



HERCULES WITH A CLUB

Northern Italy, ca. 1600.

Bronze patinated brown. Hercules with a club, the left foot resting on a severed head. On a triangular base, the corners decorated with winged female busts. On cloven feet.

H 32 cm.

The iconographic identification of this unusual subject is not entirely clear. The calm, heroic pose of the bearded man with the long club points to the hero Hercules, whereas the severed head on which the hero's foot rests rather points to the Biblical episode of David against Goliath. Possibly, it is an episode from the 12 Labors of Hercules handed down by Virgil: Hercules, who after his Tenth Labor drove the cattle

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of Geryon through the territory of present-day Italy, stopped for a break near Cacus' cave. Cacus, a giant, stole Hercules' cattle, but this did not go unnoticed by the hero. After a grueling fight, he slew the giant with his club.

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