving a Goddess

To support the conservation and ongoing care of *Juno* and other treasured works of art, the MFA is launching a public appeal. A collection box will be placed near the statue for those who would like to make a contribution in person, and donations may also be made online at <http://www.mfa.org/give/special-projects/saving-goddess>, by mail, or through text-to-give, whereby \$10 donations

may be made by texting **JUNO** to **50555**. The \$200,000 goal will benefit the MFA Fund, which provides for vital work across the Museum, including conservation, education, and exhibitions. In 2011, the MFA's public appeal enabled the Museum to acquire Dale Chihuly's *Lime Green Icicle Tower* (2011), a 42-foot-tall glass sculpture that now delights visitors of all ages in the MFA's Shapiro Family Courtyard.

The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (MFA), is recognized for the quality and scope of its encyclopedic collection, which includes an estimated 450,000 objects. The Museum's collection is made up of: Art of the Americas; Art of Europe; Contemporary Art; Art of Asia, Oceania, and Africa; Art of the Ancient World; Prints, Drawings, and Photographs; Textile and Fashion Arts; and Musical Instruments. Open seven days a week, the MFA's hours are Saturday through Tuesday, 10 a.m. – 4:45 p.m.; Wednesday through Friday, 10 a.m. – 9:45 p.m. Admission (which includes two visits in a 10-day period) is \$22 for adults and \$20 for seniors and students age 18 and older, and includes entry to all galleries and special exhibitions. Admission is free for University Members and children 6 and younger. Youths 17 years of age and younger are admitted for free during non-school hours. On school days until 3 p.m., admission for youths 7–17 is \$10. Wednesday nights after 4 p.m. admission is by voluntary contribution (suggested donation \$22). The Museum is closed on New Year's Day, Patriots' Day, Independence Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. For more information, visit www.mfa.org or call 617.267.9300.

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