



OBJECT ID	2015.26.1
OBJECT NAME	Print
MEASUREMENTS	27.78252 cm. W x 35.56 cm. L, Item (Overall)
MATERIAL	Cardboard; Paper

OBJECT DESCRIPTION

A matted print. The print is on off-white paper with a white edge. It is mounted on a piece of off-white cardboard with a blue back. The matting board is black. The print shows a colorful image of a man in Ancient Greek clothing. He is holding a long staff in his left hand. He is facing toward the left of the frame with his right hand raised in front of him. The man has a red band tied around his head and is wearing simple brown sandals. He is wearing a blue tunic belted at the waist with a ribbon or string tied in a bow. A small red cloak or shawl hangs over his arms and down his back. There is a gold sash or belt across his chest, with a sheathed sword hanging from it. There are two faded signatures near the bottom of the print. Below these is printed the following:

Phedre

Hippolyte

..... mais je supprime un secret qui vous touche.

Approvez le respect qui me ferme la bouche.

Acte IV. sc. II

ORIGIN

This print was donated by Alex Gianaras. It depicts the character Hippolyte (Hippolytus) from the 17th century French play, *Phedre*, by Jean Racine. According to Greek mythology, Hippolytus was the son of Theseus, King of Athens and slayer of the Minotaur. The myth says that Hippolytus's step-mother, Phaedra (Phedre) fell in love with him. When he refused her, she falsely accused him of having forced himself on her. Theseus then uses a wish from the god Poseidon to curse his son, leading to Hippolytus's death.

The French quote on the print, from Act IV Scene II of the play, translates as "But I'll suppress a secret that touches you.

Respect close my lips: which you should approve."

In this scene, Hippolytus has just learned of the accusations. Hippolytus is actually in love with Aricia, a woman who is forbidden to him, and feels this will prove him innocent of having assaulted Phaedra. However, he is hesitant to admit this forbidden love to his father. He eventually admits the truth but his father does not believe him and curses him.

CITATION

Print, *National Hellenic Museum*, <https://collections.nationalhellenicmuseum.org/Detail/objects/>. Accessed 05/01/24.