



**POTTERY
NETWORK**

UNDERSTANDING ATHENIAN VASES THROUGH THEIR VISUAL AND PHYSICAL PROPERTIES

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This talk will address the interplay between the visual and the physical properties of Athenian vases. Special attention is paid to the semantic relation between figures and their name inscriptions. Equally important is the distribution of both elements over the body of the vessels. It is argued that the vases can only be understood through a synoptic perspective on those qualities. In this way, inscriptions unfold their narrative potential: while the image with its traces of inscriptions might already be seen from a greater distance, one must approach the vessel with a closer look to make sense of the letter chains and to consequently decipher them. In this regard, the body of the vase plays a decisive role, as one must engage with it turning it around to discover and to rediscover the inscriptions. I will shed light on these phenomena presenting selected case studies.