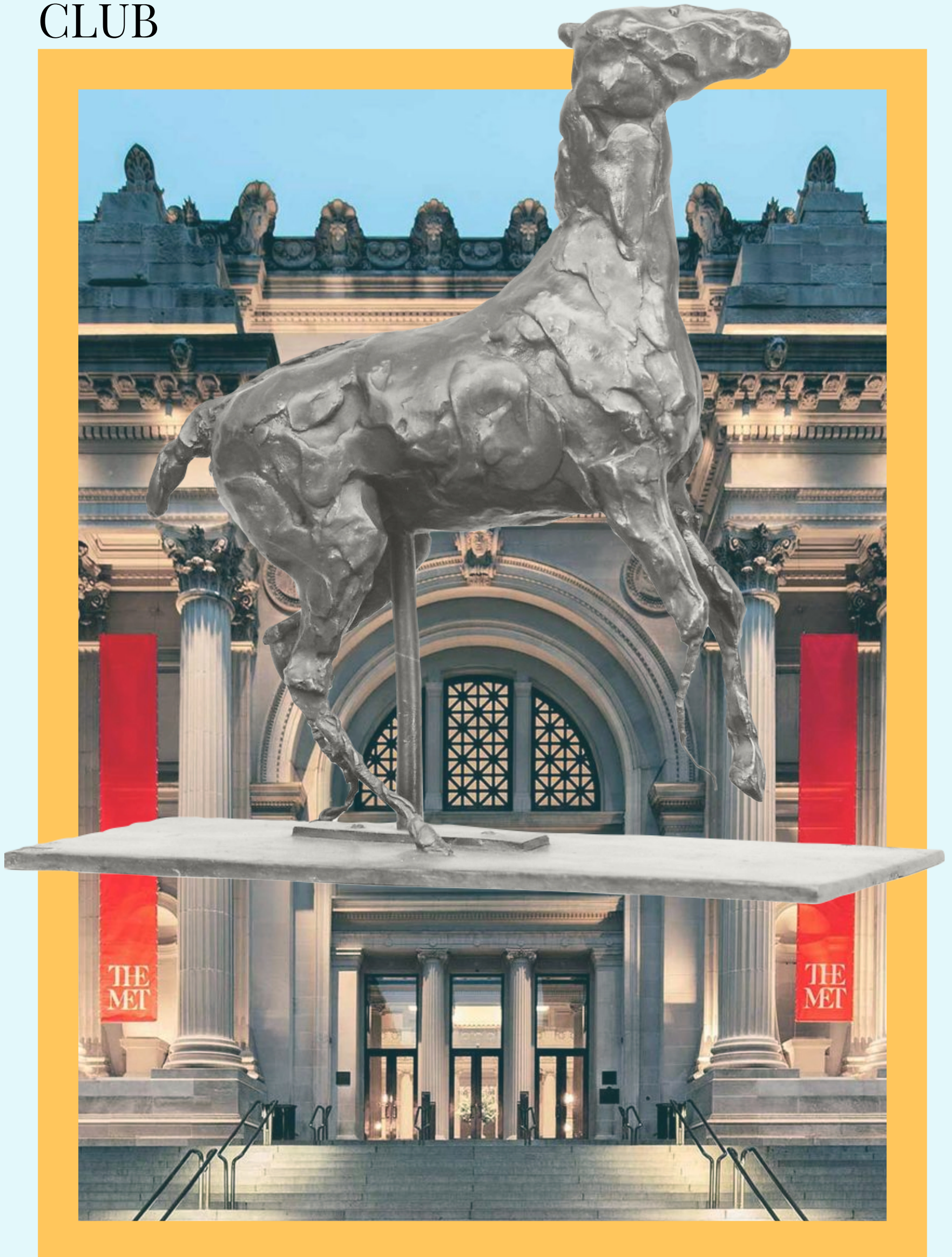


MANHATTAN  
RIDING  
CLUB



METROPOLITAN  
MUSEUM  
OF ART



# GREEK AND ROMAN



**The ancient Greeks believed that horses were created by Poseidon, god of the seas. were first domesticated in the Eurasian Steppes during the 4th millennium B.C.E. and spread to and throughout the Near East and Mediterranean from there. As they are now, horses were very expensive to maintain and were thus mainly the property of the wealthy. In fact, the second-highest property class in Athens was called the ‘hippeis,’ or ‘horse-owners.’**

