



A Neo-Renaissance silver, emerald, diamond and pearl cherub pendant

4 x 2.2 cm

Silver and 14K gold; foiled emerald, rose-cut diamond, antique baroque pearls; gross weight 11.97 g

French, Neo-Renaissance, circa 1860

Good condition, wear consistent with age. Hallmarks

A pendant in the Renaissance revival taste, centred on a winged cherub's head. Its chased silver and gold-set stones reflect the historicist goldsmithing of Second Empire Paris.

A step-cut emerald, foiled in a closed gold collet with crimped edge, crowns a pierced silver scroll arch beneath a ribbon bow. The cherub's head emerges below from feathered wings and acanthus volutes. A beaded necklace at its throat holds a small rose-cut diamond. Three articulated drops end in baroque pearls beneath fluted gold caps.

Historical context – Nineteenth-Century Jewellery

From the 1840s, Parisian goldsmiths revived the sculptural jewels of the sixteenth century. François-Désiré Froment-Meurice and Jules Wièse, trained in his workshop, made chased silver, coloured stones and pendant pearls the grammar of this style. The foiled emerald in a closed collet deliberately recalls the Spanish jewels of the Golden Age.

Iconography and symbolism

The winged child is a double heir: the Eros of antiquity and the cherub of Christian angelology. Plato made Eros a daimon, a go-between linking gods and mortals. Pseudo-Dionysius read the cherubim as the "fullness of knowledge". Pliny held that no colour rests the eye like emerald, and that pearls are

conceived from the dew of heaven.