



PROANTIC
LE PLUS BEAU CATALOGUE D'ANTIQUITES

A Neoclassical Gold Brooch Set With A Large Agate Cameo. Bust Of Psyche.



4 500 EUR

Period : 19th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Gold

Description

Dim. 4.9 x 4.6cm ; 26.6 g

This very beautiful gold brooch with an openwork border decorated with scrolling

foliage is set with a large three-layer agate cameo depicting the bust of

Psyche. A symbol of the soul and metamorphosis, the female figure is

represented in left profile, the head inclined, the downcast eyes and her

delicate mouth closed suggest introspection and melancholy. Her hair is

arranged in a chignon held by a three-tiered headband and adorned with

butterfly wings (finely executed in the deepest stratum of the intense

brown-colored stone). She is dressed in an antique-style robe, and on her

Dealer

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shoulder rests a butterfly, symbol of the soul,
also carved in the most
intense layer of the stone.

Psyche, whose name derives from the Greek
word for "soul" or
"breath of life," represents one of the most
profound and enduring
symbols in classical mythology. Originally
featured in Apuleius's
"Metamorphoses" (The Golden Ass, 2nd century
CE), her story tells
of a mortal woman whose extraordinary beauty
rivalled that of Venus herself,
leading to both divine jealousy and ultimate
transformation. Psyche embodies
the human soul's journey toward enlightenment
and divine love. Her
mythological trials represent the soul's
purification process, moving from
earthly concerns to spiritual transcendence.

Like many mythological subjects from
Antiquity, the figure of Psyche
appears in the art of engraving and jewelry
across successive periods.

However, the symbolism of this feminine figure
found particular prominence in
Neoclassical glyptics, highlighting the values of
purity, beauty, nature, and
melancholy that were highly prized during this
era.