



PROANTIC
LE PLUS BEAU CATALOGUE D'ANTIQUITES

French School, 19th Century, Faustin Besson (1821-1882) "three Cherubs" Oil On Panel



830 EUR

Signature : Faustin BESSON (1821-1882)

Period : 19th century

Condition : Quelques manques

Material : Oil painting on wood

Length : 23,5cm

Width : 17,5cm

Description

Three cherubs stand out against a clear sky in a balanced and luminous composition. This oil on panel testifies to the skill of Faustin Besson, a renowned decorative painter and ornamentalist of the Second Empire. His fluid brushstrokes, the soft modeling of the figures, and the lightness of the scene recall the elegance of the 18th century, which he tastefully adapted to the aesthetics of his time. The artist and his career: Born in Dole in 1821, a student of Gros and then Paul Delaroche, Faustin Besson distinguished himself early on with a strong taste for decorative painting and scenes of grace and fantasy. In 1852, he received a major commission from the Ministry of the Interior for four overdoors, including The Awakening of Spring, praised by the Revue des Beaux-Arts for the lightness and charm of its

Dealer

MAZARIN

Belles antiquités, souvenirs historiques, livres anciens & Art Russe.

10 Rue de la Grange Batelière

Paris 75009

execution. His talent earned him official recognition. The following year, he exhibited at the 1853 Salon "Boucher in Love with Rosine, the Neighborhood Fruit Seller," a work that so captivated Empress Eugénie that she acquired it for the Château de Saint-Cloud. Enthusiastic, she commissioned Besson to paint the ceiling of her bedroom at the Tuileries Palace, a sketch of which, dated 1853, is preserved. The decoration was delivered in early 1854, executed in just two months to satisfy the sovereign's impatience. This success led to other prestigious commissions: the ceiling of a salon in the Hôtel de la Marquise de Païva, and then those of the Hôtel de Rougemont, described by the *Revue anecdotique* in 1858:

"One can now admire two ceilings there where the painter has set in motion all the ethereal, delicate charms of the 18th century." These are merely elegant nymphs, transparent and golden clouds, little cherubs of the good family." These lost decorations illustrate Besson's mastery of allegorical painting and monumental decoration. Appointed curator of the Dole museum in 1864, he continued his career as far as Brussels, where, from October 10 to 19, 1867, he executed the ceiling of a grand salon in the Governor's residence of the National Bank of Belgium in just ten days. The work presented here, our panel depicting Three Cherubs, reflects this taste for refined and ethereal decoration. It displays the fluidity of the drawing, the opalescent tones, and the dreamlike atmosphere that characterized his work. On a small scale, it encapsulates the spirit of an artist celebrated for his grace, his sense of movement, and his perfect understanding of the French tradition. Oil on panel: 23.5 × 17.5 cm. Signed FB in the lower right corner. Restoration is needed due to a small chip (see photo). French school, 19th century.