

A Large 18th c. or earlier Red Jasper Intaglio — Roman Julio-Claudian Emperor as Jupiter

Dim. 21 × 28 × 5 mm (0.83 × 1.10 × 0.20 in)

Europe, 18th century or earlier

The large oval intaglio carved in red jasper depicting a Roman emperor in the guise of Jupiter (Zeus). The figure stands in profile, facing right. Shown nude with an athletic torso, he leans on a large oval shield with his right hand while holding a long spear or sceptre. In his left hand, he brandishes the thunderbolt (fulmen), the characteristic attribute of the king of the gods.

At his feet, to the right, rests a muscled cuirass (lorica musculata) placed on a support, evoking military victory and triumph. A horizontal ground line structures the composition.

The intaglio carving, intended to produce a relief impression on wax or clay, demonstrates careful workmanship with accomplished anatomical rendering and mastery of iconographic attributes.

Condition: Wear marks. Patina and deposits and a very small chip on the edge.