SAMPLE ID:
MRA-ITA-Tar008

SAMPLE TYPE:
Mural painting
(Sub-Type: micro-fragment)

WEIGHT:
0.8 g (fragments + container)

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION:
Country
Italy
Place
Tarquinia

SITE/MONUMENT:
Tomba delle Leonesse

HISTORICAL NOTE ABOUT THE SITE/MONUMENT:
Monterozzi necropolis in Tarquinia is called after the hill on which it is located and is popular for its high number of sepulchers (more than 6,000), some of them monumental. The necropolis goes back to the 7th and 3rd century BCE, being one of the most long-termed. The site conveys a glimpse to the Etruscan lifestyle and notion of afterlife. The tomb of the Lionesses (Tomba delle Leonesse) was found in 1874 and goes back to ca. 520 BCE. The space is accessed through a staircase; the final area is the actual funeral chamber and has the traditional gabled ceiling, similarly to other tombs in the necropolis. The ceiling is decorated with checkerboard pattern, while the mural painting is divided into smaller areas with six red pillars that evoke an open area (Fig.1 and Fig.2). The tomb is named after two felines with spotted coat looking at each other and that lie in the fronton, on the central wall. These two animals are two leopards, although they were originally defined as lionesses. On the front wall, there are two musicians playing a double flute on the side of a crater. On the right and the left, a dancer and another couple of dancers. On the other walls, people are represented while banqueting and engaging in convivial scenes. Beneath, there
are dolphins darting between the waves.

Sources and further reading:

CHRONOLOGICAL PERIOD (SAMPLE):
6th century BC

OTHER INFO ABOUT SAMPLE PROVENANCE:
11 [number on the cork]; "Barone; Nave; Leonesse" [hand-written notes next to the sample]. 11 comes most likely from Tomba delle Lionesse (Fig.3).

PHOTOS/DOCUMENTS (PROVENANCE):

Fig. 1. Front wall of the Tomb of the Lionesses, with the fronton with them, the crater with the musicians and the dancers (Photo by Photo by Gian Luca Ferme – CC 3.0).
Fig. 2. Left wall of the Tomb of the Lionesses, with people celebrating in a courtyard and dolphins jumping above the waves (Photo by Gian Luca Ferme – CC 3.0).
Fig. 3. Hand-written note with sample location and description. Photo by M.Gil2018 © ICCROM Archives.