



## Fireplace Plate, Mythological Scene Of Phaeton (90x80 Cm)

1 350 EUR



Period : 18th century  
Condition : En l'état  
Material : Cast iron  
Length : 90 cm  
Height : 80 cm  
Depth : 3 cm

### Description

Fireback dating from the very beginning of the 18th century, Regency period, mythological scene of Phaeton. In the best-known version of the myth, Phaeton, son of the Sun and an Oceanid, gets to drive his father's chariot, but the adventure threatens to end in disaster and he dies, struck down by Zeus. On our plate, the scene of the entangled quadrille and chariot is represented in a medallion, surrounded by plants in a decoration with an animated outline of scrolls, the whole lined with a frame enriched with staples arranged on the corners in a spandrel. It is noted a crack visible on our penultimate photo. Our last photo: Phaeton struck down by Zeus painted by Jan Carel van Eyck (1636-1638). His weight is 92 kg. Ancient Sources: Palaiphatos, Incredible Stories (Story 52) Phaethon, son of Helios, burned with

### Dealer

Claude Augustin  
authentic old features  
Tel : 04 78 47 39 48

104, Route nationale 6  
Les Cheres 69380

the stupid desire to ride his father's chariot. By dint of incessant requests and tears, he convinced him. When he got on the chariot, and began to whip the horses (as he could not handle the reins well and was unable to lead the horses firmly, without causing jerks), he was dragged by the beasts animated by pride and great impetuosity.

He passed too close to the ground; he was thrown out of the chariot, into the river Eridanus; he drowned, after having set fire to the greater part of the neighboring lands. Another version of Ovid, Metam. (II, 1-400) In his magnificent palace, Phoebus thrones in majesty; he received the young man kindly, willingly recognized him as his son, and offered to show him a favor. He makes the promise of the gods by swearing on the waters of the Styx. Phaeton takes him at his word and asks to drive the chariot of the Sun for a whole day. Phoebus then repents of his reckless promise and tries to divert his son from this idea, showing him the difficulties and the dangers that await him, but Phaeton is stubborn and does not budge. Reluctantly and after many recommendations, Phoebus then gives him, at dawn, the reins of the solar quadriga, and the horses (Pyrois, Éous, Aethon and Phlégon) rush into space. But, troubled by the too low weight of the driver, they get carried away and leave the path traced in the sky. Phaeton panics and fails to control them, especially as the spectacle of the earth, far below him, anguishes him even more.

As predicted by his father, he encounters monstrous animal figures (the constellations of the Zodiac), including Scorpio, which completely terrorizes him. Horses, out of control, gallop in all directions, causing disasters all over the world: cities, mountains, entire countries are set on fire, glaciers are melting, rivers are drying up, seas are warming up and their level drop, discovering new islands. Phaeton himself, whom his father had nevertheless coated with a sacred ointment to enable him to resist the heat, could no longer bear the furnace. Ovid teaches us that it was from this day that the "Ethiopians" (Africans) became black

and that the Nile, terrified, fled to the end of the world, and hid its source, still unknown at the time. of Ovid. The Earth, half charred, begs Jupiter to intervene to save the world. The latter, having obtained the agreement of the other gods and of Phoebus himself, strikes down Phaethon and tears the chariot to pieces. Phaethon, his hair on fire, falls like a shooting star into the Eridanus River. Or again: Plato (430 to 348 BC) "Many times, in many ways, the ruins of men have occurred, and others will occur; fire and water have caused the greatest, a thousand other plagues have caused lesser ones. Thus, one day Phaethon, son of Helios, harnessed the chariot of his father, but unable to drive it, he burned everything on the ground and perished himself struck down, this is said in the form of a myth. » And to finish by way of reflection: Cicero: *De natura deorum*, III, 31 « Could the Gods therefore fall into error? When we leave our goods to our children, it is in the hope that they will make good use of them: we can be deceived; but how could a God be? Like the Sun, when he entrusted his chariot to his son Phaethon » You can visit our website: [www.claudeaugustin.com](http://www.claudeaugustin.com)