Emmett & White
ANTIQUES & INTERIORS

Etruscan cornelian scarab intaglio

£1,450

Emmett & White Ltd
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REF: 7774

Height: 2.5 cm (1")

Width: 2 cm (0.8")

Depth: 1 cm (0.4")

Description

A museum-quality ancient Etruscan or related Mediterranean cornelian scarab, probably circa 5th-4th century BC, engraved with a griffin attacking a quadruped, within a hatched border; subsequently incorporated into a 19th-century silver animal-headed swivel pendant.

Etruscan scarabs are finely carved gemstones produced in ancient Italy, particularly between the 6th and 3rd centuries BC. Inspired by Egyptian scarab amulets but adapted to Etruscan taste, they were usually fashioned from materials such as carnelian, sard, agate or other hardstones.

The domed upper surface is carved to resemble a beetle, while the flat underside often carried an intaglio depicting gods, heroes, animals or scenes from Greek mythology. Pierced longitudinally, scarabs could be mounted in swivel rings and used as personal seals.

Today, genuine Etruscan scarabs are admired for their remarkable craftsmanship, classical imagery and archaeological significance.

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