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Egyptian Diorite Kohl Vessel



An ancient Egyptian Middle Kingdom diorite kohl vessel of ovoid form with raised rim and flattened bottom.

Middle Kingdom, 11th - 12th Dynasty.
Ca. 2133 - 1786 BC.
Height: 1 3/8 in. (4 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.

Formerly in the collection of Wilhelm Horn (1870-1959), Berlin, Germany; Christie's, London, December 11, 1987, lot 227; subsequently in the collection of Jerome Eisenberg, New York.

inventory number: 9556

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