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235 EAST 60TH STREET
NEW YORK NY 10022
212.989.9743 / 646.326.0820
WWW.HIXENBAUGH.NET
INFO@HIXENBAUGH.NET

Apulian Red-Figure Kantharos

An ancient Apulian Greek small red-figure kantharos with two ring handles; on one side, a seated female in a long flowing chiton holds a mirror, on the reverse is a kneeling Eros holds a mirror.



Apulia, Magna Graecia.
Ca. 350 - 300 BC.
Height: 3 1/4 in. (8.3 cm).

The output and quality of the Greek colonial potters working in Southern Italy increased greatly following the Peloponnesian War when Attic exports fell off sharply. South Italian Colonial Greek craftsmanship of the 4th century BC was an amalgamation of the Ionian (Athenian, Attic) conventions, and Doric (western colonial Greek) styles, with a noticeable native Italian aesthetic. The five predominant regional schools of South Italian pottery were: Apulian, Sicilian, Lucanian, Paestan, and Campanian. Xenon ware is a specific type of Apulian pottery, so named after a vase, now in Frankfurt (Beazley, EVP, p. 219,1.) inscribed with the name: XENON. The type is distinguished by added matte red decoration over black glaze (six's technique), often in floral and geometric designs. The sessile kantharos type is a drinking vessel with two low vertical handles, rather than the high looped handles of the long stemmed kantharoi traditionally used by Dionysos. Sessile kantharoi are embellished with intricate foliate and geometric designs.

Formerly in the Jerome Eisenberg collection, New York, acquired from Cahn, Basel, Switzerland, 2000.

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