

## Antiquarium, Ltd. Fine Ancient Arts Gallery Highlights

For his first participation at BRAFA 2020, Antiquarium Ltd. is proud to present a fine selection of highlights:



Figure of Venus at her bath  
Rome, 1st century BC-1st century AD  
Cast bronze  
19.3 x 6.9 cm  
Nude, save her diadem, the beguiling Goddess of Love and Beauty arranges her hair with her left hand while gazing into her outstretched right hand, where she once held a mirror. Venus stands on her original bronze spool-shaped pedestal with remnants of inlaid silver and glass paste decoration  
Provenance: private collection, Switzerland, before 1986



Portrait bust of an official or priest  
Egypte, Early Late Period, Dynasty XXVI, 664-525 BC  
Red jasper  
15 x 10 x 8.5 cm  
The traces of an inscription on the back pillar suggest the statue was a temple dedication. The use of such a large piece of so rare and valuable a material indicates the man represented was of some importance  
Provenance: private collection of Freiherr von Bissing, Germany, by repute; thence, private Hoffmann collection, Germany, 1935-1994; thence, private collection of K. Fischer, Germany (with invoice dated April 1994)



Imperial Roman strigilated urn  
Antonine era, 2nd half of the 2nd century AD  
Marble  
47 x 52 cm  
Provenance: private collection, London, 1970s, by descent

Below, firstly an extraordinarily rare ringstone bearing a portrait of the Ptolemaic Egyptia Queen Berenike II, and an equally rare and important gold Oktadrachm coin of her.

Secondly, a marvelous Attic Greek lekythos (oil jar) attributed to the Edinburgh Painter. It features a tableau of Herakles' Twelfth Labour, with the hero leading Cerberus, the ferocious guard-dog of Hades up out of the underworld, in the company of Hermes and Theseus.

Presented by Antiquarium, Ltd., Fine Ancient Arts Gallery (stand n° 110c)  
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IMPORTANT  
PTOLEMAIC  
GREEK  
GARNET  
RING-STONE  
ENGRAVED  
WITH A  
PORTRAIT  
BUST OF  
QUEEN  
BERENIKE II



An Important Ptolemaic Greek Garnet Ring-Stone engraved with a portrait bust of Queen Berenike II (266/7–221 BC), Queen of Cyrene by birth, Queen of Egypt by marriage to Ptolemy III, Euergetes.

The queen is portrayed in left profile as a mature woman, the extraordinary workmanship manifest in the subtly fleshy chin and eyes. Her hair is pulled back in a tight chignon, concealed beneath a transparent veil.

ca. 234–221 BC  
Intact, 16.5 x 13 mm (2/3 x 1/2")  
British private collection of Mr. C.  
Cf. A gold dekadrachm in the collections of the American Numismatic Society, acc. no. 1967.152.562; also a gold dekadrachm in the collections of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, acc. no. 35.122.



Garnet appears at 3.5 x actual size.  
Impression appears at 2 x actual size.

τέσσαρες αἱ Χάριτες, ποτὶ γὰρ μία ταῖς τρισὶ τήναις  
ἄρτι ποτεπλάσθη κῆτι μύροισι νοτεῖ.  
εὐαίων ἐν πᾶσιν ἀρίζαλος Βερενίκα,  
ἄς ἄτερ οὐδ' αὐταὶ ταὶ Χάριτες Χάριτες.

*There are Four Graces; besides the Three,  
Another has recently been made, still wet with perfume.  
Happy Berenike is radiant among all,  
Without whom even The Graces are not Graces.*

Callimachus. *Epigrams* 51. (310/305–ca. 240 BC)

SUPERB  
GOLD  
OKTADRACHM  
OF  
BERENIKE II



καὶ Βερενίκη λέων πρᾶος συνῆν, τῶν κομμωτῶν διαφέρων οὐδὲ ἓν.  
ἐφαίδρυνε γούν τῆ γλώττη τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτῆς, καὶ τὰς ρυτίδας ἐλέαινε,  
καὶ ἡνόμοστράπεζος, πρᾶως τε καὶ εὐτάκτως ἐσθίων καὶ ἀνθρωπικῶς.

