



PROANTIC
LE PLUS BEAU CATALOGUE D'ANTIQUITES

The Mismatched Couple, 17th Century Flemish School



6 500 EUR

Signature : École flamande du XVIIe siècle

Period : 17th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Oil painting

Width : encadré 118 cm.

Height : encadré 96 cm.

Description

17th century Flemish school

The Mismatched Couple

Oil on canvas

75 x 96 cm.

Framed 96 x 118 cm.

Full details of the work ([click HERE](#))

The curious subject we see depicted in the canvas proposed here belongs to the tradition of the so-called 'mismatched couples', a very fashionable theme in Nordic Renaissance painting, especially in the German and Flemish areas.

Dealer

Antichità Castelbarco

Old master paintings

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The theme, which enjoyed great popularity and success among collectors of the time, involved the depiction of deliberately grotesque couples, often consisting of an attractive young woman accompanied by an old man who was repulsive in appearance but rich.

Alongside the numerous examples by Lucas Cranach and his school, we also find this subject in the work of Dutch masters such as Lucas van Leyden, Jacob Cornelisz, Quinten and Jan Metsys. And it is precisely a work by Jan Massys (Antwerp, c. 1510 - 1575), kept in the art collection of the Nationalmuseum in Stockholm, Sweden

(<https://collection.nationalmuseum.se/sv/collection/item/17511/>), that inspired our author to reproduce the painting with some variations.

The works, besides appearing at first sight to be amusing and satirical, invited the observer to delve into their intriguing narration, from which various moralising messages could be drawn.

The main idea is as old as humanity itself, but still current: an old man allows himself to be charmed by a considerably younger and more beautiful woman who is clearly not interested in him, but only in his money.

It's interesting to note that in these paintings we see the deception taking place, and the moral of the story is clear: these couples are obviously not united by true love, but their relationship is based on a two-fold advantage (carnal for the old man, economic for the young woman).

In particular, we see here a beautiful young woman who, while making herself available to the lustful desires of the rich old man, takes advantage of the situation to keep him from realising that she has an accomplice who is intent on robbing him.

The interesting thing is that this is not an allegorical representation with a hidden meaning; in this case the action is represented, the very moment of the fraud that here becomes obvious. Therefore, no particular symbolic knowledge is needed to enjoy the work: an aspect dictated by the need to make these paintings more easily readable and therefore saleable to collectors of the time.

The message for the observer is clear: this kind of relationship leads only to depravity and derision, to the loss of all dignity, emphasising how ridiculous such behaviour is. Today we don't pay too much attention to it, we've become too accustomed to seeing images of these modern 'mismatched' couples, but several centuries ago it was art that, in addition to an aesthetic value, also had a moralising one.

Jan Massys (1509 - 1575)

Mismatched Couple

97 x 134 cm

National Museum of Fine Arts, Stockholm,
Sweden

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

The painting is sold complete with a tasteful frame and is accompanied by a certificate of authenticity and a descriptive iconographic card.

We take care of and organise the transport of the purchased works, both within Italy and abroad, through professional and insured carriers.

If you would like to see this or any other work in person, we would be delighted to welcome you to our new gallery in Riva del Garda, at 18 Viale Giuseppe Canella. We look forward to seeing you!

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