

**DAVID R. SEAR**

# Certificate of Authenticity

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*This coin has been personally inspected and authenticated by*

Issued to: Jens G. Feierabend

On: April 8, 2022

*David R. Sear*

State: Roman Empire

Ruler: Didia Clara (daughter of Didius Julianus)

Denomination: orichalcum sestertius

Mint: Rome

Date: AD 193 (April or May)

Weight: 17.79 grams

Maximum Diameter: 28.36 millimeters

Die Axis:

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Obverse: [DIDI]A CLA—[RA AVG], draped bust of Didia Clara right, her hair waved in ridges with large bun behind.

Reverse: [HILAR TEMPOR] around, [S — C] in field, Hilaritas standing left, holding in right hand a long palm branch which rests on ground, and in left a cornucopiae at her side.

References: Woodward ("The Coinage of Didius Julianus and his Family," in *Num. Chron.* 1961), pp. 85-6, 89-90 and plate X, obv. die 1/rev. die O (?); RIC (Didius Julianus) 20 and pl. 4, 2 (*same obverse die*); BMCRE (Didius Julianus) 38 and pl. 4, 6 (*same reverse die?*); Hunter III, p. 6, 2 and pl. 2; Cohen 4; Cayón, pp. 403-4, 1; Sear (*Roman Coins & Their Values II*) 6087.

Grade: fair, very rare

Historical & Numismatic Note: A noted 'belle' of Roman Society during the reign of Commodus, Didia Clara was the daughter of the wealthy senator Didius Julianus and his wife Manlia Scantilla. On the assassination of the Emperor Pertinax on March 28, 193, the mutinous Praetorian Guard put the imperial throne up for auction, the bidders being Didius Julianus and Pertinax's father-in-law, T. Flavius Sulpicianus. Julianus won by offering 25,000 sestertii per soldier, a colossal sum which was, in fact, never paid in full. With a detachment of praetorians to enforce his demands, Julianus went forthwith to the Senate House. The conscript fathers had no choice but to ratify the coup d'état and at the same time the new emperor's wife and daughter were given the rank of Augusta, a most unusual step to be taken at the very outset of a reign. The beautiful young empress was then given in marriage to Cornelius Repentinus, presumably Julianus' candidate for the eventual succession. However, these disgraceful proceedings aroused so much resentment in the provinces that three governors in widely separated areas of the Empire were, almost simultaneously, proclaimed emperor by their troops (Clodius Albinus in Britain, Septimius Severus in Pannonia, and Pescennius Niger in Syria). Of these, Severus was the closest to Italy and determined on a rapid march on the capital. His tactics were successful and quickly undermined Julianus' authority as the city awaited with trepidation the arrival of the avowed avenger of Pertinax. Julianus tried unsuccessfully to negotiate with Severus and, having been deposed by the Senate, took refuge in his deserted palace. There, on June 1st, he was murdered by a soldier after a reign of just 66 days. When Severus entered Rome, he granted an interview to Scantilla and Clara and agreed to their request that the remains of the late emperor should be deposited in his family tomb. However, both were stripped of their imperial rank and Clara lost her inheritance. They retired into private life and nothing further is known of them. The very rare coinage of Didia Clara, which was issued in the full range of metals, all bears the same reverse type. This proclaims the singularly inappropriate sentiment *Hilaritas Temporum*, "the Rejoicing of the Times," though the reference is probably to the festival of the *Hilaria*, which was celebrated each year at Rome at the spring equinox in honor of Cybele.

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