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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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### **Hixenbaugh Ancient Art Presents Old Babylonian Plaque of Ereshkigal**

*[SUMMARY. Hixenbaugh Ancient Art presents an ancient Babylonian plaque of underworld goddess Ereshkigal. This fragmentary piece is nearly identical to the "Queen of the Night Relief" in the British Museum. The ancient terracotta plaque dates to around 1850 – 1750 BC.]*

NEW YORK, April 30, 2012 – Hixenbaugh Ancient Art presents an ancient Old Babylonian terracotta high-relief plaque fragment depicting the underworld goddess Ereshkigal. The fragmentary piece depicts the nude lower torso, upper legs, and vestiges of her feathered wings. The piece is closely related to the famous 'Queen of the Night Relief' in the British Museum (inv. no. 2003-7-18,1).

The terracotta fragment was part of a larger relief depicting a complete female deity. Nude winged goddesses like this were often portrayed in Old Babylonian art, but very few terracotta figures of this scale have survived. This winged female deity has been variously identified as Lilith, the female demon said to prey upon children in their sleep; Ishtar, the goddess of fertility, love, war and sex; or Ereshkigal, the goddess of the underworld.

Vestiges of her feathered wings are evident at her hips indicating that she is most likely a goddess of the underworld. In Old Babylonian mythology, the afterlife neither punished nor rewarded. The goddess Ereshkigal acted as the guardian of the dead that dwelt in the underworld. Ereshkigal was also associated with decay and winter and as such was seen as a seasonal balance to her sister Ishtar who was associated with rebirth and summer.

This terracotta plaque is accompanied by a thermoluminescence test verifying its age and was previously in a European private collection since at least 1956. This piece as well as many other fine ancient items are available at our New York gallery (Tuesday – Saturday, 11am – 6pm) and can be viewed on our web site ([www.hixenbaugh.net](http://www.hixenbaugh.net)).

### ABOUT HIXENBAUGH ANCIENT ART

Hixenbaugh Ancient Art Ltd, located on the Upper East Side of Manhattan, is dedicated to handling fine authentic antiquities (Greek, Roman, Egyptian, Near Eastern Art). All of the pieces we handle are legally acquired, in complete accordance with US and international regulations and laws concerning the import and sale of ancient objects. All objects are guaranteed genuine and as described. Hixenbaugh Ancient Art is a member of the Art and Antique Dealers League of America (AADLA), the Confederation Internationale des Negociants en Oeuvres d'Art

(CINOA), the Appraisers Association of America (AAA), and the International Association of Dealers in Ancient Art (IADAA).

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At Hixenbaugh Ancient Art, we believe that responsible collecting of antiquities is not only a pleasurable pursuit and wise investment, but an important responsibility. Today's collectors are custodians of the past, links in a chain, preserving the past for future generations by passing their collections on to their heirs, reselling them to eager collectors, or donating them to museums. In doing so, the collector of ancient art reaps the many benefits of acquiring truly unique and thought provoking objects that have come down to us from the ancients, whose influences pervade every aspect of the modern world.

If you would like more information about this topic contact Robert O'Donnell or Randall Hixenbaugh at (212) 861-9743 or [info@hixenbaugh.net](mailto:info@hixenbaugh.net).