

Classical Art

The Art of Ancient Greece and Rome

Greek 800-323 BC

Roman 509-337 AD

"Classical"

Classical art shows an ideal of human life and works that express virtues found in well-rounded individual and worthy citizens.

It puts an emphasis on balance, proportion, and idealization of the human form.

Classical art falls into many different time periods. The main time periods focused upon are those of the Ancient Greek and Romans.

During this time the artist worked to portray perfectly proportioned bodies of young, buff men (and women). However, no human body -ever was- or ever will be, as well proportioned as the Greek and Roman statues.

The works of this time feature bodies which are absolutely flawless. Even the faces were created to look perfect too. the Greek and Roman Ideal of beauty involved gods looking like humans and humans looking like gods.

The Discus Thrower-*Discobolus* Myron of Eleutheræe

The dynamic art of discus throwing inspired a number of ancient Greek sculptors. The method of throwing was then very different. Athletes seem to have used only a three-quarter turn, unlike the two and $\frac{1}{2}$ spins of the modern throwers

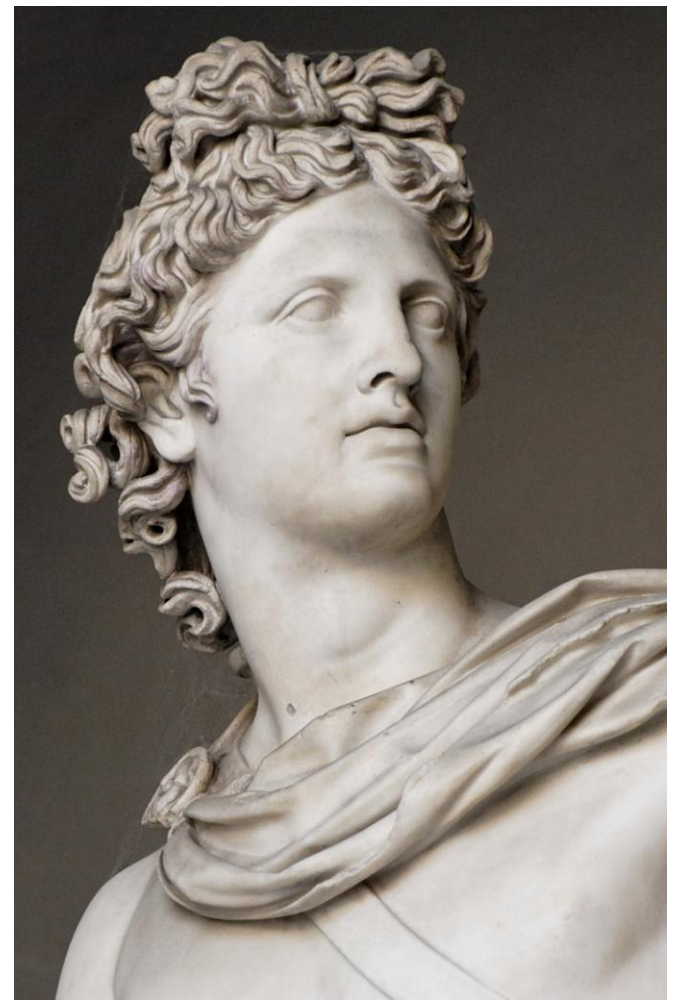


The Discus Thrower is a Greek sculpture that was

completed in 460-450 BC and was originally made of bronze. The Greek version was lost but the work is known through numerous Roman copies, both full-scale ones in marble, which was cheaper than bronze, such as the first to be recovered, the *Palombara Discobolus*, was a smaller scaled version in bronze.

A discus thrower is depicted about to release his disc. This created the enduring pattern of athletic energy. The artist has taken a moment of action. The moment captured in the statute is an example of *rhythmos*, harmony and balance. Myron, the artist, is often credited for the original and with being the first sculptor to master this style.

