19th Century Cabinet, Napoleon III Period



45 000 EUR

Period : 19th century

Condition : Parfait état, rénové selon les procédures du musée.

Material : Wood marquetry

Width : 98 cm

Height : 119cm

Depth : 48cm

Description

We are honored to present this striking cabinet, a magnificent testament to the opulence, artistic eclecticism, and unparalleled craftsmanship that defined the Napoleon III style in 19th-century France. This period, also known as the Second Empire (1852-1870), under the reign of Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte, is renowned for its unique characteristic of embracing and reinterpreting historical styles, resulting in a lavish aesthetic defined by abundance and meticulous detail.Sumptuous Materials and Ornate Design:
This cabinet is crafted from black polished wood, often ebonized to mimic exotic ebony, which provides a dramatic and sophisticated backdrop for its rich ornamentation. It is sumptuously mounted with gilt bronze and intricately inlaid

Dealer

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with brass, a technique reminiscent of Boulle marquetry from the Louis XIV period. The top is crowned with a refined slab of Belgian black marble, adding a touch of classic elegance and robust materiality.The cabinet's design embraces the Second Empire's penchant for grandeur. The deep, dark color of the wood, combined with the gleaming gilded embellishments and the subtle sparkle of brass inlay, creates a visually arresting contrast that makes this piece truly stand out.Enigmatic Iconography: Socrates and Aspasia:

The central door of the cabinet features a remarkable bas-relief or intricate inlay depicting a fascinating scene: two figures representing Socrates listening to a philosophy lesson given by Aspasia. This choice of iconography speaks volumes about the intellectual curiosity and classical tastes prevalent in the Second Empire.Socrates, the Athenian philosopher, is widely regarded as a founder of Western philosophy and the pioneer of the Western ethical tradition of thought.Aspasia, alongside Diotima, stands as one of the two female philosophers recognized by Plato as a teacher of Socrates. While her biography remains debated, she is celebrated for her profound knowledge of rhetoric and her formidable skill in debate. This depiction elevates the cabinet beyond mere furniture to a piece imbued with profound intellectual and philosophical narrative.The Napoleon III Style: A Symphony of Historical Influences:

The Napoleon III style's distinctiveness lies in its masterful borrowing and synthesis of elements from preceding eras. It is characterized by an opulent accumulation of forms, materials, and ornamentation, giving an impression of unparalleled meticulousness and lavishness. This cabinet exemplifies this philosophy, drawing inspiration from the grandeur of Louis XIV, the elegance of the Renaissance, and the exoticism of distant lands, all united under a singular vision of abundance.Key Selling Points & Unrivaled Collector's Value:Quintessential Napoleon III

Style: This cabinet is a perfect embodiment of the Second Empire's unique aesthetic, characterized by its historical eclecticism, opulence, and meticulous detailing.Luxurious Materials: The striking combination of polished ebonized wood, rich gilt bronze, intricate brass inlay, and a Belgian black marble top creates an undeniably luxurious and visually captivating effect.Rare and Intellectual Iconography: The depiction of Socrates and Aspasia engaged in philosophical discourse is a rare and highly intellectual motif, elevating the cabinet to a piece of cultural and historical significance.Exceptional Craftsmanship: The precise brass inlay, the finely cast and chased gilt bronze mounts, and the overall quality of construction demonstrate the highest level of Parisian cabinetry and bronze work of the period.Statement Piece: Its grandeur and sophisticated design make it an ideal focal point for any discerning interior, commanding attention and admiration.Investment Potential: As a unique, high-quality, and historically significant example of Napoleon III furniture, this cabinet holds strong potential for appreciation in value over time.