

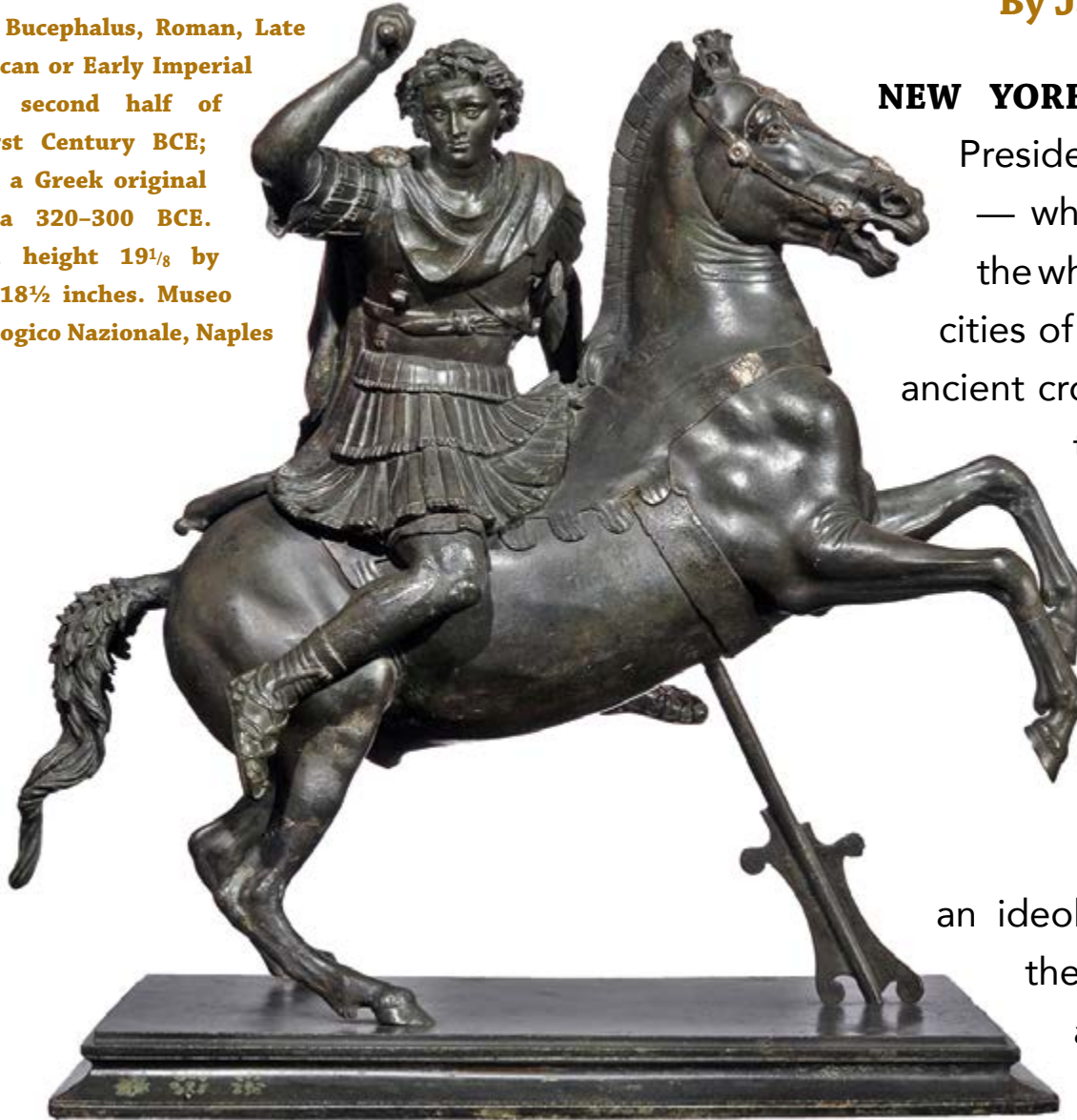
Pergamon

And The Hellenistic Kingdoms
Of The Ancient World

**“The Acropolis of Pergamon” by Friedrich (von) Thiersch, 1882.
Pen and ink with watercolor on canvas, height 78 inches by width
11 feet 5¾ inches. Antikensammlung, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin**

DIE AKROPOLIS
VON
PERGAMON
RECONSTRUIRT NACH
DEN BISHERIGEN AUSGRABUNGEN
VON F. THIERSCH, FEBR. 1882.

