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Bronze man and centaur

Greek, Geometric, mid-8th century B.C.

H. 4 3/8 in. (11.10 cm)

Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.2072)

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Description

Half-man, half-horse, the centaurs were said to inhabit remote wooded areas. In much of Greek art they appear in combat with humans and, by implication, are the antithesis of civilized man. The classic rendering of this subject appears in the metopes of the Parthenon in Athens. It is, however, already fully presented in this bronze statuette. The outcome of the conflict is indicated by the end of the spear preserved in the centaur's left flank and by the greater height of the man.