

This month's sculpture from Hadrian's Villa is a marble head of Hypnos, the Greek god of Sleep.



*Marble head of Hypnos, the Greek god of sleep, 117-138 AD, Hadrian's Villa
Palazzo Massimo alle Terme, Rome
Carole Raddato CC BY-SA*

Hypnos is represented as a young man with wings attached to his temples (now lost). The head must have been part of a full length statue showing Hypnos running forwards, holding in his hands poppies and a vessel from which he presumably poured a sleeping potion. One of the most complete representations of Hypnos is a bronze statuette from the collection of the National Archaeological Museum of Florence (see an image [here](#)).



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Hypnos was the son of the goddess Nyx (the deity of the Night) and Erebus (the deity of Darkness).

His wife, **Pasithea** (the deity of Hallucinations), was one of the youngest of the Graces and was promised to him by Hera. His sons were Morpheus (the personification of Dreams), Phobetor (the personification of Nightmares), Phantasos (the personification of inanimate objects in prophetic dreams) and Ikelos (the personification of people seen in prophetic dreams).



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This marble head of Hypnos was found inside the *cryptoporticus* of the Piazza d'Oro (Golden Court), one of the most luxurious complexes at the villa. It was a vast building complex with a great rectangular garden embellished with flower-beds. A canal was running down the main axis and was surrounded on all sides by a portico. On its eastern side was a series of rooms including a *triclinium*,

while on its southern side, opposite the entrance, was a monumental exedra with a *nymphaeum* and perhaps also a library.

This head of Hypnos is on display at the National Roman Museum – Palazzo Massimo alle Terme, Rome.

See images of the Piazza d'Oro [here](#).

See more images of Hypnos [here](#).

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