

DAVID AARON



Head of Hercules

1st-2nd century A.D.,

Roman

Marble

H: 24 cm

A marble head depicting the aged Hercules, with thick curly hair and beard. The almond-shaped eyes are deep set and heavy lidded, conveying an impression of tiredness. The slightly downturned mouth is framed by a thick moustache. A simple fillet binds the hair. This head is based on the Greek sculpture of Hercules carved by Lysippos in the fourth century B.C., known today from a third-century A.D. copy that is in the [National Museum in Naples](#). This image is known as the Farnese Hercules, or 'Weary' Hercules, as it shows the hero resting after the completion of his twelfth and final labour.

The original bronze Farnese Hercules was displayed in the Agora of Sicyon in the Peloponnese. The full figure shows the old and exhausted hero, barely able to stand and leaning on his club for support. He holds the apples of Hesperides, for which he had to take the place of the Titan Atlas in holding up the sky while he stole them for his eleventh labour. The original bronze has not survived, but it can be recognised in many Roman copies and adaptations. The sculpture is attributed to Lysippos based on the colossal version in the Palazzo Pitti, Florence, which has a Greek inscription reading 'Lyssipos' work'.