



## Vitellius Emperor Bust - 19th Century



4 800 EUR

Period : 19th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Marble

Height : 33cm

### Description

Marble bust of Emperor Vitellius - late 18th / early 19th century  
Sculpted alabaster bust depicting the Roman emperor Vitellius, figured draped in the antique style. The figure is depicted from the front, with a broad, massive face, thick features and short hair treated in wavy locks. The drapery features deeply carved folds, inspired by Imperial Roman sculpture. The bust rests on a serpentine-type posterior pedestal, close to a black-veined green marble. The rear of the bust has been left sketchier, in keeping with decorative busts intended for display in a niche or against a wall. Inscribed "VITELLIO" on the base. Late 18th or early 19th century Italian work, in the taste of antique Roman portraits. Vitellius was Roman emperor during AD 69, a period known as the "year of the four emperors", marked by a

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#### Art Eclectisme

Grand tour, décoration, et archéologie

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rapid succession of rulers and civil wars after the death of Nero (Galba, Otto, Vitellius, Vespasian), which put an end to the Julio-Claudian dynasty. Ancient authors, notably Suetonius and Tacitus, conveyed the image of a ruler marked by excess and immoderation, which explains the deliberately heavy, realistic physiognomy of his antique portraits. His effigies were copied extensively in modern times, particularly in Italy, where they served as study models for artists and lovers of Antiquity. This type of bust is part of the Grand Tour tradition. In the 18th and 19th centuries, European travelers, collectors and aristocrats brought back sculptures inspired by Roman antiquity from Italy to adorn libraries, cabinets and galleries. Representations of Roman emperors figured prominently in these ensembles, associated with the study of ancient history and the emerging neoclassical taste. Size : 33cm high Provenance : Parisian collection