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Paul Delaroche - Costume Design For Historical Theatre - Watercolor - Circa 1830



600 EUR

Signature : DELAROCHE Hippolyte dit Paul (1797 - 1856, France)

Period : 19th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Water color

Width : 31,5 cm à vue / 52 cm encadrée

Height : 22 cm à vue / 45 cm encadrée

Description

Paul Delaroche (1797-1856) Costume Design for Historical Theater Watercolor, ink, and pencil on paper Monogrammed "HD" (Hippolyte Delaroche) in the lower right corner Circa 1829-1835 This remarkable costume plate is from Delaroche's personal sketchbook and illustrates his involvement in costume design for historical theater productions in Paris. This study sheet presents eleven figures in medieval costumes, finely enhanced with watercolor. The composition reveals the diversity of the roles envisioned, including pages and lords in brightly colored surcoats and hose (red, saffron yellow, and orange), noble ladies in long dresses with trains and hennins, and religious figures in monastic habits. Of particular note are a majestic female figure in a richly embroidered,

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golden-yellow, ceremonial dress with a long, ornate train (bottom left) and a narrative scene depicting a monk kneeling before an abbot or nobleman seated on a green chest (bottom center). This scene may depict confession or feudal homage. Medieval headwear is depicted meticulously, including hoods, berets, conical hennins, and nuns' veils. Each costume is accompanied by handwritten pencil annotations that specify the desired fabrics (such as cloth, velvet, and brocade) and color shades, reflecting the documentary rigor characteristic of Delaroche's approach. A pencil sketch in the lower left corner illustrates the artist's creative process. While the theatrical production for which these costumes were designed remains unidentified, this work belongs to the golden age of French Romantic theater, when historical accuracy became a primary aesthetic concern.

Provenance: Paul Delaroche's personal notebook, family sale. The plate is in very good condition overall, with some foxing consistent with the age of the document. It is presented in a large, 19th-century frame that is also in very good condition.

The artist Paul Delaroche (born Hippolyte de la Roche on July 17, 1797, in Paris) established himself as one of the most famous French painters of the 19th century. Born into a wealthy family, Delaroche first trained with Watelet before joining Antoine-Jean Gros's studio in 1818. There, he developed his signature style, which combined academic rigor with romantic sensibility. Delaroche specialized in history painting, a major genre of his time, but he took a new approach to the subject. Rather than idealized neoclassical compositions, he favored psychological realism and dramatic emotion. His most famous works, including *Les Enfants d'Édouard* (1831), *L'Exécution de Lady Jane Grey* (1833), and *Napoléon à Fontainebleau* (1845), captivated audiences with their theatrical intensity and meticulous attention to historical detail. Delaroche's success was meteoric. Elected a member of the Institut de France in 1832, he

taught at the École des Beaux-Arts, training a generation of artists, including Jean-Léon Gérôme. His paintings enjoyed exceptional international renown, particularly in England and America, thanks to engravings that reproduced his works. Beyond easel painting, in 1837, Delaroche undertook the monumental decoration of the École des Beaux-Arts's hemicycle, a vast fresco representing seventy-five famous artists from antiquity to his own time. This major work was completed in 1841. Less well known today but essential to his career was his involvement in creating costumes for historical theater, a booming genre in the first half of the nineteenth century. Sought after for his erudition and keen sense of historical reconstruction, Delaroche designed costumes for several theatrical and operatic productions. He approached this work with the same documentary rigor as his paintings, faithfully reproducing the fabrics, ornaments, and silhouettes specific to each period. Paul Delaroche died prematurely on November 4, 1856, in Paris. He left behind a significant body of work that perfectly exemplifies the era's taste for dramatized history. His works are held in numerous French museums, including the Louvre, the Musée d'Histoire de France in Versailles, the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Nantes, Dijon, and Rouen, and the Musée Condé in Chantilly. His works are also held in museums abroad, such as the Wallace Collection and the National Gallery in London, the Hermitage Museum in Saint Petersburg, the Kunsthalle in Hamburg, and the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. Work is on display at the gallery (07240). For shipping costs in France and abroad, please contact us.