

PROTO-SUMERIAN VESSEL INLAID WITH SERPENTINE AND LIMESTONE

Ne-Mesopotamian, Late 4th - Early 3rd Millennium B.C.

Alabaster

H: 18 cm. - D: 18 cm.

Reference: 11262



This beautiful vessel, with an ovoid body and a flaring rim is complete, with a some restoration to the lip. The shoulder is marked by a simple and elegant frieze of triangular inlays, alternating between serpentine and limestone, interrupted by four suspension holes.

M.FORTIN, « Syrie, Terre de civilisation », Cat.Expo. Basel 1999, p.284

The refinement in the technique of carving the stone is remarkable, as the alabaster is almost transparent when put under a light.

An extraordinary development of stone vessels is witnessed during the Jemdet-Nasr period, especially in Southern Mesopotamia. Small limestone or alabaster jars, kohl or oil tubes, bowls, and rectangular boxes sometimes in shape of boats, are common.

Many of these pieces were suspended, as suggest by frequently carved holes carved on the artefacts.

This bowl, with its frieze of inlays, is of a particularly high quality. The same type of vessel from the Jemdet Nasr period is simpler, without any decoration at all or only a frieze of geometric pattern sculpted in relief on the stone. This piece was most probably a temple vessel, or may have used in funerary rituals.

CONDITION

The rim is restored

PROVENANCE

Ex Art Market, Cologne. Ex Mr. A. Hiernaux, Stuttgart, Germany, 1950.
Ex private Collection, Belgium; thence by descent to Mr. L. Switzerland, 1979. Acquired by the current owner, 1995. Paris auction, 2006

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A.PARROT, « Tello, vingt ans de campagne de fouilles, 1877-1933 », 1948, 46-49.