

SA1200858

**The Hypochondriac, ca 1840:
French 19th Century Moliere
Theatre figure fine line drawing
on paper**

Price

GBP 260

| USD \$354 | EUR 303

Item Reference: SA1200858

Date of manufacture: 1850

Dimensions

Height = 26 cm (10.2")

Width = 20 cm (7.9")

Depth = 1 cm (0.4")

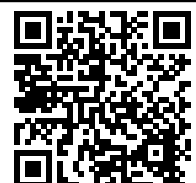
Description

This fine and sensitively treated line drawing in coloured ink heightened with white depicts Argan, the hypochondriac from Molière's play "The Imaginary Invalid". Dating from circa 1840, it was attributed to Paul Gavarni by its previous owners. The drawing captures the quintessential "hypochondriac" of 17th-century French literature, reimagined through a sharp 19th-century lens. The artist uses rapid, confident cross-hatching to define the volume of the heavy dressing gown, contrasting beautifully with the delicate white highlights on the nightcap and stockings—a technique Gavarni pioneered to create a sense of theatrical light. Gavarni was famous for his ability to translate human foibles into visual form. Around 1840, there was a significant revival of interest in Molière's plays in Paris, and Gavarni often turned to theatrical archetypes to comment on the bourgeois life of his time. This piece is a superb example of the "Physiognomy" movement popular in the 1840s, where an individual's character was read through their dress and posture. The size of the drawing measured without its frame is 26.5 x 20 cm at sight, with the framed size being 37 x 29 cm.

Seller Details

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