



ANTHEA FINE ARTS



**A Roman carnelian intaglio. Mars Gravidus.**

Circa: 2nd-3rd century A.D.

carnelian

1.15 x 1.65 x 0.2 cm (0 1/8 x 5/16 x 1/8 inches)

2nd-3rd century A.D.

The god walks leftward, wearing a crested helmet and sandals holding a spear and weapons trophy. On the hips is tied a drapery. In the field, at his feet a star. Groundline. Interesting and well-composed work, executed with deep and marked engraving lines. Signs of wear on the surface of the stone.

*Nickname given by the Romans to Mars, the god of war. The name Gradivus means "He who advances" (in battle), or "He who makes the crops grow" (because Mars was, prior to his assimilation to the Greek Ares, an agricultural god). Numa Pompilius created twelve Salian priests in his honor.*

*Festus puts forward several hypotheses on the origin: we nickname Mars Gradivus because we advance in battle from one side to the other; either because of the action of brandishing the javelin; either because it was born from grass (gramen); it is specified that the turf crown is the most honorable crown of military exploits.*