Emmett & White
ANTIQUES & INTERIORS

Pair of Early 19th-Century Portrait Miniatures of Napoleon and Joséphine

£485

Emmett & White Ltd
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REF: 1068

Height: 7.5 cm (3")

Width: 5.5 cm (2.2")

Description

A compelling pair of early 19th-century portrait miniatures depicting Napoleon Bonaparte and Joséphine de Beauharnais, presented in richly decorative giltwood and gesso frames. Intimate in scale yet full of historical presence, these finely painted portraits capture one of the most celebrated and enduring couples of the Napoleonic era.

The companion miniatures portray Napoleon and Joséphine in formal profile or bust-length composition, their likenesses recalling the idealised images that helped to define the public identity of the Imperial court. Napoleon, soldier, statesman, and Emperor of the French, remains one of the most recognisable figures in European history. Joséphine, Empress of the French and a leading figure of Parisian style, brought elegance, diplomacy, and cultural influence to the court. Together, they came to embody the ambition, glamour, and political drama of the age.

Each miniature is housed in a handsome giltwood and gesso frame, whose warm gilded surface provides a refined setting for the small-scale portraits. The decorative framing gives the pair a strong period character and allows them to be displayed together as an evocative historical pendant. Inked inscriptions to the reverse add a further layer of interest, preserving identifying details and enhancing their appeal as personal, collectible objects.

Portrait miniatures were among the most cherished forms of personal art in the 18th and early 19th centuries. Designed to be held, displayed, and exchanged, they offered an intimate alternative to grand formal portraiture. This pair combines that sense of personal scale with subjects of exceptional historical importance.

A fascinating addition to a collection of Napoleonic memorabilia, portrait miniatures, or early 19th-century decorative arts. Displayed together, they would make an elegant focal point in a library, study, drawing room, or cabinet collection.

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