

The Statue that Didn't Look Right: Part 2

(Adapted from *Blink* by Malcolm Gladwell)

For a time it wasn't clear. The kouros was the kind of thing that art experts argued about at conferences. But then, bit by bit, the Getty's case began to fall apart. The letters the Getty's lawyers used to carefully trace the kouros back to the Swiss physician Lauffenberger, for instance, turned out to be fakes. One of the letters dated 1952 had a postal code on it that didn't exist until twenty years later.

Originally the conclusion of long months of research was that the Getty kouros was in the style of the Anavyssos kouros. But that, too, fell into doubt: the closer experts in Greek sculpture looked at it, the more they began to see it as a puzzling pastiche of several different styles from several different places and time periods. The young man's slender proportions looked a lot like those of the Tenea kouros, which is in a museum in Munich, and his stylized, beaded hair was a lot like that of the kouros in the Metropolitan Museum in New York. His feet, meanwhile, were, if anything, modern. The kouros it most resembled, it turned out, was a smaller, fragmentary statue that was found by a British art historian in Switzerland in 1990. The two statues were cut from similar marble and sculpted in quite similar ways. But the Swiss kouros didn't come from ancient Greece. It came from a forger's workshop in Rome in the early 1980s.

And what of the scientific analysis that said that the surface of the Getty kouros could only have aged over many hundreds or thousands of years? Well, it turns out things weren't that cut and dried. Upon further analysis, another geologist concluded that it might be possible to "age" the surface of a dolomite marble statue in a couple of months using potato mold. In the Getty's catalogue, there is a picture of the kouros, with the notation "About 530 BC, or modern forgery."

When Federico Zeri and Evelyn Harrison and Thomas Hoving and Georgios Dontas- and all the others- looked at the kouros and felt an "intuitive repulsion," they were absolutely right. In the first two seconds of looking-in a single glance-they were able to understand more about the essence of the statue than the team at the Getty was able to understand after fourteen months.

Answer:

What conclusions can we come from this case about reason and intuition? Is one the superior way of knowing (WOK)? What are the implications of this case?