



Antique-themed Ivory Plaque - 18th Century



650 EUR

Period : 18th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Ivory

Length : 8,5 cm

Height : 5,8 cm

Description

A rare ivory plaque, remarkably carved in very low relief, depicting a mythological scene from Greek antiquity: the death of Hippolytus. Beautiful ivory patina. France, 18th century. Dimensions: 5.8 x 8.5 cm. Weight: 25.5 g. (Surface wear). Provenance: Collection of MR, former antique dealer. Hippolytus, son of Theseus and an Amazon queen, is a fervent worshipper of the virgin goddess Diana and scorns the cult of Venus, goddess of love. To avenge this disdain, Venus strikes his stepmother, Phaedra, in a fit of passion. Phaedra, consumed by her guilty love, tries to seduce Hippolytus, who, faithful to his vows of chastity, violently rejects her. Humiliated, she commits suicide, leaving a letter falsely accusing Hippolytus of rape. Theseus, discovering the letter and his wife's body, is

Dealer

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furious and uses one of his three divine blessings, granted by his father Neptune, to curse his son. As Hippolytus drives his chariot along the shore, Neptune sends a monstrous bull from the waves. The horses, terrified, bolt, and the chariot breaks apart. Hippolytus becomes entangled in the reins and is dragged over rocks and through brambles until his body is completely torn to pieces. Ovid adds a unique ending to his version of the myth: the grieving goddess Diana goes to the god of medicine, Asclepius, and persuades him to bring Hippolytus back to life. To protect him from the wrath of the other gods, particularly Jupiter, Diana hid him in the Aricia forest in Italy, under a new identity: Virbius, the "twice-man." The details of the mythological scene depicted here are remarkable: Hippolytus is shown lying on the ground while in the distance a dog can be seen pursuing the hunt, chasing a boar. Descending from the heavens, the goddess Diana intervenes. To the right, a small winged Cupid or Eros observes the scene with a sad and distraught expression. This plaque will delight both lovers of 18th-century French art and enthusiasts of ancient myths. This type of piece is also quite rare on the market. Ivory in good standing, sold with its CITES certificate in accordance with current legislation!