



PROANTIC  
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Curiosa - Artifact - Antiquity - Terracotta Oil Lamp - Erotic Scene - Roman Empire



165 EUR

Period : Before 16th century

Condition : En l'etat

Material : Terracotta

#### Description

Dating: 1st - 3rd century AD (cf. Bussière)

Origin: Western Mediterranean, probably North African or Italian workshops Provenance: Private collection, South of France

An intimate gesture captured in the light Roman oil lamp molded in terracotta, Bussière type D II 1 b, with decorated medallion. The biconvex reservoir has a rounded spout bordered by a straight line, punctuated at its ends. The bowl-shaped disc, bordered by a groove, depicts an explicit erotic scene, in the tradition of domestic representations where the carnal act becomes a motif of light and presence. The object is distinguished by a frontal and direct composition: two figures in union, inscribed in a tight elliptical frame, evoking the engravings of Roman intimacy found on the walls of Pompeii. The iconography, both trivial and ritualistic,

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speaks of a time when the intimate was not hidden, but was part of everyday gestures. The vertical handle, pierced with two grooves, is molded from the mass. The outer edge is slightly inclined outward. Presence of a functional vent hole. The flat base, with a circular ring border in slight relief, bears a potter's mark on the reverse, as yet unidentified. Description o Material: Molded terracotta o Shape: Rounded reservoir with short spout, molded vertical handle o Decoration: Erotic scene - two figures in carnal union o Disc: Bowl-shaped, circled with a clear groove o Base: Circular, slightly raised, manufacturer's mark on the reverse Condition o Very good general condition o Central decoration formerly broken then reattached, clean and stable restoration o Beautiful burial patina, light residual deposits Interpretation Lamps with erotic subjects were not marginal in the Roman world: they circulated in houses, baths, sometimes even tombs. They were part of an uninhibited view of the body and desire, integrated into everyday objects. Lighting then became a medium for storytelling, a mirror of earthly pleasures, and a silent offering in the ancient night. Dimensions o Length: 10 cm Bibliography consulted o Bonifay (2005), Observations on the typology of African lamps, in *Lychnological Acts I*, Montagnac o Bussière (2000), *Antique lamps from Algeria*, Montagnac o Bailey (1980), *A Catalogue of the Lamps in the British Museum, II*, London o Deneauve (1969), *Lamps from Carthage*, Paris o Heres (1972), *The Roman Picture Lamps of the Berliner Antique Collection*, Berlin o Ponsich (1961), *Roman Lamps from Mauretania Tingitane*, Rabat o Loeschcke (1919), *Lamps from Vindonissa*, Zurich o Dressel (1899), *Lucernae formae*, in *CIL XV*, Berlin Delivery ALL DELIVERIES ARE MADE BY DHL EXPRESS ONLY.