

GREEK BLACK-FIGURE OLPE WITH ANIMAL FRIEZE

Greek, Corinthian, 640 – 625 B.C.

Terracotta

H: 33 cm (13 in)

Reference: 35447



Olpe with low splayed foot and triple handle with rosettes at the rim, the body painted in four registers with friezes of confronted seated sphinxes, striding grazing deer and gazelles, striding rams, swans, striding bulls, and lions, dotted rosettes in the field, rays above the foot, concentric circles underneath, the details in added red and white.

The olpe is a container of Corinthian origin that Etruscan potters introduced into their repertory of ceramics, first in the form of their distinctive bucchero ware, and then in painted pottery, either polychrome or black-figured. Like the oinochoe, some olpai were used at symposia as a pitchers to serve wine, while other examples were intended for funerary use.

The figural decoration occupies both zones on the body. The zone on the shoulder is painted with polychrome tongues. In the zones below, goats or monsters, such as winged horses, winged panthers, or beaked wild animals, walk to the right.

The vase can be attributed to the painter of the Vatican. Among the most versatile artists of the period, this painter decorated vessels such as olpai and oinochoai in the polychrome technique, and cups, alabastra, and aryballoi in the black-figure technique. These figures are full of vigor and often innovative in conception, for example, the rooster-lion of the upper frieze.

PROVENANCE

Sotheby's, New York, 8 December 2000, lot 72;

The Gilbert collection, Cambridge, Massachusetts, acquired in New York, 8 December 2000

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EXHIBITED

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