



Seven Gold Appliqués Depicting Winged Lions. Achaemenid Empire, 5th-4th Century.

5 000 EUR

Period : Before 16th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Gold



Description

Seven Gold Appliqués Depicting Winged Lions. Achaemenid Empire, 5th-4th Century BC. Each circular appliqué measures approximately 1.5 cm in diameter and weighs 0.3 grams, with a total combined weight of 1.92 grams. Delicately worked in high-purity gold, each disc features a finely rendered lion-griffin (or winged lion), seated right but with the head turned dramatically to the left--an enduring motif of power and vigilance within Achaemenid art. The surface retains crisp detail, with each appliqué pierced with three small holes, likely for attachment to garments or ceremonial textiles. Provenance: Private English Collection, assembled between the late 1970s and early 1990s. For closely related examples, see the Oxus Treasure in the British Museum, London, registration nos.

Dealer

Belle Histoire

Early European sculpture, works of art and jewellery

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1897,1231.28-30.

[https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/](https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/W_1897-1231-29?selectedImageId=1613837251)

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Gold held immense significance in the

Achaemenid Empire, not only as a symbol of

wealth and divine favour but also as a practical

medium for art, currency, and royal regalia. It

was used in architectural decoration, lavish court

objects, jewellery, and ceremonial ware, often

reflecting the empire's vast wealth and

cosmopolitan reach. Among the prominent motifs

in Achaemenid art is the lion-griffin--a mythical

creature combining the body of a lion with the

wings of an eagle. This powerful image,

frequently seen in gold appliqués, seals, and

metalwork, conveyed themes of imperial power,

protection, and control over both terrestrial and

celestial realms. The lion-griffin stood as an

emblem of dominance and guardianship, befitting

the grandeur of Persia's imperial ideology.