



Anna Pinel (1868) - Presumed Portrait Of Pauline Viardot In The Role Of Sappho



3 500 EUR

Signature : Anna Pinel

Period : 19th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Oil painting

Description

Anna Pinel (active in the 19th century) Presumed portrait of Pauline Viardot in the role of Sappho Oil on canvas Dimensions: 92 × 72 cm, signed and dated on the left "Anna Pinel / 1868." This beautiful academic painting depicts a young woman in ancient attire, crowned with a gold diadem set with cabochons, draped in a white tunic with gold braiding and an ivory cloak with brown lapels. She holds a golden lyre, plucking its strings with her right hand, her gaze slightly averted, her expression both dreamy and melancholic. The background features a sweeping red drape that isolates the figure and lends her a theatrical presence. The composition clearly evokes the poetess Sappho, a major figure in 19th-century Romantic and Neo-Greek imagination. The suggested identification--Pauline

Dealer

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Tableaux et desins anciens (1500-1900)

Rue Michel Ange

Paris 75016

Viardot in the title role of Charles Gounod's

Sappho--is entirely plausible. Pauline

Viardot-García (1821-1910), a mezzo-soprano of

Spanish origin and sister of Maria Malibran, was

one of the greatest singers of her time. She

premiered the role of Sappho at the premiere of

Gounod's opera at the Opéra de Paris (Salle Le

Peletier) on April 16, 1851. The work, written in

close collaboration with her, made her the

modern embodiment of the poetess of Lesbos: an

improviser, a betrayed lover, and a figure of the

female artist. In 1868, Viardot was forty-seven

years old; the portrait makes her appear younger

and idealizes her, as was common for role

portraits. The motif of the "woman with the lyre,"

popularized in particular by Vigée-Lebrun's

portrait of Madame de Staël as Corinne, finds a

direct musical and theatrical expression

here. Anna Pinel was a French painter of the

Second Empire, listed in the Benezit. She was

likely related to the sculptor Pierre-Sébastien

Guersant (1789-1853), a student of Cartellier,

which places her within Parisian artistic circles.

Like many female painters of her generation, she

Painted portraits and genre scenes in a refined

style inherited from her academic training: supple

rendering of skin tones, skillfully studied drapery,

and lighting that sculpts the face and hands. The

date 1868 corresponds to a period when classical

subjects and portraits of figures from the worlds

of opera and literature remained highly prized at

the Salon. The work stands out for the quality of

its execution: the rendering of the fabrics (the

satin of the tunic, the velvet of the cloak), the

precision of the lyre (Sappho's emblematic

instrument), the delicacy of the diadem, and the

psychological depth conveyed by the gaze. A

beautifully executed painting, it is representative

of the historicist and musical tastes of the 1860s,

bringing together two remarkable female figures:

a singer-composer who left her mark on the

history of French opera and a painter who is now

forgotten but was firmly embedded in the artistic

circles of her time.

<https://www.praeantastic.com/en/1815556-anna-pinel-1868-presumed-portrait-of-pauline-viardot-in-the-role-of-sappho.html>