

Sophocles

Cast of an original in the Vatican Museums, Rome. The marble statue is a Roman copy of a Greek bronze original of the late 4th century BCE, probably from the circle of the sculptor Leochares; the original statue may have been set up in the theater of Dionysos in Athens by Lycurgos, the leader of Athens, in the 340s BCE.

Sophocles was one of the foremost writers of Greek tragedies in the 5th century BCE, author of more than 120 plays -- only 7 have survived: Oedipus the King, Antigone, Ajax, Electra, Trachiniae, Philoctetes, and Oedipus at Colonos. Here he is shown with a circlet in his hair, an honor granted him after his death allowing his worship as the Heros Dexion who introduced the cult of the healing god Asklepios into Athens. At the feet of the poet is a round container holding eight scrolls.