



A Massive 19th-century Ring Made Of Chiseled Gold, Set With A Nicolo Intaglio. Portrait Of Juno.



4 200 EUR

Period : 19th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Gold

Description

Nicolo intaglio, 9 × 14 mm Chiseled gold ring; TDD FR 52½; weight 10 g. Owl-head hallmark on the band (18-karat imported gold, applied after 1893) Ring and intaglio, mid-19th century. Heavy ring; the oval bezel rises in three molded and fluted steps to the closed setting; the shoulders, tapering toward a rounded band, are engraved on either side with a flowering stem within a pointed cartouche above facing foliage scrolls; the lower part of the band features a hatched frieze. The owl-head hallmark stamped on the band is the French import mark for 18-karat foreign gold, in use from 1893: it merely attests to the ring's late entry into France and indicates that it was made abroad well before that date. The nicolo, a double-layered carved onyx, depicts a veiled woman's head in right-side profile: the veil falls

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from the top of the head over the nape of the neck and onto the shoulder; the hair is arranged in short curls across the forehead, and a diadem is visible beneath the veil. The profile is straight, the chin firm, the neck long--the Greek ideal as understood in the 19th century, precisely engraved and polished.

Historical Context Around the mid-19th century, Italian goldsmiths turned to the forms of Roman jewelry, and the massive ring with a stepped setting and chiseled shoulders--heavy in the hand, understated in ornamentation--is one example of this style. The nicolo, the Romans' preferred stone for seals, was recut in the 19th century precisely for this purpose: an antique-looking gem in an antique-looking setting, for a Grand Tour collector or their heirs.

Iconography and Symbolism The veiled head adorned with a diadem is the typical image of Juno, queen of the gods, as she appears on Roman coins and gemstones: the veil is the flammeum of a married woman, the diadem symbolizes her sovereignty. Juno Regina watched over marriage and the month of June, which still bears her name; as Jupiter's wife and sister, she is the only goddess who is his equal.