Red Figure Column Krater with two scenes
Syriskos Painter, Greek (Attic)
Greek, Classical, 480-460 BC
Terracotta, Overall: 17 3/8 x 16 1/2 x 14 1/2 in. (44.2 x 41.9 x 36.8 cm)

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This large ceramic vessel, called a column krater, was used for mixing water and wine. It is exceptional for its size, beautifully balanced composition, and finely painted figures. The primary characters are important deities from Greek mythology.

On the front, Zeus and Hera, king and queen of the Olympian gods are seated on either side of a winged goddess, Iris, who pours an offering from a jug, called an oinochoe, into a dish, called a phiale, held by Zeus. Iris’ left hand is extended toward Hera who grasps it in her own hand. Hermes, messenger to the gods, walks to the left but looks back to the right. The back of the krater depicts a woman standing between two youths.

Online Resources:
Hirsch Library Online Catalog
The Metropolitan Museum of Art Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History

Articles: (full-text access available on-site; off-site access available through your school library or Houston Public Library)

Print Resources:
Athenian Red Figure Vases, The Classical Period
The Colors of Clay: Special
Women in Ancient Greece
Drinking Vessels
Greek Religion
Bibliography

General Surveys of Greek Art


Greek Art, History, and Culture


Greek Pottery


This reference guide is just the tip of the iceberg on helpful resources in the library’s holdings. Many of the suggested resources above have their own bibliographies. Each of these may lead you to another resource that would also be helpful in your research here in the museum or in another library. To find additional resources, use keywords such as “Attic pottery” and “Greek krater” in the online catalog and in periodical indexes. Once you find a few relevant titles, pay attention to the subject headings to identify similar materials. Examples of useful subject headings are:

- Vase-painting, Greek
- Vases, Greek
- Athens (Greece)—Antiquities
- Greece—Antiquities

For guidelines about writing it may be helpful to look at Sylvan Barnet’s *A Short Guide to Writing about Art*, which includes tips for looking, reading, and writing about art. Ask for it at the reference desk. At every stage of your work, please allow the library staff to help you. Contact us at 713-639-7325 or hirsch@mfah.org