

ROBERT
YOUNG
ANTIQUES



11th Annual
EXHIBITION OF
ANTIQUUE FOLK ART

7th - 15th May 2010
Preview 6.30pm Thursday 6th May

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books



THE GREEK BODY (by Ian Jenkins and Victoria Turner; British Museum, rrp £19.99) The word *gymnasium* derives from the ancient Greek *gymnos*, meaning 'stripped'. This is a useful piece of etymology in a book that is, unsurprisingly, chock-full of nudity. As explained by these two curators at the British Museum - where nearly all of the sculpted objects in this attractive volume reside - Greek males did their exercise naked. Cultivating a perfectly honed body carried a moral as well as aesthetic importance, captured in the Socratic connection between the words *kalo* and *agathos* - beautiful and good. Teacher-philosophers, we're told (without a hint of a wink), frequented the gymnasium to attract pupils from among the athletes. No differentiating, for the Greeks, between the jocks and the geeks.

The representation of women as *naturel* was generally out of the question, though a notable exception to this rule was the depiction of divinities. Splashed decadently across the frontispiece is a close-up of Aphrodite caught at her bath - a large expanse of the goddess's back in all its fleshy glory, her half-turned head turning the viewer into voyeur. Marvel at how perfectly the sculptor has manipulated cold marble to become warm, living flesh; and at how the book's photography keeps hold of this: full-figure pictures coupled with dramatically lit close-ups ensure these studies of the human form come alive on the page.

To counterbalance these romantic, idealised images of the Greek body, the authors present us with such works as the early Cycladic marble figurines whose abstract forms inspired Picasso. A concern in the later Greek period for realism and character yielded works such as the carved-ivory figure of a hunchback with twisted, dwarfed body and grotesque face. Here are the darker realms of both the Greek imagination and reality: rapturous satyrs grappling with resistant nymphs, the hunter Aktaion being attacked by his own dogs; a clay pouring vessel that takes the form of a black man's head, the pathos in whose face becomes more poignant when one considers that its enslaved model might have used this very object to serve his master.

Jenkins and Turner give more attention to the face alone - a whole chapter - than the book's title would suggest. One of the highlights is a second-century BC bronze head believed to be from a statue of Sophocles; it contains as much tragic expression in its lined features as one of the playwright's protagonists, and shows how the Greek chisel could carve out character as adeptly as it could the body beautiful. Somehow, though, it's the rippling tones of the Westminster Youth and the athletic discus thrower that stick in the mind. Strange, that. ■ SOPHIE BARLENG >

To order *The Greek Body* for £17.99 (plus £4.50 UK p&p), ring the World of Interiors Bookshop on 0271 911 1747



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Visitors to Harrods' third floor will now find a distinctly Italian feel with the arrival of B&B Italia. Since 1966 the company has been a pioneer in contemporary furnishings. The unity of research, industrial knowledge and innovation ensures that each piece is original, authentic and of the highest quality. The firm

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1860. The products are hand-finished and many are made using the original casts. Its latest collections include the nature-inspired 'Organic', and 'Pupaluxe', which is influenced by Futurism and the industrial world. The company's new collection of beautifully veneered 'Lamos' doors is available in a variety of woods, from oak to black bolivar. Beardmore, 321 Fulham Rd, London SW10 (020 7354 5444; beardmore.co.uk).

With over 50 years of experience, Marvin Alexander is truly established in the world of lighting, respected by distinguished decorators and architects alike. To meet the growing demand for antique lighting, the company launched the 'L' 'Circle' collection, with its vast array of high-quality reproduction chandeliers, lamps, candlesticks, candlesticks and decorative accessories. Most of the models are made using techniques that have been used for centuries: sand casting, lost-wax casting and glass blowing. Marvin Alexander, 315 East 62nd St, New York, NY 10065 (212 212 858 2100; www.marvinalexander.com).

Evitaroni has gone back to old-school Holly-wood glamour with its bedroom collection. Indulge yourself with deep-buttoned headboards, floor-length curtains, metallic-trimmed cushions with delicate embroidery - all available in an elegant palette of silver, charcoal and deep browns. For the finishing touch, go for glass or crystal lighting.

■ The annual exhibition of antique folk art will be held from 6 to 15 May at Robert Young's gallery in Battersea. This year's is the 11th to take place and includes an eclectic mix of exhibits, from a Viking bowl to love tokens to weathervanes. Young believes that it's the arresting colours, individuality and naivety of folk art that have made people increasingly recognise its value. Robert Young Antiques, 68 Battersea Bridge Rd, London SW11 (020 7228 7847; robertyoungantiques.com).

highest-quality water in their factory in Corchospo. Available soft or carbonated. The water is sourced from beneath the Cambrian Mountains. The factory site within 300 acres of organically maintained pasturage and forestry, and the firm's environmental policy extends to its bottles, which are made from blue and clear glass and plastic, all of which can be recycled. For orders, ring 01974 272111, or visit www.tysons.com.

Aiming to unite European craft skills with an English aesthetic, sisters Gytha Bouchon and Amber Aikens have set up Nuttall Home to produce furniture of the highest quality. Each piece is hand-finished and designed to last for generations, using the finest artisanal skills and fabrics such as cashmere, angora, silk and linen from the Loro Piana 'Interiors' range, which are hard-wearing as well as sumptuous. Visitors to the Chelsea showroom can find both contemporary and traditional sofas, club chairs, ottomans and daybeds. Nuttall Home, 2 Pond Place, London SW3 (020 7384 8989; nuttallhome.com) ■



From top: bedroom furnishings by Evitaroni; English Nave School painting, c1850, at Robert Young Antiques; 'Harley Pines' lever from The Beardmore Collection; 'Delano' chandelier by Marvin Alexander;



silk wall hanging, or bed cover, at Richard Moore; 'Florence' foot stool by Nuttall Home; 'Alcoa' bed by B&B Italia