



A Cameo Ring Depicting Silenus. Italy Or England, Circa 1800-1820.



2 200 EUR

Period : 19th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Vermeil

Description

A Cameo Ring Depicting Silenus. Italy or England, circa 1800-1820. Materials Honey-coloured agate cameo set in a silver-gilt ring. Measurements Ring size: T 1/2 UK / 9.75 US / 62 EU. Weight: 9.5 grams. Description An expressive cameo carved in layered honey and grey agate, depicting the head of Silenus in profile to the right. The elderly companion and tutor of Bacchus is shown bald and bearded, his features rendered with striking naturalism--the furrowed brow, aquiline nose, and flowing curls of his beard all crisply defined. Around his head winds a crown of vine leaves, deeply cut to exploit the contrasting strata of the stone, the carver skilfully using tonal variation to distinguish flesh, hair, and background. The cameo is mounted in a simple oval silver-gilt

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bezel with a broad tapering hoop of early nineteenth-century form. The understated classical mount complements the sculptural quality of the gem and reflects the neoclassical taste for mounting earlier or antique-style cameos in contemporary settings. The cameo itself may be slightly earlier than the ring. Iconography and Context Silenus, an attendant of Bacchus, embodies the duality of intoxication and wisdom--an aged reveller whose drunkenness conceals prophetic insight. In classical art he is distinguished from Bacchus by his age, bald pate, and fuller beard, yet retains an air of dignity and contemplative repose. The present example follows this mature iconography, conveying both sensuality and sagacity in a composition that would have appealed strongly to neoclassical collectors attuned to the moral and allegorical nuances of antique myth. Condition Very good condition, with minor natural inclusions in the agate and gentle surface wear to the gilding consistent with age.