**Chariot races were popular athletic events in ancient Greece, originating as part of the ceremonies in early funeral games. Horse racing with riders, not chariots, was introduced somewhat later, as is depicted on the Panathenaic prize amphora below (I wrote a paper on this in college; they contained sacred olive oil and were the original rewards for the victors of the Panathenaic Games). The races took place on courses called hippodromes, dangerous tracks with hairpin turns at either end. As is the case in horse racing today, the prizes and acclaim were given to the owners of the horse teams, not to the driver of the chariot or to the jockey. In addition to races, ancient Greek athletic competitions could include horseback acrobatics and military sports, such as throwing javelins from horseback.**

**I'd also like to note that the drinking vessel (called a 'rhyton') in the shape of a horse's head would have been painted, as almost all Greek sculpture was. It's a common misconception that the ancient world was simply filled with white marble. While the polychrome decoration on this vessel is lost, if you look around the gallery, there are other examples where you can see the original color faintly remains.**

**The terracotta sculpture of the horse's head reminds me of the Horse of Selene from the Parthenon, currently in the British Museum (though as a Greek person I must note that they stole it from us and we want it back). The Horse of Selene is probably the most important representation of a horse in ancient Greek art, so I encourage you to Google that now.**

**I also selected the fragment of a jar depicting a groom quieting two horses because of the similarities between their eyes. The eye is the window to the soul, and I think it's moving, though likely not intentional, that all three figures have essentially the same ones.**





1

2



3





4



5



6

7



**1**

**Title: Fragment of a terracotta amphora (jar)**  
**Attributed possibly to the Painter of Vatican 365**  
**Period: Archaic**  
**Date: ca. 540–530 B.C.**  
**Culture: Greek, Attic**  
**Medium: Terracotta; black-figure**  
**Accession Number: 20.259**  
**On View: Gallery 155**

**2**

**Title: Terracotta amphora (jar)**  
**Attributed to The Horse-Head Amphorae**  
**Period: Archaic**  
**Date: ca. 600 B.C.**  
**Culture: Greek, Attic**  
**Medium: Terracotta; black-figure**  
**Accession Number: 22.139.7**  
**On View: Gallery 171**

**3**

**Title: Terracotta Panathenaic prize amphora (jar)**  
**Attributed to the Leagros Group**  
**Period: Archaic**  
**Date: ca. 510 B.C.**  
**Culture: Greek, Attic**  
**Medium: Terracotta; black-figure**  
**Accession Number: 07.286.80**  
**On View: Gallery 171**

**4**

**Title: Terracotta rhyton (vase for libations or drinking)**  
**Period: Hellenistic**  
**Date: late 4th–early 3rd century B.C.**  
**Culture: Greek, South Italian, Apulian**  
**Medium: Terracotta**  
**Accession Number: 17.230.36**  
**On View: Gallery 171**

**5**

**Title: Terracotta horse's head**  
**Period: Hellenistic**  
**Date: 3rd century B.C.**  
**Culture: Greek, South Italian (?)**  
**Medium: Terracotta**  
**Accession Number: 10.210.83**  
**On View: Gallery 171**

**6**

**Title: Bronze hoof of a horse**  
**Period: Imperial**  
**Date: 1st–2nd century A.D.**  
**Culture: Roman**  
**Medium: Bronze**  
**Accession Number: 08.258.9**  
**On View: Gallery 171**

**7**

**Title: Bronze bit**  
**Period: Iron Age**  
**Date: early 1st millennium B.C.**  
**Culture: Near Eastern or Greek**  
**Medium: Bronze**  
**Accession Number: 98.11.1**  
**On View: Gallery 171**