



Connections

Presented by ArtAncient at BRAFA 2018

Leading London-based antiquities dealer, ArtAncient, will be showing at the BRAFA Art Fair for the first time in January 2018. The gallery will be presenting ‘Connections’, an exhibition which explores objects’ stories through their surprising connections with coins.

Seventeen objects are paired with seventeen coins sharing visual, symbolic and historical connections. The display is designed to be engaging and enrich the visitor’s experience:

“As dealers, we’ve always enjoyed anecdotes relating to our objects; we felt it would be fun to share these snippets of information at a fair like BRAFA, with its focus on connoisseurship, to encourage people to look closer at works of art.” - Costas Paraskevaides, Director.

The display includes the oldest item ever shown at BRAFA; an extraordinary, sculptural meteorite, which predates the formation of our planet. The image on a little-known coin placed directly underneath proves that our fascination with these beautiful, otherworldly objects goes back millennia: a four-horse chariot tows the famous meteorite of Emesa to Rome exactly 1800 years ago.

Sometimes coins show subtle changes in artistic style, and through comparison, help us date important objects and appreciate rare styles. Other times, they boast of conquest, the effects of which can be seen in the region’s artistic traditions centuries later. Whether the connection is academic or whimsical, the aim of the exhibition is to engage visitors and to encourage them to see objects in a new light.

‘Connections’ will be exhibited at the BRAFA Art Fair from 27 January to 4 February. For more information please contact denis@artancient.com, or telephone +44 (0) 3621 0816. Selected highlights of the exhibition can be found overleaf.

AN EXTRAORDINARY AMMONITE; SILVER COIN WITH THE PORTRAIT OF ALEXANDER, C. 297 BC

Pliny, Natural History XXXVII, 167: 'The Horn of Ammon, which is among the most sacred stones of Ethiopia, has a golden yellow colour and is shaped like a ram's horn. The stone is guaranteed to ensure without fail dreams that will come true.'

Iridescent ammonites are some of the most beautiful fossils in the world. In ancient times people referred to these strange stones as *Hammonis Cornu*, due to their resemblance to the sacred Horns of Ammon. This coin shows Alexander the Great wearing the Horn of Ammon, a symbol of his deification and identity as son of Zeus-Ammon. The modern word 'ammonite' is derived from these ancient associations.



ANCIENT GREEK CUIRASS DATING TO THE 4TH CENTURY BC; PATRAOS COIN C. 330 BC



Minted during a decisive moment in Alexander's Persian campaigns, this coin immortalises a moment of heroism: Ariston, Alexander's cavalry general spears the Persian commander Satropates in a skirmish prior to the Battle of Gaugamela in 331BC. This finely modelled and muscled cuirass also dates to the 4th century BC and would have been the prized possession of a cavalryman going to war.

GANDHARAN STUCCO, 4TH CENTURY AD; ALEXANDER WEARING AN ELEPHANT SCALP, 323 - 305 BC

This coin was struck shortly after Alexander's death and shows him wearing an elephant skin headdress, a symbol celebrating his conquest of modern-day India. Sculpture in the Graeco-Roman tradition was introduced into the region and fused with local Buddhist beliefs to create a new style of art. This exquisite Gandharan stucco head is a wonderful example of the lasting impact that Alexander the Great had on the artistic traditions throughout his empire.



IRON METEORITE FORMED 4.6 BILLION YEARS AGO; STONE OF EMESA COIN, 218 AD



As described within the press release.