

A 18th/19th century chalcedony intaglio depicting a priapic scene.

Dimensions: 19 × 22 mm — Weight: 1.9 g
Mounting on request

A large and finely carved chalcedony intaglio depicting a priapic scene after the antique. Two nude female figures flank the god Priapus, adorning him with garlands of leaves in a ritual gesture of offering and celebration. The god stands at centre, his posture animated and his ivy-crowned head turned toward one of the attendant figures. Adding to the Dionysiac atmosphere. In the field to the left, a tall brazier on a slender tripod stand burns with a flame — a standard sacred attribute in scenes of ancient cult and sacrifice.

The composition is set on a ground line and rendered in the blueish chalcedony with remarkable fluency and depth of carving, the figures modelled with confident anatomy and lively movement.

The scene draws directly from Roman erotic and Dionysiac iconography as revived and reinterpreted by the great gem-cutters of the 18th and early 19th centuries, working in the tradition of Lorenz Natter, the Pichler family, and their contemporaries. An accomplished cabinet piece of the neoclassical glyptic tradition.