



PROANTIC
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Diogenes Looking For A Man, Studio Of Pieter Van Mol, Paris, 17th Century



11 200 EUR

Signature : Atelier de Pieter Van Mol (Anvers 1599 - Paris 1650)

Period : 17th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Oil painting

Width : 68,5 cm (encadré)

Height : 60 cm (encadré)

Description

Diogenes with his lantern looking for an honest man Studio of Pieter Van Mol (Antwerp 1599 - Paris 1650) Paris, mid-17th century Oil on canvas, h. 44.5 cm, w. 54 cm Louis XIV period richly carved giltwood frame with flowered corners. Framed: h. 60 cm, w. 68.5 cm Our work, at the crossroads of the influences of Rubenism and Caravaggism, is distinguished by its intriguing staging with dramatic chiaroscuro magnified by a brilliant and shimmering palette. The subject, rarely represented in Nordic painting, is inspired by an anecdote taken from the life of Diogenes of Sinope, a Cynic philosopher of the 4th century BC, famous for his caustic wit, his contempt for wealth and conventions, and his existence stripped of all superfluity. Walking through Athens at midday

Dealer

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with a lantern in his hand, Diogenes would answer those who questioned him: "I am looking for a (real) man," thereby meaning that the human beings he met were not worth being called as such because of their vices. In a tight frame, the philosopher appears surrounded by several figures seen from the bust: men and women of different ages. The philosopher appears as a grizzled old man with a long beard wearing a coat with wide purple and yellow draperies. The hand holding the lantern is a central element of the painting, casting its light only on a young man wearing a feathered beret and wrapped in a large coat. The painter places intense lighting on this chivalrous figure, all dressed in a bright red, typical of Rubens' palette. The color and light set this young man apart from the rest of the group, suggesting to the viewer that this is probably a real man, his youth and beauty worth more than the supposed wisdom of the two old men with tired features who remain in the shadows. In a typically Mannerist approach where gestures take on significant proportions, the painter introduces a very young boy whose head and shoulders are only visible, pointing at the lantern in order to draw the viewer's attention to the object in question. Finally, a mysterious young woman hides behind the figure of Diogenes, her head with a languid expression, barely lit, appearing from the half-light that serves as the background of the painting. Our work is inspired by two paintings with the same subject by the Parisian painter of Antwerp origin Pieter Van Mol and was probably created by a student in the workshop during his long Parisian career (around 1625-1650). Thus, we feel in our painting this Flemish baroque style tempered by French classicism. Pieter Van Mol in turn seems to have borrowed the subject from his colleague Peter Paul Rubens. The singular style, both Caravaggesque and Rubensian, expresses the Antwerp training of Pieter Van Mol, first of all the chiaroscuro influenced by Abraham de Janssens (Antwerp, 1575-1632) known for having

studied in Rome and Peter Paul Rubens for the colors and the baroque spirit. Related works:-

Diogenes looking for a Man, Musée des

Beaux-Arts d'Orléans, oil on canvas, 111.7 cm x

175 cm, inv. 1320- Diogenes looking for a Man,

Drawing on paper, 14.8 x 18 cm, signed, Graphic

Collection, Stadel Museum, Frankfurt, Germany,

inv. 3234- Diogenes looking for a Man, Sotheby's

auction, oil on panel (65x84.6 cm), 01/27/2022,

lot n 6, ex collection of Lucien Bonaparte Pieter

Van Mol is a little-known artist, born in Antwerp,

apprentice of Artus Wolffert, received master in

Antwerp in 1622. It is assumed that he

accompanied Rubens when he came to Paris in

1625, and then remained in the city where he

made his career. Having benefited from a rapid

reputation, he received numerous commissions

and became the ordinary painter to the king in

1637 and the painter to Queen Anne of Austria in

1640. In 1648 he was among the founding

members of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts.