



African & Oceanic Art, Antiquities and Natural History (598)

Tue, 5th May 2020, Live Online

Lot 87

Estimate: £8000 - £12000 + Fees

ANCIENT GREEK HELMET OF ILLYRIAN TYPE ARCHAIC PERIOD, 600 - 550 B.C.

hammered bronze, domed helmet with a pair of raised parallel ridges, each with smaller ridges at the outer edge, with long, triangular cheek pieces and flaring neck guard, the borders with rounded studs and sections of bronze wire

23cm tall

Provenance:

Private collection, Europe, acquired 1980's.

Private collection, United Kingdom

Note:

Passed from father to son, helmets were amongst the most prized items of the ancient hoplite. This striking example belongs to the class known as Illyrian. It is distinguished by the open face without a nose guard and parallel ridges running along the top intended for the attachment of a crest.

Though found across the ancient Greek world, it is most commonly encountered in the modern Balkan states which correspond to ancient Illyria. Though the Illyrian tribes adopted it *en masse*, the first known examples were uncovered much further south on the Peloponnese and date to around 700 B.C. The shape of the Illyrian evolved over time to offer improved neck protection and allow better hearing in battle. Scholars now recognise four subgroups which span from 700 – 400 B.C. The present example belongs to type III and dates to 600 – 550 B.C.