

DAVID & CONSTANCE YATES

EUROPEAN SCULPTURE, OIL SKETCHES AND DRAWINGS

PIERRE-JEAN DAVID D'ANGERS
(Angers 1788 - 1856 Paris)

Medallion with Profile Portrait of Cecilia Odescalchi

Original terracotta in wooden frame
Diameter: 16 7/8 inches (43 cm)
Frame: 20 3/4 x 19 3/4 inches (52.7 x 50.2 cm)
Signed, at bottom center: *P.J. DAVID*
Inscribed, at left: *CECILIA*
c. 1815

LITERATURE:

Georges Chesneau, *Les Oeuvres de David d'Angers, sculpteur d'histoire et mémorialiste*, Angers, 1934, p. 170 no. 341 *bis*

Born in Angers in 1788, David travelled to Paris in 1808 to study with Philippe-Laurent Roland, and in 1810 entered the *atelier* of Jacques-Louis David. It was at this time that David altered his name so as not to be confused with the great David. He was awarded the Grand Prix de Rome in 1811 with his *tête d'expression La Douleur*. The Grand Prix enabled the young artist to travel to Rome and work at the Villa Medici. David remained in Rome from 1811-1815.

Pierre-Jean David d'Angers was arguably the most important sculptor France produced at the beginning of the 19th century. He is renowned, among other achievements, for the *Galerie des Contemporains*, his personal pantheon of great men and women in medallic form, which he produced during the course of his lifetime. David's first medallion, executed in 1815, represented the French musician Ferdinand Hérold, a fellow *pensionnaire* at the French Academy in Rome. David's *galerie* would eventually number over five hundred portraits including politicians, writers, artists, musicians, composers and actors--a virtual pantheon of the international Romantic Movement--all inspired by David's ardent republican sympathies. He also sculpted a relief for the Arc de Triomphe, Paris, producing one of the grand reliefs, as well as a replacement of the Frieze on the Panthéon, Paris under the Bourbon restoration.

While working at the Villa Medici, David met and fell in love with Princess Cecilia Odescalchi. Cecilia was from a grand aristocratic family, which included Pope Innocent XI, who was pope from 1676 until his death in 1689, within its genealogy. David asked Cecilia's father for her hand in marriage, but he was consummately rejected and sent packing. Within a year, Cecilia was relocated to a convent and died there shortly thereafter.

Telephone: 212 879 7758 Email: info@dcyates.com

Post Office Box 580 Lenox Hill Station New York, NY 10021

DAVID & CONSTANCE YATES

EUROPEAN SCULPTURE, OIL SKETCHES AND DRAWINGS

While at the Villa Medici, David sculpted a portrait relief of Cecilia. His model for the medallion was created in 1815-1816. Our terra cotta is the original model for this medallion, including the frame, which was made for the terra cotta at that time.

Depictions of women are relatively rare in David's œuvre--whether in relief or sculpture. David never forgot Cecilia. In fact, he employed her face in the christening cup that he made in 1836 for one of his children. There are low reliefs encircling the cup that depict images of motherhood. In one in which the mother is suckling her baby, the mother's face is that of Cecilia.

In 1836, David also sculpted a marble statue of Saint Cecilia for the Cathedral in Angers. Once again, the facial features in this sculpture are those of his first, and perhaps, true love, Cecilia Odescalchi. When the artist was given the job of replacing the pediment of the Panthéon, Paris, during the Bourbon Restoration, he also incorporated Cecilia's features into the figure of History in that relief.

Telephone: 212 879 7758 Email: info@dcyates.com

Post Office Box 580 Lenox Hill Station New York, NY 10021