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Egyptian Alabaster Double Kohl Tube

An ancient Egyptian alabaster double kohl tube vessel with two side-by-side cylindrical containers and a recess for the applicator.

New Kingdom.
Ca. 1570 - 1070 BC.
Height: 2 3/8 in. (6 cm).



Black galena (lead sulfide) based kohl (Egyptian: mesmedet) was not only used for beauty but also for religious, symbolic, and practical reasons as it worked as a natural disinfectant and protected the eyes from the bright sunlight. Alabaster was prized by the ancient Egyptians for its translucence and decorative veining, qualities which were further emphasized in the carving process.

Formerly in the Monnier collection, Paris 1960s; Tajan auction, Paris, 1996; subsequently in the Jerome Eisenberg collection, New York.

inventory number: 9540

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