Gold Snuffbox With Miniature Signed Jean-baptiste Isabey (nancy 1767 - Paris 1855)



19 900 EUR

Period : 18th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Gold

Length : 7.5

Width : 5

Height : 2

Description

Elegant rectangular snuffbox with chamfered corners, entirely crafted in engraved and chased gold, with a total weight of 141 grams. The lid is adorned with an oval ivory miniature depicting the portrait of a high-society lady, likely Marie Antoniette, dressed in a pink silk gown with a bodice decorated with black and yellow ribbons, a pearl necklace around her neck, and a voluminous powdered hairstyle adorned with a pink flower. The miniature, of exceptional finesse and signed "Isabey", is set within an open gold mount, framed by a garland alternating natural pearls and navette-cut emeralds arranged in pairs of leaves.The background of the lid and base is finely engraved with neoclassical motifs: octagonal reserves with confronted birds and trophies within cartouches, bordered by arcaded

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patterns and vegetal friezes. The lateral bands display a rich frieze of acanthus leaves and palmettes, also finely chased and matte-finished.It bears French gold hallmarks of the period, including the head-shaped mark (likely the "tête d'aigle" in use from 1838) and the maker's mark.Jean-Baptiste Isabey was one of the most celebrated French miniaturists and portraitists, active between the Revolutionary era and the Second Empire. A pupil of David and a friend of Napoleon, he portrayed figures of the court and the European aristocracy, becoming a master in rendering female faces with transparency, softness of complexion, and refined expressions. This miniature exhibits Isabey's typical delicacy: the lively, slightly tilted gaze, the silky rendering of the hair, and the light touches on the complexion and drapery.The gold mount with gemstones and pearls, together with the neoclassical decorative repertoire, places the work in the context of high Parisian goldsmithing intended for an aristocratic clientele. The combination of a miniature signed by Isabey with such a richly decorated gold container makes this snuffbox a piece of extraordinary rarity and collector's value.