

# GALERIE GOLCONDA

ARCHÉOLOGIE MUSÉALE  
FOSSILES – BIJOUX RARES ET ANCIENS  
CABINET DE CURIOSITÉS DES GRANDES CIVILISATIONS

## CERTIFICATE

### **FUNERARY MARBLE STELE WITH EPITAPH ROMAN PERIOD (AD 2<sup>nd</sup> / 3<sup>rd</sup> century)**

**MATERIAL AND METHOD:** An excellent rectangular plaque of white Italian marble carved in depth. Two griffins represented in low relief are framing the portrait of a young boy in a medallion. A Latin epitaph is engraved on the superior part of the plaque which is flat. Circular traces of drill can be observed on the wings of the griffins and around the design. This tool, often used in Greco-Roman sculpture, facilitates the cut of the volumes and the creation of contrasts.

Excellent state of preservation, some very minor scratches due to age. Old patina.

**ORIGIN:** The habit of writing epitaphs is a perfectly codified Greek tradition which was widely used during the funerary praises of the Roman period. On this particular epitaph, one can read the abbreviated letters D.M as a usual formula *Dis Manibus* meaning "to the god's souls", the gods of the deceased. The name of the deceased is written in the Roman manner of the tria nomina: V is the first name, L the family name and RUFUS the nickname. The inscription *VIXIT ANNII* means "has lived through those years."

Griffins are composite mythological creatures with the body of a winged lion, the head of an eagle and the tail of a snake. They were a favourite motif in the ancient Middle Eastern and then Greek and Roman lands. Originating from Elam and Egypt as far as 3000 years B.C., the griffin has spread throughout western Asia and through Greece by the 12<sup>th</sup> century BC

The griffin was sacred, appearing frequently in sanctuary and tomb furnishings. The type of griffin represented on our stele can be seen on the tomb number 58 in Paestum.

**DIMENSIONS:** Height: 16 cm/6,29"- Width: 22 cm/8,66"- Depth : 3cm/1,18"

This object is fixed on a contemporary metal pedestal of rusted iron

**EXPORT LICENSE:** supplied with cultural passport issued by the French Ministry of Culture, n°117544.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:** published in 'Collecting Masterpieces' part one by Beryl Cavallini. pages 96/97

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