



Simon François, Mary Magdalene



29 000 EUR

Signature : SIMON FRANÇOIS

Period : 17th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Oil painting

Length : 158

Height : 122

Description

SIMON FRANÇOIS Tours 1606 - 1671 Paris THE PENITENT MARY MAGDALENE Oil on canvas 122 x 158 cm / 48 x 62.2 inches, with frame 146 x 182 cm / 57.5 x 71.7 inches PROVENANCE Italia, Ascoli, collection del Duca French Painting of the 17th Century: Between Renowned Masters and Lesser-Known Artists The French painting of the 17th century is often defined by towering figures such as Charles Le Brun (1619-1690), Philippe de Champaigne (1602-1674), and Nicolas Poussin (1594-1665). These masters set the artistic standards and shaped the era's visual language. However, alongside these celebrated names existed a vast number of lesser-known artists whose work has long remained in the shadows due to limited documentation or surviving pieces. In recent

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years, interest in these "minor" artists has been steadily growing. Newly discovered archival sources and the increasing availability of graphic material -- drawings, especially engravings -- have opened new avenues for art historical research. Graphic works often serve as key evidence in attributing paintings and understanding artistic practices of the period. One of the leading scholars in 17th-century French painting is Sylvain Kerspern, whose meticulous research has significantly contributed to re-evaluating overlooked painters. Kerspern highlighted the fascinating connection between a painting depicting Saint Mary Magdalene and a print based on the work of Simon François (1606-1671), a notable French painter of the 17th century.

Simon François (1606-1671): A Brief Biography

Born in Tours, France, Simon François showed early artistic promise and initially considered a religious vocation. However, his passion for painting prevailed. He spent a formative period in Rome, where he met and befriended Guido Reni (1575-1642), whose influence is evident in François' style. Returning to France, he became a member of the prestigious Paris Academy of Painting in 1663. François primarily focused on religious subjects, producing works such as the Saint Sebastian (located in the Musée de Soissons) and Saint Mary Magdalene. His oeuvre includes not only paintings but also engravings, often created in collaboration with contemporary printmakers, thereby extending the reach and impact of his compositions.

Saint Mary Magdalene and Related Works

The painting of Saint Mary Magdalene inspired an engraving preserved in the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam. This evidence suggests François' keen involvement in both painting and printmaking as complementary media, enhancing the dissemination of his artistic ideas during the 17th century. Similarly, the subject of Saint Sebastian was also popularized through prints, with an engraving after François' painting held at the Musée de Soissons, showing

stylistic and compositional parallels that underline the unity and coherence of his artistic approach.