*Berenike had a pet lion for a companion, no different from her maids.  
For example, it would wash her face softly with its tongue and smooth  
her wrinkles. It would share her table and eat in a sober, orderly  
fashion, just like a man.*

Aelian. *De Natura Animalium* 5.39 (175–235 AD)

Berenike II was perhaps single most influential and celebrated woman of the Hellenistic age; a constellation was even named for a lock of her hair. Strangely, the modern age has forgotten her.



## ATTIC GREEK WHITE-GROUND POTTERY LEKYTHOS

An Attic Greek White-Ground Pottery lekythos with a rare tableau of Herakles' Twelfth Labour, Capturing the monstrous Cerberus, guard-dog at the gates of the Underworld.

Attributed to the Edinburgh Painter, ca. 490–485 BC

Repaired, with small restorations. 30.5 x 11.5 cm (12 x 4 1/2 ")

Ex: Massachusetts private collection of Mr. J. V. Acquired in the early 1960s from Bernheimer's Antique Arts, Cambridge, thence by descent.

Herakles walks left, wearing the skin of the Nemean Lion, a short sword on his belt and a quiver over his shoulder. He holds his club menacingly aloft in his right hand while looking back over his shoulder at Hermes, who in his role as *Psychopomp* served as Herakles' guide through the Underworld. Hermes is depicted with his *Caduceus*, wearing a *Petatos* and *Chlamys* (traveler's hat and cloak), and his winged boots. Hermes' stance is a mirror-image to Herakles' as he walks to the right, returning to the Underworld, whilst looking back over his shoulder as he and Herakles exchange parting glances. The enormous and menacing Cerberus is depicted in the foreground, superimposed over Hermes. Leashes about each of the creature's two necks are held firmly in Herakles' raised left hand. Snakes grow from the beast's back, with another bearded snake serving as its tail. Theseus, the Greek Hero and mythological founder of Athens, follows Cerberus up out of Hades. In full armour, he carries

two spears, a *chlamys* draped over his outstretched left arm. Theseus had been held prisoner in the underworld following a failed attempt to abduct Hades' wife Persephone. After subduing Cerberus, Herakles stopped to free his fellow hero.

The capture of Cerberus is an infrequent subject for Attic Vase-Painting. Herakles' Twelfth and final Labour in service to the Mycenaean King Eurystheus of Tiryns was arguably his most harrowing task. Following protracted machinations to gain access to the underworld, Herakles asked Hades' permission to take the beast. Hades assented, under the condition that Herakles subdue it without the use of any weapon. The hero then strangled Cerberus into submission.

The association of the ultimate Panhellenic hero Herakles with Theseus, the penultimate but, importantly, the founder of Athens, sent a powerful message throughout the entire Greek world, asserting Athens' political, military and economic

dominance in the wake of its defeat of the Persian invasion at the Battle of Marathon (490 BC). Cf., A White-Ground lekythos by the Edinburgh Painter in the collections of the Cleveland Museum of Art, no. 1929.135, published in *Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum: Cleveland Museum of Art* 1, 13-14, PL.(699) 19.1-3. Also, another in the collections of the Musée National Rodin, Paris, no. 954, published in J.D. Beazley, *Attic Black-Figure Vase-Painters* (Oxford, 1956), 476. Also, another in the collections of the Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Gela, no. N125, published in J.D. Beazley, *Attic Black-Figure Vase-Painters* (Oxford, 1956), 476.

For the propagandistic implications of emphasizing Herakles' and Theseus' association, see Ralf von den Hoff, "Herakles, Theseus and the Athenian Treasury at Delphi", in Peter Schultz (ed.), *Structure, Image, Ornament: Architectural Ornament of the Greek World* (Oxford, 2009), pp. 96–104.