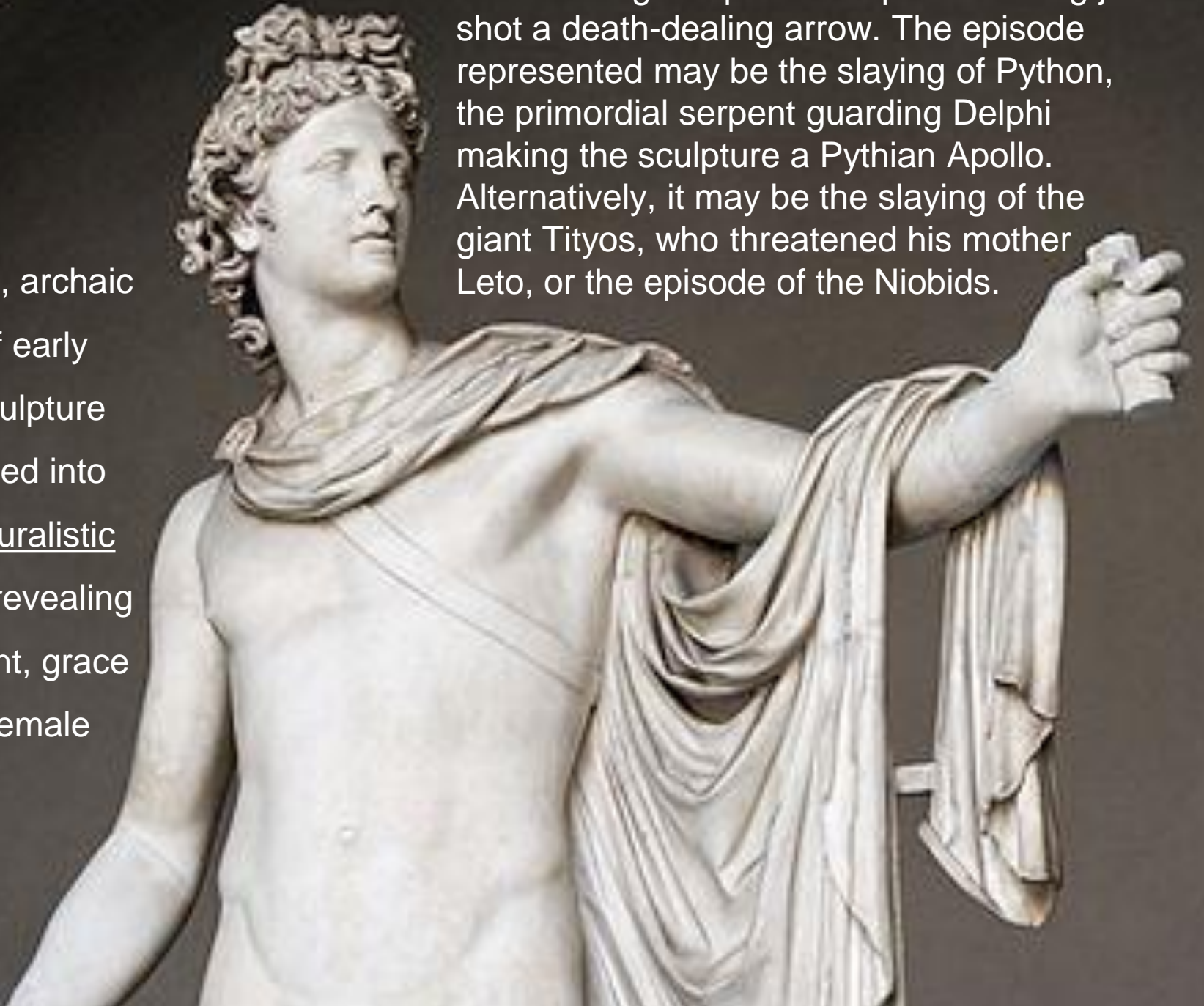
Naturally, as always in Greek athletics, the *Discobolus* is completely nude. His pose is said to be unnatural to a human, and today considered a rather inefficient way to throw the discus. Also there is very little emotion shown in the discus thrower's face. The potential energy expressed in this sculpture's tightly-wound pose, expressing the moment just before the release, is an example of the advancement of Classical sculpture from Archaic.



