Circe Italian Neoclassical Sculpture Early 1800s



5 500 EUR

Period : 19th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Painted wood

Width : cm. 37

Height : cm. 71

Depth : cm. 27

Description

Early 1800s carved ebonized and partially gilt wood standing figure depicting of the Goddess Circe, dating back to the early 19th century. The carved Cembran pine wood and the ebonizing technique with gilded details add value and sophistication to this work. Circe, in Greek mythology, is known for her power of transformation and enchantment, its depiction in a standing position, with arms spread wide, palms facing downward, in a welcoming attitude, reflects the duality of her figure, capable of both love and deception.The golden drapery covering the hips and other details, such as the golden footwear and the central bow of the drape demonstrate the artist's ability to play with textures and finishes, creating an elegant and sophisticated contrast. The attention to detail in

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the face and the use of glass eyes testify to excellent craftsmanship, typical of Italian neoclassical sculpture.The detailed hairstyle, the pendant earrings, the perfect anatomy and muscle tone of the body of the goddess suggest the artist's desire to enrich this female semi-nude neoclassical divinity figure. This work is in good condition and comes from a private Italian collection.The circular wooden base il probably later.The iconographic setting of the Goddess Circe has, over the centuries, been represented in various artistic forms, from classical antiquity to the modern period; Sir Edgar Bertram Mackennal's bronze sculpture of 1893 is an excellent example of how Circe has been reinterpreted in modern art, while retaining traditional iconographic elements. Mackennal, known for his elegant and symbolist sculptures, succeeds in capturing the essence of the figure of Circe, emphasizing both her beauty and her enchanting power.In general, the depiction of Circe has often included elements such as the chalice, a symbol of her magical potions, and animals such as pigs, as a reminder of her transformations. These iconographic motifs refer to mythological tales, such as those found in Homer's Odyssey, in which Circe plays a crucial role. Mackennal's sculpture, while innovative in its approach, is part of a long tradition of depictions that have sought to communicate Circe's dual aspect: the seductive and the threatening.