



PROANTIC
LE PLUS BEAU CATALOGUE D'ANTIQUITES

The Battle Of Fornovo



3 400 EUR

Period : 17th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Oil painting

Width : 64

Height : 32

Description

Workshop of Francesco Simonini (Parma, 16 June 1686 - Venice or Florence, 1753 or 1755) The Battle of Fornovo(2) Oil on canvas, 32 x 64.5 cm With frame, 39 x 71 cm Born in Parma, Simonini trained in the vast workshop of Francesco Monti, known as Brescianino delle Battaglia, under the guidance of another pupil of the battler originally from Brescia, Ilario Spolverini. Supplied with great talent, following his inclination to paint battles, he acquired a great reputation in that genre of painting, also producing, especially with regard to the first years of his career as an artist, many drawings "characterised by a lively pictorial style". Having become independent following his training in Parma, he worked in Florence, with the Piccolomini family, who gave him the

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opportunity to study the works of Borgognone. In particular, he copied twenty-four paintings by this author, thus increasing his knowledge and refining his skills. He later moved to Rome, where he served several knights, aristocrats and cardinals. Then, he went to Bologna, where he established a school and had good success in both oil and watercolor painting: among his most prestigious clients in the Bolognese area there was certainly Cardinal Ruffo, the Pope's ambassador to Bologna. Subsequently, he moved to Venice, where in 1744 he painted paintings with battles, landscapes, fortresses, battles to decorate a large room of Casa Capello. In the lagoon he worked not only for the Venetian patriciate but also for the rich international aristocracy that was settling in the city in the early eighteenth century. His particular style, characterized by rapid brushstrokes and the use of bright colors, was formed under the influence of the contemporary Venetian school, in particular the landscape painter Marco Ricci. Other peculiarities of this artist are the tendency to create elegantly elongated and dynamically sinuous figures, the attention to landscape and architectural details, including those of classical style, the depth of the landscape that is infinitely lost, the almost indefinite horizon line for the confusion of heaven and earth, the drama and realism in which the influence of Salvator Rosa can be seen. In this beautiful pair of paintings developed within Simonini's workshop, all the crucial characteristics of the master's production are denoted: the dynamism of the characters, the light and clear colours, the crowding of the scenes, the looseness of the brushstroke and the great interest given to the architectural dimension. The episode presented in the two canvases is that of the battle of Fornovo del Taro, held near the city of Parma in 1495. In it, in the socio-political context of the Italian wars, the army of Charles VIII of France - made up of Frenchmen, Swiss mercenaries and a large contingent of Italians - and that of the Italian league - made up of the

armies of Milan and Venice, were faced, mostly made up of mercenaries, Italians, Albanians, Dalmatians, Greeks and Germans, but also of some conscript units. The clash, short but bloody (about three thousand deaths in total), had an uncertain result. In fact, the French of Charles VIII declared that they had implemented a strategic retreat while the powers of the Italian League claimed to have recorded a clear victory. The clash in Fornovo appears to be one of the themes most frequented by battaglista painters even in the eighteenth century, as demonstrated by this beautiful pair of paintings.