

AIV

Arts in Virginia

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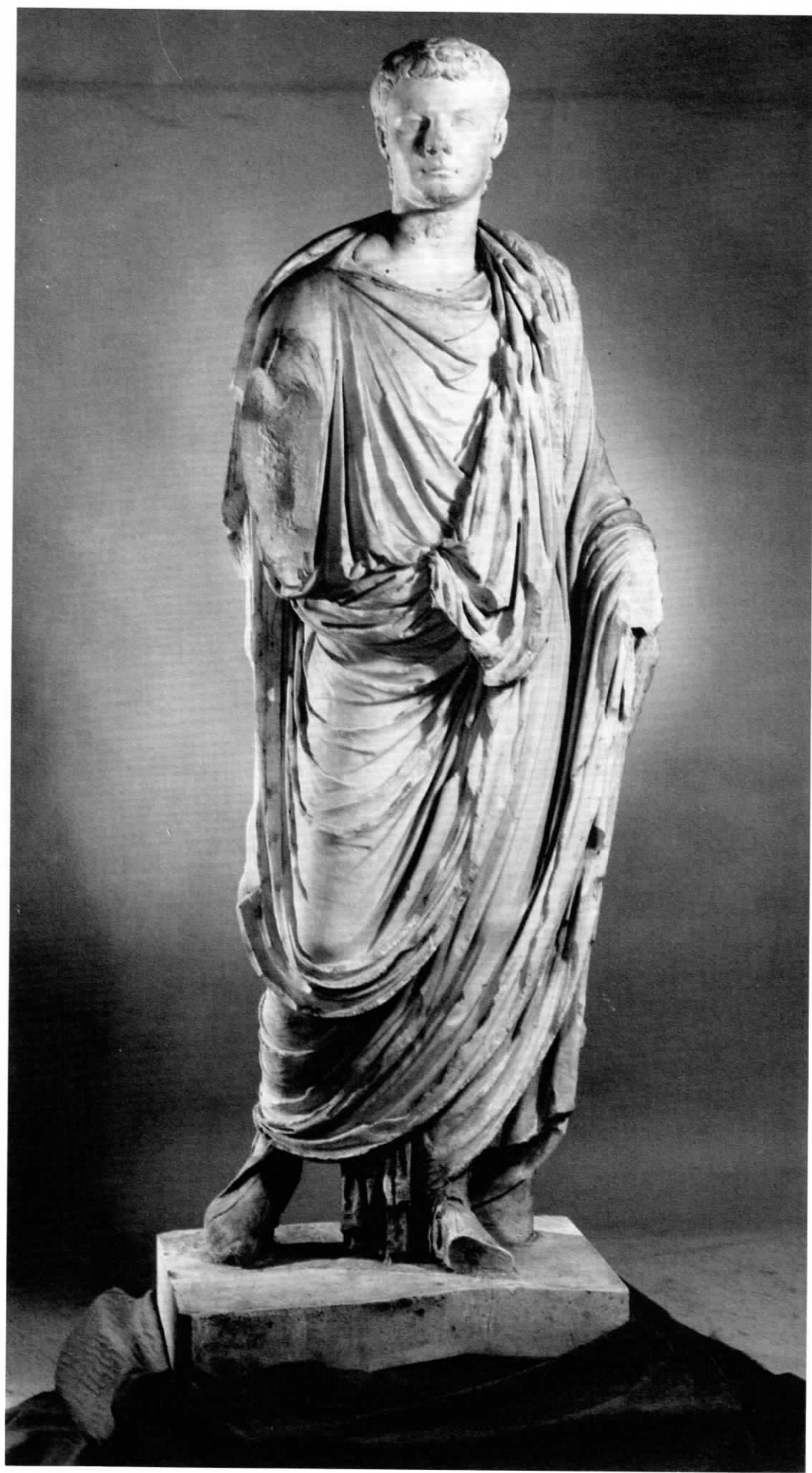
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Among our recent important acquisitions have been a group of superb antique boxes bequeathed to the Museum by Mrs. Ailsa Mellon Bruce, a stunning view of Boston Harbor by one of the 19th century's most prominent marine painters, and a rare statue of the Roman emperor Caligula. For this "collections issue" of *AIV*, three eminent authorities, Eric Benton, John Wilmerding, and Joseph Ternbach, have contributed interesting accounts on these works. Mr. Benton has written a most helpful introduction to English "toys," and he has commented knowledgeably on six fine enamelled examples in the collection. In the second article, Mr. Wilmerding traces the career of Robert Salmon, one of whose finest works is now, happily, owned by the Museum. And Mr. Ternbach offers brief but useful notes on the restoration of the Caligula, thus supplementing an earlier article by Dr. Hans Jucker (Volume 13, Number 2). As the collection increases in breadth, we are pleased to continue to provide scholarly, informative articles such as these.

