

PATRICK JEFFERSON



APHRODITE ANADYOMENE

Europe *circa* 1890, museum cast after a Hellenistic 1st century B.C. marble.

Height 72" (183cm) Width 17" (43.2cm) Depth 13 1/2" (34.4cm)

Painted plaster; casting flaw to the reverse at the right shoulder; some conservation; original integral display plinth.

"To see which many have sailed to Knidos, is the finest statue not only by Praxiteles but in the whole world" wrote Pliny the Elder. This statue was inspired by the most famous Greek sculpture of a goddess, the Aphrodite of Cnidos. Carved from marble by Praxiteles in the 4th century B.C, it was one of the first devotional statues of a naked female goddess, producing an immediate sensation when it was installed in a sacred precinct on the island of Knidos.

Centuries later, it inspired Roman sculptors to re-create the celebrated image of the goddess. Here we see a more sensual depiction, both arms raised freeing her body, her curves unadorned by drapery. In this pose - of which the most famous depiction is Sandro Botticelli's 'Birth of Venus' in the Uffizi, Florence - the goddess of love and beauty is shown emerging from the sea, wringing the waters from her hair.

As Guy de Maupassant on the Venus Landolina in *The Wandering Life* (1890) wrote: "... It is not the poetized woman, the idealized woman, the divine or majestic woman like the Venus de Milo, it is the woman as she is, as we love her, as we want her, as we want to embrace it. She is plump, with a strong chest, a powerful hip and a slightly heavy leg, she is a carnal Venus, that you dream of lying down when you see her standing. Her fallen arm hid her breasts; with the hand she has left she lifts a drapery with an adorable gesture covering the most mysterious charms. The whole body is made, designed, bent for this movement, all the lines are focused there, all the thought goes there. This simple and natural gesture, full of modesty and shamelessness, which hides and shows, veils and reveals, attracts and steals, seems to define the whole attitude of women on earth."

£12,500

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