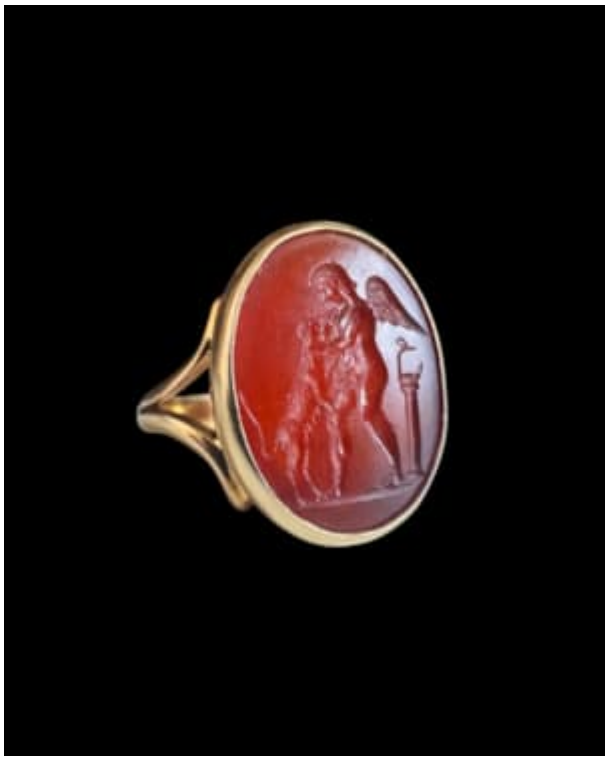

A Neoclassical gold ring set with a carnelian intaglio. Eros with a dog.

gold (18k-750) ; UK size : M½ – US size : 6.5

750 hallmark

Intaglio: 11 x 15 mm

Gross weight 7,38 g

European work, 19th century

A delicate carnelian intaglio depicting the infant Eros caressing a dog that rears up on its hind legs to greet him. The two figures stand upon a ground line, with a column rising behind them surmounted by an oil lamp, anchoring the composition in an architectural setting.

The scene, at once tender and lively, is drawn from the rich classical repertoire of subjects celebrating love, fidelity, and affectionate companionship — the bond between Eros and animals symbolising the gentle ties between beings.

The carving is precise and expressive, the two figures rendered with a naturalistic warmth within the small oval field. The translucent reddish-orange carnelian, a stone prized by gem engravers since antiquity for its hardness and luminosity, enhances the intimacy of the subject.

The intaglio is set in an 18-karat gold ring with a smooth rubbed-over bezel, typical of 19th-century European goldsmith work. The mount is elegant in its simplicity, allowing the gem to take centre stage. The ring is structurally sound, with a soft patina consistent with age, and is eminently wearable.

The motif of Eros with a dog standing on its hind legs finds parallels in Hellenistic and Roman gems, and was enthusiastically revived by neoclassical engravers, particularly in Italy, during the late 18th and 19th centuries. For similar compositions, see Paoletti (T.V - 84 - Amore e Cane, simbolo della fedeltà; impression by Pichler after an original intaglio ante 1787) and (T.VI - 208 - after an intaglio signed CERBARA). Such pieces were worn as personal talismans and markers of classical culture by educated European collectors.

Condition: Very good. The carnelian is intact with no chips or cracks. The gold mount shows light surface wear consistent with age.