PROANTIC
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Nicolas Chaperon (1612-1653/4) - Fauness And Cupids, Old Master Drawing

2 800 EUR



Signature : Nicolas Chaperon (1612-1653/4)

Period : 17th century

Condition : Etat d'usage

Material : Paper

Length : 31,3

Height : 19,5

Description

Nicolas Chaperon (1612-1653/4)
Fauness and Putti
Black chalk, red chalk, wash in red chalk and grey on paper, 195 x 313 mmUnsigned
Provenance:
Private collection
Expert opinion by Sylvain Kerspern available upon request. Drawings by Nicolas Chaperon are exceedingly rare on the art market.

Nicolas Chaperon, trained in Paris under Simon Vouet, distinguished himself with a career as brilliant as it was short, marked by a strong temperament and an independent spirit. Born in 1612, he first gained recognition in the 1630s through a series of engravings inspired by Bacchic themes, notably in a collection published

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in 1639 by François Langlois. This corpus reflects his keen interest in mythological and sensual subjects, often populated by fauns, satyrs, and putti, rooted in a reimagined antiquity.
Settling in Rome in 1642, Chaperon entered the circle of Nicolas Poussin, though he resisted the strict discipline of his mentor. This detachment allowed him to develop a personal style, blending classical structure with graphic spontaneity. The present drawing illustrates this Italian phase of artistic maturity: the fragmented composition, the diversity of the children's poses, the reclining fauness, and the undertones of pagan sensuality evoke an instinctive view of human nature.
The drawing combines black chalk and red chalk, heightened with washes of brown and grey, lending the work a subtle but effective chromatic vibration. The approach is dynamic: contours are firm, even scratched in places, showing a lively, almost impulsive line that emphasizes form without rigidity. Rather than depicting a specific narrative, the scene seems to suggest a state of being--a bucolic meditation tinged with melancholy.
The foliage, loosely sketched, and the gentle contrasts highlight Chaperon's preference for composing in masses and rhythms, akin to a natural theatre. His attention to spatial distribution and bodily expression places him firmly within the French Grand Siècle tradition, while also revealing a unique voice within the Roman artistic milieu.
Due to its fine execution, private provenance, and rarity on the market, this drawing stands as a valuable testament to the talent of Nicolas Chaperon--an artist still relatively unknown, despite growing scholarly interest in recent years.