



"theodora, Florentine Medallion", Plaster Cast, Jean Rivière, Toulouse, France, 1891

8 600 EUR



Signature : Jean Rivière

Period : 19th century

Condition : Parfait état

Material : Plaster

Width : 45 cm

Height : 85 cm

Depth : 12 cm

Description

"Theodora," a high relief and wall sculpture, gilded and patinated plaster cast, decorated with small medallions in enamel and colored glass, with mother-of-pearl eyes. Unsigned. The model, designed in 1891, depicts the face and adornments of the Byzantine empress, reputedly inspired by those of Sarah Bernhardt in Victorien Sardou's play of the same name, created in 1884. Another version is kept in the collections of the Musée des Augustins in Toulouse and was exhibited at the Salon de l'Union Artistique in Toulouse in 1891. History: After the success of Victorien Sardou's play, Theodora, played on stage by Sarah Bernhardt, became a true icon in the 1880s and 1890s. It is likely that the interpretation of her complex personality, somewhere between saint and prostitute, made

Dealer

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her a free and powerful woman ahead of her time; The choice of actress to portray her proved to be most appropriate given the many similarities between the two women. Jean Rivière, a sculptor from Toulouse, took up the character in turn to create what he called in 1891, at the Union Artistique exhibition, a Florentine medallion, echoing his great predecessors.

Biography Jean Rivière (1853-1922) was a French sculptor and painter. Born into a family of furniture makers, Jean Rivière spent his childhood in Saint-Paul-Cap-de-Joux (Tarn). In 1868, he left for Toulouse to study sculpture at the *École des Beaux-Arts*. There he befriended artists of his generation, including Antoine Bourdelle, Jacques Labatut, Henri Marre, Paul Pujol, and above all the painter Henri Martin, his loyal friend for whom he made frames from precious woods. In 1890, Jean Rivière became a professor of ornamental sculpture at the Toulouse School of Fine Arts, where he held the chair from 1892 to 1922. He was a multi-talented artist, working in terracotta, ceramics, goldsmithing, and cabinetmaking. His art was at the crossroads of Art Nouveau, Post-Impressionism, and Symbolism. His major work, *Théodora*, created in 1891, was recently acquired by the Musée des Augustins in Toulouse. Jean Rivière gained a certain degree of fame through his sculpture. He exhibited at the Salon des Artistes Français from 1882 to 1896, where he received honorable mentions in 1882 and 1887, and more regularly at the Salon de l'Union Artistique de Toulouse from 1885 to 1922. He became a member of the Artistes Français in 1893. He was also part of the group of artists who exhibited in March 1899 in the studio of the painter Henry Gérard in Toulouse. He produced numerous religious works that adorned churches in his region. He also earned his living by carrying out commissions for public and private funerary monuments, and in Toulouse he received numerous official commissions, mainly to decorate the Salle des Illustres in the Capitole and the Musée des

Augustins (completed in 1901). You can find further information on this Wikipedia link, in French.