



**PROANTIC**  
LE PLUS BEAU CATALOGUE D'ANTIQUITES

## Allegory Of Europe - Anicet Charles Lemonnier (1743 - 1824)



2 800 EUR

Signature : Anicet Charles Lemonnier

Period : 18th century

Condition : Bon état

Width : 29,5 cm

Height : 41 cm

### Description

Study for the Figure of Europe (1787-1792), black chalk with white heightening on tinted paper, is the preparatory sheet for Anicet-Charles-Gabriel Lemonnier's grand allegorical décor, The Spirit of Commerce (Musée des Beaux-Arts de Rouen). Commissioned by the Le Couteulx family, the drawing was conceived at the heart of Neoclassicism and the Enlightenment: the primacy of drawing, a return to antiquity, and faith in commerce as a pacifying force. Europe, enthroned in majesty, does not dominate here; she orders and safeguards exchanges between continents. The caduceus, cornucopias, and "Asian treasures" form a learned vocabulary that Lemonnier modulates with exemplary economy of means. The study also reflects the flow of

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ideas between Paris and the Atlantic world (Franklin, the Lodge of the Nine Sisters) and the civic vocation of allegory on the eve of 1789. Historical and artistic significance. Through its virtuosic technique and clarity of purpose, the sheet distills the concerns of French Neoclassicism (in dialogue with David, Vincent, Greuze) while inscribing itself within the iconology of commerce (the figure of Mercury, shared prosperity). Circulated through Jean-Charles Levasseur's engraving, the invention participated in networks that exchanged images and ideas. A rare benchmark work. The installation of the large canvas in the Palais des Consuls in 1792, followed by the destruction in 1944 of the monumental version at the Chamber of Commerce, confers upon this study the status of a unique testimony to a Rouen civic manifesto. With sovereign precision it fixes the image of Europe as guardian of balance and preserves the memory of a decisive moment in our economic and artistic history. A detailed note is available on request.