Apollo Belvedere

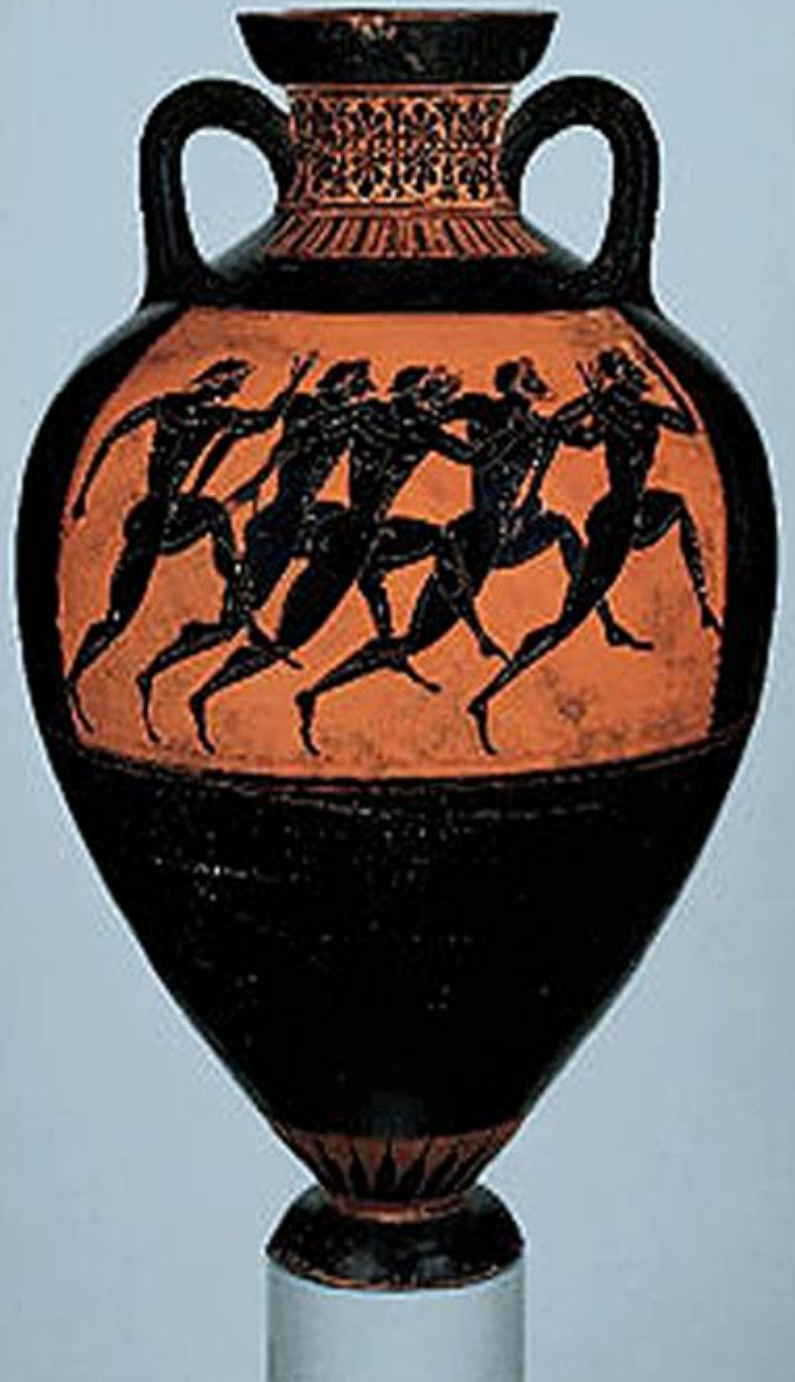
The solid, archaic figures of early Greek sculpture transitioned into more naturalistic statues, revealing movement, grace and the female form.

The Greek god Apollo is depicted having just shot a death-dealing arrow. The episode represented may be the slaying of Python, the primordial serpent guarding Delphi making the sculpture a Pythian Apollo. Alternatively, it may be the slaying of the giant Tityos, who threatened his mother Leto, or the episode of the Niobids.



In addition to sculpture, the Greeks and Romans were masters at painting. The most complete form of Greek and Roman painting that has survived throughout the ages is that of vase painting. Another word for the vase is an urn. Each black and red figure urn have an intricate story to tell.









The [red-figure technique](#) superseded the previously traditional [black-figure technique](#). This change may not, at first, seem monumental, but it allowed a greater ability to portray the human body, clothed or naked, at rest or in motion.

