



Neoclassical Agate Cameo With Two Layers, Set In Gold And Enamel, Empire Period



7 000 EUR

Period : 19th century

Condition : Très bon état

Description

Late 18th century, circa 1770-1790 Empire-style setting, circa 1805-1815 Two-layered agate, gold, and blue enamel Dimensions: 30 × 26 mm Bezel thickness: 3 mm A rare and very elegant neoclassical cameo, finely engraved in a two-layered agate, depicting the profile of a young woman idealized in the classical style, wearing a headband with her hair pulled back and tied at the nape of her neck. The engraving is remarkably delicate. The profile, of great purity, features particularly delicate modeling: a straight forehead, a slender nose extending naturally from the face, a subtly defined mouth, and a perfectly balanced chin. The rendering of the hair is particularly remarkable, with numerous finely incised strands running alongside the headband before coming together in a small bun tied at the

Dealer

Collection

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nape of the neck. The engraver has made perfect use of the agate's two natural layers, bringing out the light profile in relief against the stone's deeply dark background. Through its design, balance, and the quality of its execution, this cameo is a prime example of the revival of ancient glyptic art that accompanied the development of European Neoclassicism in the second half of the 18th century, particularly in Italy. The cameo is set in a remarkable antique gold mount from the Empire period, circa 1805-1815, of exceptionally fine quality. The stone is surrounded by several concentric bands of finely chased gold, alternating between geometric motifs and delicate friezes. The ensemble is highlighted by a wide border of deep blue enamel, whose color contrasts with the gold and the black and ivory tones of the agate. The very construction of the setting attests to its precious nature: unlike a simple ring setting, it forms a true structure enveloping the stone, with both the edge and the reverse side adorned with gold. The antique pin mechanism allows the piece to be worn as a brooch.

A REMARKABLE PARALLEL WITH THE MURAT PRINCES' COLLECTION

A particularly interesting comparison can be drawn with a male cameo from the Murat Princes' collection, published in **Marché de l'Art** in 2015. Its setting bears a striking resemblance to that of this cameo: the same oval shape, the same sequence of finely worked gold friezes, and, above all, the same wide border of blue enamel that frames the composition from the outside. A side-by-side photograph of the two works immediately highlights this similarity. While it does not establish a shared provenance, this parallel provides a valuable point of comparison and helps place this setting within the context of high-quality jewelry crafted in the imperial style in the early 19th century. In very fine condition.