James M. Brown, Director

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Further Comments on "Caligula"

by Joseph Ternbach

A prominent conservator offers a synopsis of the technical steps involved in restoring the Museum's *Caligula* to its original state.

Dr. Jucker's essay (Vol. 13, No. 2) on the statue of Caligula in the Virginia Museum identifies this sculpture with the one catalogued by the archaeologist F. von Duhn among ancient sculptures in Rome in 1880.

The references which both von Duhn and Dr. Jucker make about the head and body, and their belonging together, prompt some further technical comments.

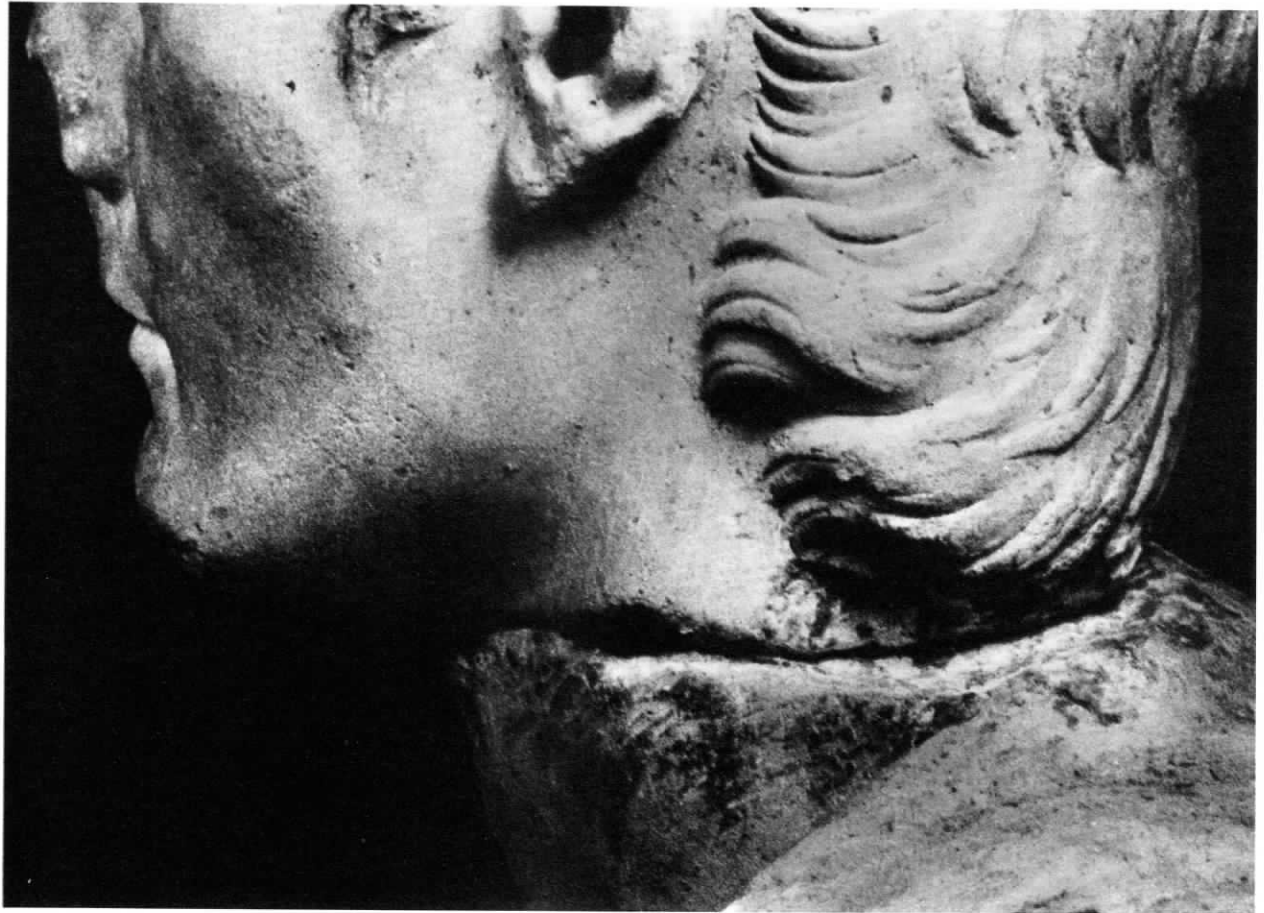
The description by von Duhn corresponds exactly with the condition of the sculpture as I received it for restoration—except for the "modern addition" around the neck which had been removed. The line where that addition-restoration had been applied was clearly discernible; the "modern addition" must have covered the back of the original neck over the lower curls and blended into the upper folds of the mantle (Photo 1). Of all the details and areas for repair and restoration which the sculpture required, the only significant concern was the determination and verification that this head belongs to this body. The head itself was not set on precisely: specifically, it was not correctly lined up with the neck; it was shifted and tilted and a gap existed. Too much (hardened) glue, shellac, and plaster on the surfaces of the breakage and in the area of the iron dowel that fastened the head to the neck, had caused the gap and the movement (Photo 2).

