



## Diana, Goddess Of The Hunt - French School, Circa 1660



9 500 EUR

Signature : Artiste du XVIIe, Siècle École Française, Vers 1660

Period : 17th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Oil painting on paper

Width : 37 cm

Height : 32 cm

Depth : 4 cm

### Description

Artist 17th Century

French School

Circa 1660

'Diana, Goddess of the Chase'

Signature: not signed

Medium: tempera on paper applied to oak panel

Dimensions: image size 23.5 x 18.5 cm, frame size 37 x 32 cm

Provenance: Old English collection; private Dutch collection

Notes: In the background, one can discern ruins reminiscent of the Aventine Hill in Rome, where Servius Tullius, a legendary Roman king, is

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believed to have built a temple dedicated to Diana. This temple marked the introduction of the goddess's worship in Rome. Diana is typically depicted carrying a bow, symbolising her role as a huntress, and clad in a short tunic. However, the intricate attire she wears in this painting is more akin to the opulent fashion of the French court.

### A Story of the Painting: 'Diana, Goddess of the Chase'

In a serene forest bathed in the soft light of dawn, Diana, the Roman Goddess of the Hunt, stands poised and regal. This 17th-century painting, a product of the French School circa 1660, captures the goddess in a moment of quiet determination, her gaze fixed on the unseen prey that roams the woods before her. She holds her bow lightly, an extension of her very being, ready to strike with the precision and grace for which she is revered.

Unlike the more austere depictions of Diana seen in earlier works, this piece presents her adorned in elaborate dress, rich with the elegance of the French court. The artist has chosen to drape her in garments that speak more to the opulence of Louis XIV's France than to the rustic simplicity typically associated with the goddess. This creative liberty imbues Diana with a timeless quality, blending her divine attributes with the regal splendor of 17th-century nobility.

Behind her, the ruins evoke the grandeur of ancient Rome, hinting at the Aventine Hill where her temple once stood, a sacred site that marked the introduction of her worship to the city. These ruins are not merely a backdrop; they symbolize the enduring nature of Diana's influence, bridging the gap between the ancient and the contemporary, the divine and the mortal.

Diana was not just a huntress; she was a guardian of the wilderness, a protector of women in childbirth, and a guide through the night. Her

connection to the moon, represented by the faint crescent that crowns her head, further cements her role as a multifaceted deity. In this painting, these aspects are subtly conveyed through the delicate interplay of light and shadow, which illuminates her figure against the darkening woods.

As she stands, both ancient and eternal, Diana invites the viewer to reflect on her role in Roman and Hellenistic religion, where she was revered as a patroness of nature, hunters, and the moon. The painting also nods to her association with the Greek goddess Artemis, whose attributes she absorbed over time. The artist's decision to dress her in more temporal attire while maintaining her divine poise suggests a goddess who transcends time, embodying both the grandeur of the past and the elegance of the present.

This artwork, with its fine attention to detail and its harmonious blend of myth and history, is more than a mere depiction of Diana. It is a tribute to the enduring legacy of a goddess who, through centuries, continues to inspire and protect, her spirit as vibrant and powerful as the moment captured in this timeless piece.