



Red-figure calyx-krater (mixing vessel)

Date

350-320 B.C.E.

Primary Maker

Unknown artist, Greek (Ancient)

Medium

Polychrome terracotta with slip and pigment

Description

The vessels seen here are two of nearly sixty that were bequeathed to the College in 1928 upon the death of Edward S. Burgess, Class of 1879, H1904. At Hamilton, where Burgess studied classics, he was one of the organizers of the Emerson Literary Society and was named class poet in the year he graduated. After graduating, he held a fellowship in Greek at the Johns Hopkins University and taught botany and other natural history subjects at several schools before earning a doctorate in botany from Columbia University in 1899. Burgess taught at Normal College (later known as Hunter College) in Manhattan from 1895 until 1925 and served as director of the New York Botanical Garden in 1912–13. In addition to antiquities, he collected rare medieval manuscripts and incunabula (primarily in Latin), which are now in the special collections of the University of

Oregon. The vases bequeathed by Burgess are ideal for teaching, and the collection must have been intentionally formed for that purpose, as it includes representative vases in a variety of shapes from all major periods of development and major sites of ancient Greek and Roman production from the seventh to the third century BCE. Together, the vases demonstrate the migration of the art form with the territorial expansion of the ancient Greeks from their mainland to southern Italy during the second half of the fourth century BCE. On account of that influx, the area became known as Magna Graecia (Greater Greece). Ceramic manufacturing centers arose in the Campania and Apulia regions of southern Italy, where distinctive iconographies developed over time. Illustrated here are two examples of this expansion: a vessel used for mixing wine with water created in the city-state of Athens and a water jar made around the same time in Campania. Both are decorated in the red-figure technique, in which the artisan used slip (liquid clay) that turned black during firing to fill in the background and the details within figures, while the figures themselves, left exposed, retained the color of the clay. Both also demonstrate the addition of white slip to highlight certain figures and objects within the composition. (SOURCE: Alcauskas, INNOVATIVE APPROACHES, HONORED TRADITIONS, 2017) This Attic vase, created in Athens, Greece, depicts Eros, god of love, in mid-flight. Although the vase is painted in the red-figure style, in which black slip is applied around the figures, which retain the color of the clay used to make the vessel, white pigment has been applied after firing to draw attention to this central figure. Eros is flanked by the god of wine, madness, and ecstasy, Dionysus, as well as by one of his female followers, known as maenads, who holds a thyrsos and a shawl. Dionysus was a common subject on kraters, which were used to dilute wine with water. The opposite side of the vase shows two ephebes, or adolescent men in training, one of whom holds a book up to the other.

Dimensions

Overall: 12 3/8 × 10 7/16 × 10 7/16 in. (31.4 × 26.5 × 26.5 cm) Diameter (rim): 10 7/16 in. (26.5 cm) Diameter (base): 4 5/16 in. (11 cm)