Nevertheless, Dr. Jucker, from an examination of the edges of the neck and head, had been able to ascertain that the head and body belonged together. This was supported by additional evidence in the modeling of the marble. My handling of the sculpture affirms that this head belongs to this body.

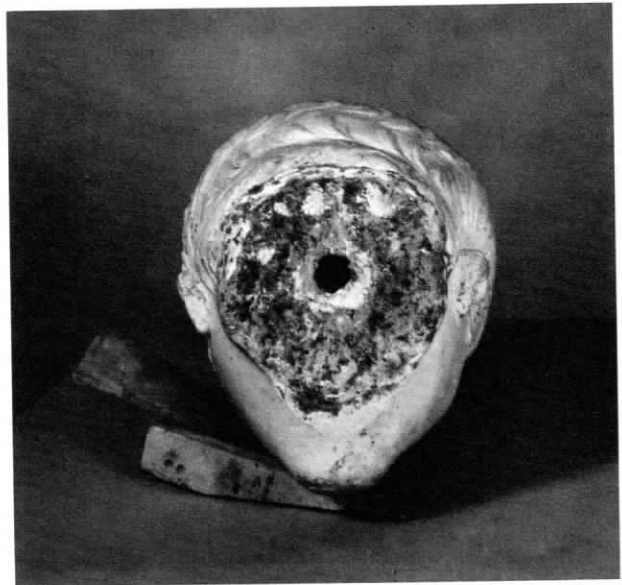
It required slow, sensitive maneuvering to free the head from the sculpture (Photos 3 and 4) without causing any further damage. When I had cleaned the surfaces and re-set the head, the cleavage roots matched and locked into each other in their original position—testing, juggling, guessing were all unnecessary. The shift and tilt and gap between the surfaces were eliminated.

To complete the restoration and to achieve the desired aesthetic appearance of the sculpture, I filled in the gap with stone cement but without covering the original edges of the break.

