



Cesare Lapini (florence, 1848-1893), Bust Of A Young Breton



2 800 EUR

Period : 19th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Marble

Width : 34

Height : 38

Depth : 17

Description

Cesare Lapini (Florence, 1848-1893) Bust of a Young Breton, ca. 1880 Marble, 38 x 34 x 17 cm Signed on the base Born in Florence in 1848, Cesare Lapini was one of the most prolific and highly regarded figurative sculptors in late-19th-century Florence. Active both in the Tuscan capital and on the international market, Lapini specialized in creating busts and genre figures, allegories, and idyllic or ethnographic subjects, enjoying considerable public success, particularly among European and American collectors who visited his famous Florentine gallery. His work is characterized by extraordinary technical skill in working with marble, combining the descriptive virtuosity of the Italian sculptural tradition with a keen attention to the distinctive features of folk

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costume and regional exoticism. The refined sculpture in question, signed on the base and depicting a young Breton woman seen in three-quarter profile, is an excellent example of Lapini's mastery of polychrome and mixed-media techniques. The artist skillfully employs different types of marble to create a vivid contrast between forms and fabrics: for the girl's face, he uses a crisp, veinless white statuary marble, capable of delicately rendering the subject's sweet expression and idealized features, framed by soft blond curls spilling from her headdress. The typical Breton bonnet, characteristic of the Pont-Aven or Fouesnant area, is carved from a beige-brownish marble enriched with engraved motifs highlighted in brown, which enhance its decorative appeal and documentary value. The bust and shoulders, covered by the typical ruff and traditional dress, are carved from a contrasting marble with a light, mottled background crisscrossed by pronounced dark veins, as is the base with its rounded corners, thus creating a refined interplay of chromatic and material overlays. Interest in subjects related to Breton folklore was particularly strong in the 19th century, thanks in part to the influence of the artists of the Pont-Aven School, including Paul Gauguin and Émile Bernard. The significance of this iconography in the artist's body of work is confirmed by the existence of a similar version of the piece, which has been featured in various exhibitions at the Breton Departmental Museum in Cornwall, attesting to the historical and artistic value of the model and its success within the genre of sculpture of that era. Furthermore, as a testament to the international stature the sculptor achieved, several of his works are now housed in major French museums, including the prestigious Musée d'Orsay in Paris.