

## CALYX KRATER ATTRIBUTED TO THE WORKSHOP OF THE KONNAKIS PAINTER

Apulian, mid 4th century B.C.

Ceramic

H: 29.7 cm (11.7 in)

Reference: 26070



The vase has the shape of an inverted bell, which ends in a broad, flared and horizontal lip; it is supported by a trumpet foot. The handles, of circular section, are welded almost vertically to the shoulder. Even if this type of container was originally used as tableware for symposions (we mixed water and wine to drink during the banquet), this copy had an exclusively funeral destination, as evidenced in particular by the position handles that are too close to the neck to be effective.

The subject painted on the main face also frequently appears on vases specially designed to accompany the deceased in his last home: while moving with a rapid step, a young Eros plays with a large circle, which he pushes with his left hand, while in the right he holds a bronze coat hook, filled with circular objects, perhaps fruits or eggs. The young god, with a magnificent pair of spread wings, is naked, but a red strip adorns his wrist. Her hair is held in place by a hat (krobylos), from which curly braids escape.

Two shrubs with a thin red trunk and decorated with fruit or circular leaves frame the scene, while two skulls of ibex or rams hang above the young man. The ground under Eros' feet is strewn with a few flowers and pebbles.

The B side offers a much simpler decoration, which is limited to a horizontal branch made up of triangular leaves which alternate with dotted fruits: it is a vine or ivy, attributes of the god of wine, Dionysos, who, as a god of vegetation, was closely linked to the Chthonian cults. Stylistically, this container belongs to the so-called "Gnathia" ceramic, whose main production center was actually in Taranto and not in Egnazia (south of Bari), as we thought; this ceramic appeared in southern Italy (in present-day Puglia in particular) during the last stages of the production of Italian red-figure ceramics. It was characterized by its polychrome decoration (white, reddish brown, golden brown) painted on an entirely black and shiny background which imitated the more prestigious tableware made of metal (bronze, gold). The krater under examination was attributed to the painter of Konnakis, who was probably among the inventors of this style, and who worked

during the second quarter of the 4th century BC. Among its characteristics, which can be found on the crater under examination, we can mention the scene with an isolated figure, the long vine / ivy branch incised on the secondary face and the ground covered with small pebbles.

### PROVENANCE

Ex – G. Granelli de Croon collection, Switzerland; 1930-1950

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

On the Konnakis Painter and his workshop, see Green – 1986, 114-117 and 137-138; Padgett – 1993, 191-195, cat. nos. 108-110 and 112; A.D. Trendall, in Cat. Malibu – 1994, 142-144, cat. no. 63.