

Officer of the Chasseurs of the Guard by Théodore Géricault
Original Lithographic Bookplate - Main Subject: Portrait



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7125463796

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Dimensions (As Shown)
7.5W x 10H Inches
19.05W x 25.4H cm

Medium
Original Lithographic Bookplate

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About Théodore Géricault

Jean Louis André Théodore Géricault, whose life and career epitomize Romanticism, was born in Rouen, France but went to school in Paris. He was a classmate of Delacroix both in the Lycée Louis-le-Grand and at the Beaux-Arts where he studied with Vernet and Guerin. A realist throughout his career, Géricault's earliest works were sculptural drawings in the manner of Michelangelo, whose work he studied when he fled to Italy after an unhappy love affair. He did not stay long in Italy (where he met Ingres, whose drawings he admired) but rushed back to Paris and in 1812 submitted a baroque painting, "Officer of the Imperial Guard", to the official salon. A striking work showing an officer on a plunging horse in a smoky atmosphere of fire and flame, the painting was a very original synthesis of Venetian color, Rubens-like movement, and lighting that recalls Caravaggio. Yet it was none of these, but rather an expression of the artist's own passionate temperament that made the most significant impression at he salon.

Two years later he showed a similar work, the "Wounded Cuirassier", after which he joined the Bourbon Musketeers with whom he fought as a cavalry officer for the restoration of the French royal house. In 1819 he showed the last of his three masterpieces, "The Raft of the Medusa" a study for which Géricault, in his passion for realism, spent weeks studying the dead and dying in morgues and hospitals. The work had political overtones indicative of the artist's romantic and humanitarian tendencies as well as his indignation at misgovernment in France. The French government disapproved of the painting, so Géricault took it through England on what would become a triumphant tour. He remained abroad for three years, living elegantly and filling his notebooks with drawings of horses. Horses were his passion. Ironically, it was the neglect of injuries caused by a fall from one was to cause his long, paralyzing illness and premature death at the age of thirty-two. Géricault's masterpieces (energetic, powerful, brilliantly colored, and tightly composed) stand to represent not only his own genius, but also the spirit of the Romantic era as a whole, and they bear within them the seed of the Realistic movement that was to follow. Such a combination made him extremely influential upon the generation of artists that succeeded him; most notably upon Delacroix, who was slightly younger and of an equally fiery temperament.

Original Lithographic Bookplate

Sorry. No information about this medium is available.

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