

MINIATURE BRONZES FROM ANCIENT OSTIA

Artist: Unknown
Date: 1st - 2nd Century AD
Dimensions: Various
Material: Bronze, ivory, glass, clay
Inventory Number: 16846, 16853, 16862, 16908, 16919, 16931, 16942 – 47...

Total Cost: € 14.150,00

STATE OF PRESERVATION:

The surface of these objects is deteriorated and encrusted with organic residues and bi-products of the bronze corrosion. Part of the decoration is missing.

RESTORATION PROCESS INCLUDES:

- Cleaning and elimination of the corrosive salt bi-products
- Systematic cleaning of all the surfaces
- Stabilizing the residual products of corrosion
- Consolidation of the fractures and filling of existing lacunae (small holes)
- Protective final varnish
- Photographic documentation

In the mid-19th century intensive excavations were carried out in the ancient city of Ostia. More than 200 beautiful objects were discovered at this site by Pietro Ercole between 1855 and 1870. Today, they are displayed in two exhibition halls of the Profane Gregorian Museum. This beautiful collection is composed of *instrumenta*: imperial age clay and metal objects related to the daily life of ancient Romans.

This collection, especially those pieces which are made of bronze, is showing clear signs of deterioration, making their restoration urgent in order to stabilize their condition. This restoration and conservation project will offer us the opportunity to create a new display which will better highlight the importance of these objects from daily life in ancient Roman times.

This collection consists of small chains, buckles, tools and containers for liquids and mirrors. Also notably included are several decorative sculptures of deities, such as a Hercules seated on a rock and a small statuette of Isis. Particularly valuable are a few appliqués which were formerly used to decorate pieces of furniture and other objects used in ancient daily life. The appliqués take a variety of forms - including small winged cherubs, a half-length figure of a young man with a pointed cap, probably Attis, Eastern deities connected with the cult of Cybele and the bust of a plump, young African slave - which exhibit a wonderful expressiveness and plasticity.

