

The British
Museum



Kekrops
The Great King of Athens

Room 3 01 September – 30 November 2014

The Great King of Athens

Kekrops was an early earth-born king of Attika and founder of the city of Athens. Attic iconography presented him as a male figure with a serpent's-tail. His children comprised, a son, Erichthonios, and three daughters, Aglauros, Herse, and Pandrosos. In his time, the gods decided to procure cities in order to establish their own cults. Poseidon came to Attika first and struck his trident on the Acropolis rock producing sea. Athena followed this with her miraculous creation of the first olive tree. She was judged the winner

This fragment comes from the west Pediment of the Parthenon. It shows part of a serpent that coiled beneath Kekrops. The serpent fragment was made separately and at some point in its history became detached. Acquired by Lord Elgin, it came to England, while the figure of Kekrops itself remained on the temple.

The Parthenon, Athens
438 – 432 BC
Pentelic Marble

GR 1816.6-10.104



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