

Apollo Belvedere

Open, Second Place

Plaster cast of the celebrated white marble statue known as the Apollo Belvedere in the Vatican Museum, which is thought to be a Roman copy (Hadrianic period, c.120-140 AD) of a lost bronze statue made between 350 and 325 BC by the Greek sculptor Leochares.

*“Exegi monumentum aere perennius.” **Horace 3. 30***

So, not quite the god, but a plaster cast,
a copy of a copy of (oh yes!) another copy,
this xeroxed god cannot quite hope to outlast
either Parian marble or Achaean bronze.

This delicate pretender, unlike his namesake,
cannot control the elements, but painlessly
craves — Poor impressionist? Sad boastful fake? —
our careful protection from wind, ice and rain.

He’s like so many other gods who cling
to the daily care and security *we* bring.
All start to slobber, wither, once we’ve gone,
melt away that marbled muscle tone.

He thinks he’s loosed a consequential arrow,
but has merely, again, oddly mislaid his bow.

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