A Gold Ring With A Roman Nicolo Intaglio. Jupiter-serapis.



3 650 EUR

Period : Before 16th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Gold

Description

18K yellow goldCat: 21 × 17 mm - Finger size: P½ (UK) / 8 (US) / 57½ (EU) - modifiableIntaglio: Roman, IIe-IIIe century AD.C. Mounting: European, XXe century, 18-carat yellow goldRoman intaglio of oval form, finely engraved on nicolo, depicting the bearded bust of Zeus-Serapis in sinister profile. The god is depicted according to his canonical iconography: long wavy hair falling in heavy locks to the nape of the neck, abundant beard treated in fine parallel stripes, and the kalathos - cylindrical bushel measuring grain - on top of the head, an attribute inseparable from his syncretic identity as deity of fertility, abundance and the afterlife. The drapery of the himation is visible on the chest, rendered by deep parallel incisions that catch the light against the bluish surface of the stone.The

Dealer

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nicolo, a particularly sought-after variety of layered onyx, features a thin upper layer of whitish-blue agate that the engraver left intact around the figure, while cutting through it to reveal the lower layer of deep bluish-black. This two-tone optical effect - the engraved figure standing out darkly against a luminous pale-blue halo - is one of the signatures of fine Roman imperial glyptics and was particularly prized for theophoric subjects from the IIe century AD onwards. The cut is fluid and confident, with characteristic rotella and burin work visible in the hair and beard.The intaglio is set in a meticulously executed 18-carat yellow gold setting, designed in the XXe century in the taste of the antique seal ring. The oval bezel is framed by a double molded bezel in polished gold, the shoulders gracefully extending to a plain D-section ring - a restrained setting that lets the ancient gem speak for itself.Iconography and cultSerapis is a syncretic deity formally instituted under Ptolemy Ier Sôter (305-283 BC.C.) to unite the Greek and Egyptian populations of Alexandria around a single tutelary god. His iconography fuses the sovereignty of Zeus (beard, throne, majestic pose), the chtonian authority of Hades (Cerberus at his feet), the healing power of Asclepius, the luminous nature of Helios, and - through its roots in the Memphite cult of Osor-Apis (the deceased Apis bull likened to Osiris) - the Egyptian principles of resurrection and life after death. The kalathos worn on the head, modeled on the grain bushel, signals his role as guarantor of fertility and the harvest cycle.The cult of Serapis spread rapidly from Alexandria throughout the Mediterranean basin, reaching Rome by the end of the Republic, and became one of the most widespread cults of the imperial era. Wearing an intaglio of Serapis was both a personal act of devotion and a public affirmation of cosmopolitan religious sensibility.ConditionIntaglio in an excellent state of preservation, the engraving clean and unworn, the nicolo retaining all of its original bichrome

contrast. Mount in very good condition, light surface wear consistent with age and wear.