



Painting By Raffaello Sorbi (florencia 1844-1931), "itinerant Musicians"

55 000 EUR



Period : 19th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Oil painting

Length : 73,4

Height : 82,5

Description

Painting by Raffaello Sorbi (Florence 1844-1931), "Itinerant Musicians", 82.5x73.4 cm, oil on canvas, signed "Raf. Sorbi/1885" lower right. The painter portrays a festive banquet scene in which the customers of a country inn are entertained by two itinerant musicians, intent on singing and playing. The atmosphere is joyful: Sorbi magnificently renders the expression of each of the characters in the painting, demonstrating his very precise and virtuosic technique. Sorbi's skill is also revealed in the rendering of light that gives great luminosity to the scene, restoring the glow of a sunny day outdoors. On the back, the painting still bears an ancient cartouche of a London gallery, Mitchell Galleries Ltd., which may have acquired the painting presumably in the first half of the

Dealer

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twentieth century. BIOGRAPHY: Raffaello Sorbi was born in Florence on February 24, 1844. Introduced to drawing by his father, he then enrolled, in 1858, at the Academy of Fine Arts in his city, following the teachings of Antonio Ciseri. In 1861 he presented himself at the National Exhibition of Florence with his *Death of Corso Donati*, in which he was appreciated and earned him first place in the triennial competition. Along with him at the Exhibition were also the artists who were points of reference for him: Stefano Ussi, Domenico Morelli and also the Macchiaioli. The latter, however, criticized his first style, closer to the neoclassical and romantic academicism, so loved by the public. Sorbi then took advantage of the criticism and moved towards a style that made his paintings more relevant to reality. His pictorial style was characterized by the great attention he paid to drawing and the meticulous study for the reconstruction of historical settings: from genre scenes in Pompeii courtyards, to those of Imperial Rome, to medieval Florence and interior scenes in eighteenth-century costumes. His ability was also appreciated by King Vittorio Emanuele II who, in 1863, commissioned a painting depicting *Piccarda Donati kidnapped from the convent of Santa Chiara by her brother Corso*, preserved in Palazzo Pitti. In the same year he received another recognition: he won a scholarship in Rome with his *Savonarola explaining the Bible to the monks and friends in the Convent of San Marco*, but decided not to leave and remained in his Florence. In his city he had the opportunity to get to know the Macchiaioli artists and their painting better, gathered at the Caffè Michelangiolo: in particular, he carried out a study on the light of their paintings. The influence of the Macchiaioli was seen in particular in the landscapes that Sorbi executed after his debut with historical subjects. Most of his works, however, had historical subjects, works for which Sorbi quickly acquired great success thanks to his precise technique and accuracy in the

construction of the scenes, especially for ancient historical scenes. The subjects were certainly inspired and went hand in hand with the new archaeological discoveries of the site of Pompeii. Sorbi's work was enriched in 1872, when he signed a seven-year contract with the famous French merchant Eugène Goupil: with him the painter became one of the most appreciated artists internationally. His historical paintings were sought after by many European collectors. In addition to the paintings for Goupil, Sorbi exhibited his works in Italian exhibitions and in the Parisian Salons. Back in Italy, he also had the opportunity to try an academic career as a teacher, becoming a professor at the Academy of Fine Arts in Florence in 1892. He died in Florence on December 19, 1931.