Small statue of Alexander the Great astride Bucephalus, Roman, Late Republican or Early Imperial period, second half of the First Century BCE; copy of a Greek original of circa 320-300 BCE. Bronze, height 19 $\frac{1}{8}$ by length 18 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Naples



By James D. Balestrieri

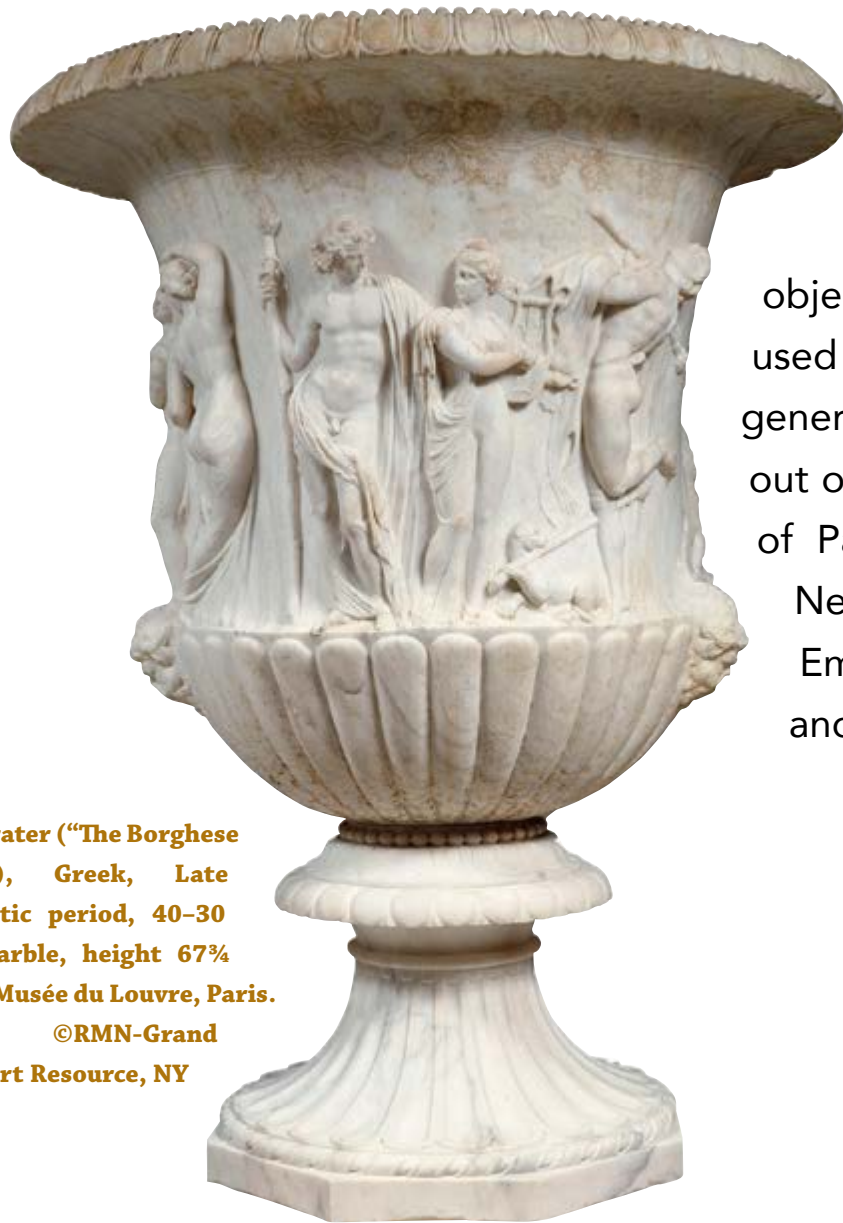
NEW YORK CITY — Antiquity is news. President Bashar al-Assad's Syrian army — who are themselves responsible for the wholesale destruction of the heritage cities of Aleppo and Homs — retakes the ancient crossroads city of Palmyra, rescuing the Greek, Roman and Persian ruins from ruin at the hands, jackhammers and explosives of the self-styled Islamic State. ISIS, ISIL, Daesh — call it what you will — views any history not of its own writing as idolatry, through the blood red mesh of an ideology of violence. In other news, the United States Congress passes a law forbidding the importation of artifacts from Syria. Yet a

December 4, 2015, *New Yorker* article, “The Real Value of the ISIS Antiquities Trade,” cites scholars in the field who contend that the assertion that there is a “billion-dollar market” in illicit antiquities is severely inflated, encouraging looters while aiming at legitimate trade.

Meanwhile, in London’s Trafalgar Square, a scale model replica of Palmyra’s Arch of Triumph — built by Emperor Septimius Severus at the beginning of the Third Century CE to commemorate Rome’s victory over the Parthians and blown to shards by ISIS — is unveiled as a gesture of cultural solidarity. Italian robots carved the arch out of Egyptian marble from a 3D computer model compiled from hosts of photographs. The arch will travel to New York in the fall and elsewhere thereafter.



“The Vienna Cameo,” Greek (Ptolemaic), Early Hellenistic period, 278–270/269 BCE. Ten-layered onyx (Indian sardonyx), gold hoop; height 4½ inches. Antikensammlung, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna



Calyx-crater (“The Borghese Krater”), Greek, Late Hellenistic period, 40–30 BCE. Marble, height 67¾ inches. Musée du Louvre, Paris.

Image ©RMN-Grand Palais/Art Resource, NY

And then there are the people for whom antiquity is, or was, home.

The world of antiques and art is a world of objects. When we think of the people who made, used and owned the things we collect and cherish we generally see them through a golden haze, as figures out of simpler times. To approximate what the people of Palmyra or Aleppo are going through, imagine New York or Paris 2,000 years in the future, with the Empire State Building a crumbling but revered ruin and the Eiffel Tower a hologram....

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