


37

Relief with Two Griffins Attacking a Deer

350-300 BC

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Object Details

Catalogue Number	37
Inventory Number	80.AD.39.1 
Typology	Relief
Location	Taranto region
Dimensions	
Fragment 1. H: 2.6 cm; W: 4.6cm	
Fragment 2. H. 4.7cm; W: 6.6cm	

Fabric

beige in color, a slip of light-yellow diluted clay, with foil gilding.

Condition

The relief is partially preserved, in two fragments.

Provenance

– 1980, David Swingler (Santa Monica, California), donated to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1980.

Bibliography

Unpublished.

Description

The two fragments, identifiable as a Tarentine appliqué, still show extensive traces of the original gilding. The first fragment preserves only the body of a griffin with truncated back legs; the second fragment depicts a griffin in a symmetrical position, in the act of clutching with its left front claw a fallen animal, perhaps a stag, only the back part of whose body is still preserved. The griffin holds its prey still with its right back claw as it sinks its fangs into the animal's back. The attachment of the griffin's right front claw to the animal's body forms an eyehole that was probably used to attach the relief to the sarcophagus.¹

Notes

1. For the griffin motif, see C. Delplace, *Le griffon de l'archaïsme à l'époque impériale: Étude iconographique et essai d'interprétation symbolique* (Brussels, 1980); and idem., "A propos de nouvelles appliques en terre cuite dorée représentant des griffons, trouvées à Taranto," *Bulletin de l'Institut Historique Belge de Rome* 39 (1968), pp. 31–46.