



Franz Wolfgang Rohrich - Portrait Of Sibylle Of Cleves And Her Son - Oil On Wood - 19th Century



6 000 EUR

Signature : ROHRICH Franz Wolfgang (1787 - 1834,
Nuremberg, Allemagne)

Period : 19th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Oil painting on wood

Width : 42 cm - 85 cm encadré

Height : 57 cm - 74,5 cm encadré

Description

The painting "Sibyl of Cleves and Her Son," long attributed to Lucas Cranach the Elder, is actually a work by the German forger Franz Wolfgang Rohrich, created in the first third of the 19th century. Rohrich made several copies of this scene in his studio, each slightly different from the other. Oil and gold leaf on wood panel. The composition features Sibyl of Cleves, wife of John Frederick I of Saxony, depicted from the waist up. Dressed in a richly embroidered gown, she wears an imposing hat decorated with pearls and jewels characteristic of 16th-century Saxon fashion. To her right stands her young son, John Frederick, wearing a red cap and draped in an ermine-lined cloak. The neutral background, muted tones, and frontal gazes reinforce the solemnity of the scene, in a perfectly balanced

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composition. As in other copies, we find Cranach's signature on one of the princess's jewels (on her hat). Several copies of this painting are in circulation, all from Rohrich's hand or his workshop. The best-known version is kept at the Louvre, but other copies exist, notably at the Huntington Museum (United States), the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg, and a version sold at Sotheby's in 2010. Each one presents slight variations in format, palette or detail, testifying to the forger's desire to multiply the versions while maintaining the illusion of a rarity of the period. For a long time, experts believed that Rohrich had created the scene from scratch. But some years ago, a copy held by Britain's Royal Collection Trust was finally identified as Cranach's original. This painting was presented at an exhibition at the Düsseldorf Kunstpalast: Cranach der Alterer: Meister Marke Moderne (2017). The copy we offer here is in very good condition. There are some old retouches, including one on the face of the princess. The work is offered in a modern frame of black carved wood, in the Haute Epoque style. The artist Franz Wolfgang Rohrich (sometimes spelled Rorich) was a German painter and forger, born in 1787 in Nuremberg, where he died in 1834. Although trained as a painter, Rohrich is primarily known as an art forger. He created works in the style of - and sometimes confused with - Lucas Cranach, considered originals in the 19th century. His carefully crafted canvases deceived collectors and even museums (notably the Louvre) on subjects such as the Sibyl of Cleves, his son, Sophia of Poland, Frederick III of Saxony... Critics of the time and modern bibliography (notably Élisabeth Foucart-Walter, Curator of the Department of Paintings at the Louvre Museum and secretary of the Société de l'Histoire de l'Art français, a specialist in German painting) emphasize the deceptive excellence of his copies, bordering on historical forgery. Rohrich has become a notable case in the history of Cranach fakes, fueling debates on authenticity

and counterfeiting in ancient art. Work visible at
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