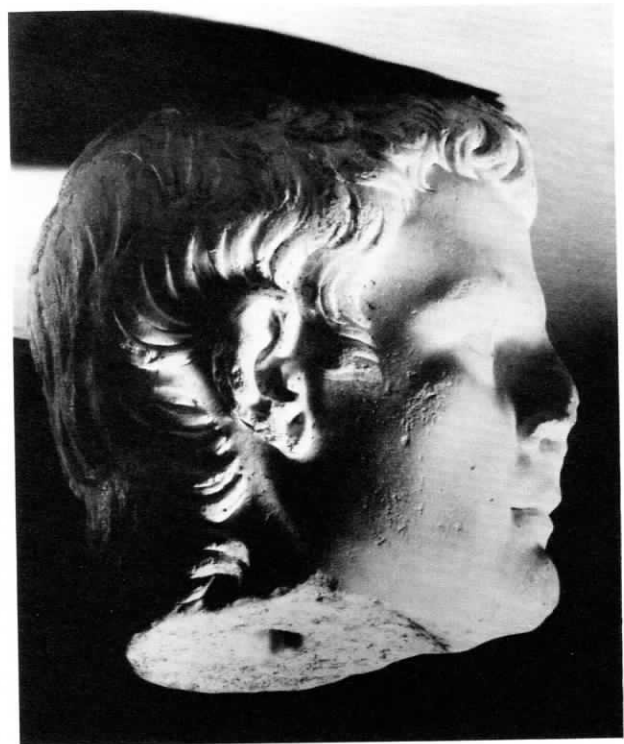
Forest Hills New York
March 1973



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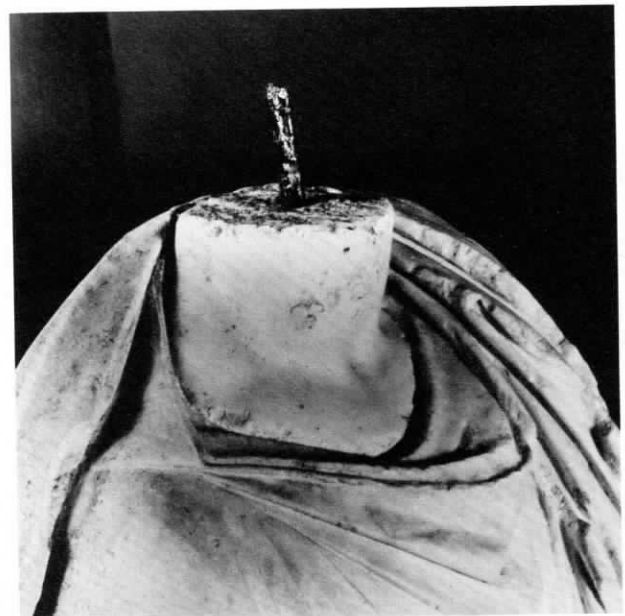


2



3

1. Area of neck showing remnants of cement from previous restoration.
2. Head as removed from neck, showing excess glue and cement.
- 3,4. Cleavage roots on head and neck match to allow locking into original position.



4

In This Issue

ERIC BENTON is a physicist by training, a historian and collector by inclination. After graduating at Birmingham in pure science, followed by a degree in physics, he published some work on hydrodynamics and acoustics. In the course of research work in industry, he became familiar with the properties and uses of vitreous enamels. Working in the Bilston area, he became interested in the history of English painted enamels, especially in those from Bilston and Wednesbury. At that time, in the 1930s, Bernard Rackham, Gerald Mander, Egan Mew, and others were trying to establish the truth about enamelled toys, which for many years had been called "Battersea enamels." Encouraged by his friend Gerald Mander, Benton joined in the search. This was interrupted by the war, which he spent with the British Admiralty working on anti-submarine weapons. Some time elapsed before he could pick up again the threads of the inquiry. He made a collection of enamels, and in 1967 arranged an exhibition at Leamington Spa of *Gilt Metal and Enamel*, which for the first time demonstrated how the enamelled toys developed out of the gilt-metal trinkets of the earlier part of the 18th century. He has written a number of technical papers on vitreous enamels. Two papers to the English Ceramic Circle on the Bilston and London enamellers are the most recent contributions to the subject. Benton's interests, in addition to enamels, are in porcelain, prints, and books, as well as everything that relates to the craftsmanship of the eighteenth century.

JOSEPH TERNBACH received his Master's Degree in sculpture and art crafts from the School for Art and Crafts in Vienna. He was at the Vienna Kunsthistorisches Museum as a free-lance restorer for sculpture and metals until 1938, and had been appointed expert and appraiser at the courts in Vienna. He also created a permanent teaching exhibition for the Kunsthistorisches Museum Arms and Armour section. Ternbach has been living in New York since 1939, working as a free-lance restorer of sculpture in all media for prominent

United States museums and private collectors. He was appointed a member of the Citizens Advisory Committee for Cultural Affairs of the City of New York by Mayor Robert F. Wagner in 1963. He lectures on restorations of bronzes, ancient and modern, at the American Museums Association and at the International Institute for Conservation, American Group. Several articles on restoration of significant objects have been published in *Archaeology* and other periodicals.

JOHN WILMERDING is one of the country's leading authorities on the work of Robert Salmon, and is a scholar of 19th-century American art. His books include *Robert Salmon, Painter of Ship and Shore* (Boston Public Library and Peabody Museum of Salem, 1971), *Fitz Hugh Lane, American Marine Painter* (Essex Institute, 1964), *A History of American Marine Painting* (Little, Brown, 1968), *19th Century America, Paintings and Sculpture*, with John K. Howat (Metropolitan Museum and New York Graphic Society, 1970), *Audubon, Homer, Whistler and 19th Century America* (McCall's Publishing Company, 1972), and monographs on Fitz Hugh Lane and Winslow Homer (Praeger, 1971 and 1972). He has also prepared a number of important exhibition catalogs, including *Fitz Hugh Lane, The First Major Exhibition* (DeCordova Museum and Colby College Art Museum), *Robert Salmon, The First Major Exhibition* (DeCordova Museum), *Winslow Homer's Drawings* (Cooper-Hewitt Museum), and *The Art of Benjamin Rowland* (Fogg Art Museum). A native of Boston, Wilmerding earned his B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. at Harvard. He joined the faculty of Dartmouth College in 1965, served as Chairman of the Department of Art from 1968 to 72, and was Chairman of the Humanities Division in 1971-72. He became the Leon E. Williams Professor of Art in 1973. During 1972-73 he was Visiting Lecturer in the History of Art at Yale University, and has lectured widely throughout the United States. He is on several boards, including those of the Shelburne Museum in Vermont and the Wyeth Endowment for American Art, and currently holds a Guggenheim Fellowship.

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