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

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Greek Marble Relief: Phokion

An ancient Greek marble relief from a funerary lekythos depicting a bearded man followed by a youth facing left, each wearing himations that fall from the left shoulder, their names are inscribed above, "Phokion," and "Nikokokles."



Ca. 318 BC.
Height: 11 1/2 in. (29.2 cm).

The relief is thought to portray the famous 4th century BC Athenian politician and general, Phokian, who studied under Plato and was famed for his honesty, frugality and succinct speech. Unlike his contemporary Demosthenes he argued for diplomacy with Macedonia rather than war. Plutarch wrote his biography, describing his tragic end in which he was condemned to death by drinking hemlock. Despite this, he was later honored for his service to Athens.

Formerly in a Swedish private collection; Sotheby's, New York, December 17, 1998, lot 330; Christie's, London, October 5, 2007, lot 216; subsequently in a Rhode Island private collection.

inventory number: 9079

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