



PROANTIC

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Jean-auguste-dominique Ingres (montauban 1780 - Paris 1867) - Apelles Holding His Palette



6 000 EUR

Signature : Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres (Montauban 1780 - Paris 1867)

Period : 19th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Paper

Length : 30

Width : 18

Description

Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres(Montauban 1780 - Paris 1867)Apelles holding his palette and brushesLate reinterpretation after The Apotheosis of Homer - c. 1860Black chalk, stumping and white heightening on light brown laid paper, laid down on thin card300 × 180 mmSigned and inscribed lower left: "à Mr Visconti / Ingres"ProvenancePrivate collection, FranceThis drawing relates to Ingres's painting The Apotheosis of Homer, completed in 1827 for the decoration of the Musée Charles X in the Louvre (Paintings Department, inv. 5417)--a composition which the artist later revisited in a drawing he worked on for over twenty years (the number of assembled historical figures nearly doubled in the

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meantime, increasing from forty-two to eighty-two), and which he only completed in 1865: *Homer Deified* (Louvre Museum, Department of Drawings, inv. RF 5273).

It specifically depicts the figure of Apelles, placed on the left in both works, holding Raphael's hand and presenting the epic Greek poet with a palette and brushes. In the Louvre painting, Apelles's body is partly concealed, notably by the figure of Poussin in the foreground. In the 1865 drawing, as in the present sheet, the ancient painter is shown in full--though his right foot is slightly differently positioned from one drawing to the other.

However, this is not a preparatory study for either of these compositions, but rather an independent work executed relatively late in Ingres's life. Ingres often enjoyed revisiting earlier works in full or in part. The softened, almost chalk-like line reflects the spirit of the artist's late finished drawings, in which he sought to give his pencil a new velvety texture. This aesthetic is quite different from the sharply incised lines characteristic of his earlier sheets and recalls, to some extent, the final style of his teacher Louis David, who in exile in Brussels produced numerous drawings featuring antique figures with darker, more charcoal-like features.

The inscription on the lower left, in elegant cursive--"à Mr Visconti / Ingres"--might help us date this sheet more precisely. Let us recall that Louis Visconti was Ingres's colleague at the Académie des Beaux-Arts, albeit for a very brief period, the architect having passed

away on 29 December 1853, only five months after his election to the Institut (on 23 July).

That

said, the two men, who shared classical ideals in matters of art, likely became acquainted earlier. It is known that Ingres served on the committee for Napoleon's tomb at the Invalides--a structure entrusted to Visconti after a design competition in March 1842--and that Ingres even sketched a design for the tomb himself.

Nevertheless,

we do not believe that the present drawing was given to the architect during his lifetime, but rather conceived by the artist in the months following Visconti's sudden death (around 1854-1855). A posthumous tribute--the undated dedication, more formal than truly personal, seems to confirm this--paid to a renowned architect. In this drawing, Ingres may have identified himself with the figure of Apelles, and might well have kept the sheet for himself rather than offering it to a relative or friend of the deceased.

Sylvain Bédard, 12 July 2025