



Bust Of Menelus, King Of Sparta



4 800 EUR

Period : 19th century

Condition : Très bon état

Description

Italy, Rome, circa 1850-1880 Carved marine ivory
Height: 15.5 cm
An elegant bust carved from marine ivory depicting Menelaus, King of Sparta and husband of Helen, a major hero of the Trojan War. This sculpture reproduces with remarkable fidelity the famous ancient bust housed in the Vatican Museums, itself inspired by a Greek original from the 2nd century B.C., discovered at Hadrian's Villa in Tivoli. The model was immensely popular among travelers on the Grand Tour and inspired the finest Roman workshops of the 19th century. The face, imbued with a noble solemnity, is rendered with great finesse. The deeply chiseled beard, the eyes deliberately left without pupils in keeping with ancient tradition, and the understated drapery of the breastplate highlight the extraordinary richness of the

Dealer

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helmet. The helmet is the true masterpiece of this sculpture. It is covered with high-relief decoration of exceptional quality depicting mythological episodes, notably Heracles' battles against the Centaurs, accompanied by fantastical creatures, griffins, eagles, and sea creatures. The old catalogs of the Vatican collections specifically mention these bas-reliefs as one of the major features of the ancient model of Menelaus. The finesse of the craftsmanship, the depth of the reliefs, and the perfect mastery of ivory carving are hallmarks of a first-rate Italian workshop, in the great tradition of neoclassical sculptures created for connoisseurs on the Grand Tour. Thanks to the quality of its craftsmanship, its excellent state of preservation, and the exceptional richness of its decorated helmet, this bust stands out clearly from the more common reproductions of this famous ancient model and is a particularly appealing collector's item.