



Sèvres Porcelain Bust--portrait Bust Of Philippe Descartes, Philosopher--marble



950 EUR

Signature : Porcelaine de Sèvres

Period : 19th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Porcelain

Width : 30

Height : 53

Depth : 20

Description

An interesting bisque porcelain bust depicting René Descartes, a 17th-century French philosopher, mathematician, and scholar. The figure is identified by the inscription "DESCARTES," engraved on the front of the pedestal. The Sèvres porcelain manufactory produced several depictions of Descartes. An early model, part of the "Illustrious Men of France" series, was created around 1784 based on a sculpture by Augustin Pajou presented at the 1777 Salon. However, that piece is a full-length seated figure, distinct from the present bust portrait. The Louvre Museum also holds a "Bust of Descartes" in hard-paste porcelain, attributed to the Sèvres Porcelain Manufactory and dated to the 19th century, which was transferred by the manufactory to the Museum of Versailles in

Dealer

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September 1885. This second model bears a direct resemblance to our specimen. Descartes is depicted from the waist up, his face slightly turned and his gaze directed to the side. The facial features incorporate elements traditionally associated with his iconography: long, wavy hair falling over his shoulders, a thin mustache, a small beauty spot beneath his lower lip, a prominent nose, and a meditative gaze. This depiction is derived from the engraved and painted portraits of the philosopher that began circulating in the 17th century. The sculptor emphasizes the intellectual structure of the face. The high forehead, heavy eyelids, and sidelong gaze give the portrait an expression that is at once attentive, distant, and meditative. The asymmetry of the gaze and the slight rotation of the head avoid a rigid frontal pose and give the bust a genuine sense of presence. The costume is rendered with great precision. Descartes wears a wide, two-paned cape, characteristic of the scholarly and bourgeois attire of the 17th century. Beneath it is a doublet fastened with buttons and adorned with tasseled trimmings. A loose-fitting cloak drapes over his shoulders and crosses his chest in a diagonal line. This drapery is particularly detailed; the deep, supple folds form a broad curve around the torso and lend the silhouette a monumental grandeur. The contrast between the descriptive precision of the face, hair, and doublet and the more general treatment of the cloak reflects a work of fine quality. The unglazed bisque porcelain allows for the recreation of the matte, velvety appearance of the sculpture, which imitates marble. The whiteness of the clay particularly highlights the facial contours, the strands of hair, the trimmings, and the folds of the garment. A beautiful commemorative portrait suitable for a library, a study, or a scholarly institution. The bust rests on a rectangular pedestal, which in turn sits on a tall, antique-style support made of natural wood with octagonal tiers. Overall dimensions: height 53 cm; width 30 cm; depth 22 cm. Height of the wooden

pedestal: 20 cm.