



A Grand Tour carnelian intaglio gold ring, portrait of a Roman matrona

Intaglio approx. 15 × 13 mm

Ring size UK M½ (US 6½ / EU 53) – 2.6 g.

18th century

The circular carnelian, of warm orange-red, engraved with the draped bust of a matrona facing right, her hair dressed high in tiered curls in the antique manner; set in a yellow-metal ring with pierced scrolling foliate shoulders.

The subject, the Roman matrona — the idealised noble matron, emblem of dignity and married virtue — a type the Neoclassical age drew directly from Roman imperial portraiture: the elaborate, towering coiffure revives the fashion of the Antonine empresses (cf. Faustina). *Born of the Grand Tour taste for engraved gems, such carnelian teste of antique ladies were among the most sought devices of the period, worn as personal seals and emblems of classical learning.*