



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.