



PROANTIC
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Jean François Portaels (1818 - 1895) - ' Oriental Girls - Beggars In Tangier, Morocco'



4 500 EUR

Signature : Jean François Portaels, 1818 - Bruxelles - 1895,

Peintre Belge 'Signature : signée en bas à droite 'J. Portaels'

Period : 19th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Oil painting

Width : 67,5 cm

Height : 56 cm

Depth : 10 cm

Description

Jean François Portaels

1818 - Brussels - 1895

Belgian Painter

'Oriental Girls - Mediants à Tanger, Maroc'

Signature: signed lower right 'J. Portaels'

Medium: oil on canvas

Dimensions: image size 40,5 x 28,5 cm, frame
size 67,5 x 56 cm

Biography: Jean François Portaels, also known as Jan Portaels, was a versatile Belgian painter born on April 3, 1818, in Vilvoorde and passed away on February 8, 1895, in Schaerbeek. He was celebrated for his genre scenes, biblical stories, landscapes, portraits, and Orientalist subjects. As

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a teacher and director of the Academy of Fine Arts of Ghent and the Académie Royale des Beaux-Arts in Brussels, Portaels significantly impacted Belgian art, becoming a pivotal figure in the Belgian Orientalist school. His works were known for their 'everyday elegance and feminine grace,' and he played a crucial role in influencing the next generation of Belgian artists, including notable figures like Théo van Rysselberghe.

Portaels was the son of a wealthy brewer who also served as Vilvoorde's mayor. Showing an early passion for drawing, he was sent to the Académie Royale des Beaux-Arts in Brussels in 1836, where he studied under François-Joseph Navez, a former student of Jacques-Louis David. Navez invited him to his studio, which was renowned at the time, allowing Portaels to refine his skills alongside other talented students like Charles de Groux and Joseph Stallaert.

In 1841, Portaels moved to Paris, enrolling at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts and studying under Paul Delaroche. He became influenced by the emerging Orientalist movement, which was gaining traction in Paris. In 1842, he won the Grand Prix de Rome, which funded his travels across Italy and other regions, including Morocco, Algeria, Egypt, Lebanon, Judea, Spain, Hungary, and Norway. These journeys profoundly influenced his artistic vision, particularly his Orientalist works.

Upon his return to Belgium in 1847, Portaels was appointed Director of the academy in Ghent. In 1849, he married Marie Hélène Navez, the daughter of his first teacher. Despite being offered the directorship of the Brussels Academy, he initially declined, opting to preserve his independence. He later accepted a teaching position at the Academy and eventually became its director in 1878, succeeding Eugène Simonis.

Portaels was known for his broad range of artistic

talents, including history painting, portraiture, and genre art. He was particularly recognised for his Orientalist depictions, often portraying the 'Oriental woman' with distinctive features like arched eyebrows and almond-shaped eyes. His style, marked by charm and elegance, distinguished him from the dominant artistic movements of Classicism and Romanticism.

He was a pioneer in monumental art in Belgium, working with Jean Baptiste van Eycken to introduce fresco techniques like water glass painting. This method was notably used in the decoration of Saint Jacques-sur-Coudenberg in Brussels.

Portaels' legacy extends beyond his artwork, as he played a critical role in educating and mentoring the next generation of Belgian artists. His students, such as Emile Wauters, Théo van Rysselberghe, and Léon Frédéric, became prominent artists in their own right. Portaels' influence is evident in the continued appreciation of Orientalist art and portraiture, making him a significant figure in Belgian art history. He left behind a rich legacy that continues to be celebrated, with his works remaining highly regarded in various collections and institutions.