

Auction 66
GLYPTICS

London, 10th July 2019

AUCTION

10th July 2019 at 3.00 pm GMT

Halkin (4th Floor) 10 Lower Thames Street, London, EC3R 6AF United Kingdom.

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EXHIBITION

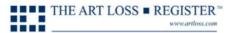
3rd - 9th July 2019 at 10.00 am - 5.00 pm GMT

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AUCTIONEER

Lindsey Alexa Gundersen







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488

A rare roman agate intaglio. Harbour with ships.

The harbour structure is hexagonal in shape and is characterized by the entrance area from the sea by colonnaded and covered porticos (with a sixth-arched entrance), to continue with square buildings (warehouses) and two long colonnaded porticoes; the structure ends at the bottom with a temple characterized by columns and a double entablature register (interrupted by a sixth-arched niche). Inside, a statue of a divinity flanked on either side by two shields [?]. Above, a star, perhaps referring to the reference star for the navigation routes. Three boats inside the harbour, engraved in detail (two ships have a mast and a closed sail, and there is sailors). Below, maritime allegorical emblem: two dolphins on the sides of a trident. Interesting variety of red-orange agate with small reddish inclu-sion and a whitish opaque band layer (in the lower half of the scene) to simulate the sea. Hexagonal shaped bezel. Signs of wear and chipping on the obverse side of the bezel. Intaglio performed with skill. Extremely rare and of considerable historical importance. The most compelling iconographic comparison is the cooling of the Port of Trajan (Ostia) on the reverse side of the emperor's sestertius, coined between 112 and 115 AD [RIC II 631, BMCRE p. 205, Cohen 306]; for ships, a comparison Ostia is useful. The iconographic and compositional similarity between the representation of the intaglio and the one on the sestertius is very narrow, however there is not just few variations. Often there was a correspondence between the engraver of the coinage and the seal in hard stone, or the coins were taken as a source of inspiration from ateliers far from the place that was wanted to be representually changed. Despite the variations compared to a codified model (in this case the the most faithful term of comparison is the reverse of the coin), the unmistakable hexagonal structure of the port (attributed to Apollodoro di Damasco) and numerous architectural details present on the intaglio, lea consider the gem an unpublished interpretatic the Ostiense port; presumably the only one kn at the moment in the glyptics. English private

2nd century AD.

18 x 20 x 5 mm

1.000

4.000-5.000





