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Campanian Red-Figure Bail Amphora

An ancient Campanian Greek large red-figure bail amphora; a scene of a woman seated with her maid receiving a mirror and platter; below is a seated warrior wearing a feathered helmet, white tunic and a bronze belt, his right arm resting on a large circular shield, a woman walking toward him with a long white fillet; the reverse side depicts two draped youths.

Campania, Magna Graecia.
Ca. 330 - 320 BC.
Height: 24 1/4 in. (61.5 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. The Campanian region around the Bay of Naples, produced red-figure vases in the 5th and 4th centuries BC. The fine light brown clay of Campania produced a distinctive look. Campanian potters preferred mostly smaller vessel types, but did produce larger vessels like bell kraters and bail-amphora. Subjects include youths, women, birds and animals, and often native Samnite warriors. At 4,000 known vases, the Campanian style is the second most common in the region after Apulian.

Published: J. Eisenberg, 1000 Years of Greek Vases II, (2010), no. 149.

Formerly in the collection of Axel Guttmann (1944-2001), Berlin, acquired in Krefeld, Germany in 1991.

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