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FIRST HALF OF 4TH CENTURY BC

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LITERATURE

BIEBER M., THE HISTORY OF THE GREEK AND ROMAN THEATRE, PRINCETON, 1961, PP. 45-48, N. FIG. 198, AND TRENDALL A.D. – WEBSTER T.B.L., 'ILLUSTRATIONS OF GREEK DRAMA', LONDON, 1971, P. 127, PL. IV, 9, N. 20.

THIS AMUSING AND FINELY DETAILED FIGURE PROBABLY DATES FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE 4TH CENTURY BC, POSSIBLY AFTER THE LAST WORKS BY ARISTOPHANES. THE 'COMIC' MASK WAS CERTAINLY USED UP TO AROUND 330 BC AFTER WHICH MEANDER CHANGED THE NATURE OF ATHENIAN COMIC THEATRE CREATING THE 'NEW COMEDY'.

THE SHORT SLEEVED TUNIC IS FASTENED AT HIS LEFT SHOULDER, INDICATING A PERSON OF INFERIOR RANK. WEARING HIS 'COMIC' MASK WITH GAPING MOUTH WOULD INDICATE THE ACTOR IS IN 'FULL FLOW', WITH HIS ARMS IN AN ANIMATED THEATRICAL POSE. THE COMEDIC NATURE OF 'HIS' ACT IS FURTHER ACCENTUATED BY THE ABSENCE OF HIS TIGHTS AND THE SHORTNESS OF HIS TUNIC, REVEALING HIS GENITALS BENEATH HIS ROUNDED STOMACH, FOR ALL TO SEE !

PROVENANCE

EX PRIVATE COLLECTION CANTERBURY, KENT, UK

THENCE BY DESCENT TO THE FATHER WHO IN TURN PASSED THE FIGURE ON, AMONGST A COLLECTION OF ANTIQUITIES, TO THE UNCLE OF THE LAST OWNER IN THE 1960S

CF:

FOR A SIMILAR BRONZE FIGURE SEE: WEBSTER, T.B.L; 'MONUMENTS ILLUSTRATING OLD AND MIDDLE COMEDY' LONDON, 1978, PG. 58 - 59 AT22F