



PROANTIC
LE PLUS BEAU CATALOGUE D'ANTIQUITES

Eugène Fromentin (la Rochelle 1820 - 1876), "berber Warriors"

13 000 EUR



Signature : Eugène Fromentin

Period : 19th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Oil painting

Length : 60

Height : 30

Description

Eugène Fromentin (La Rochelle 1820 - 1876), "Berber Warriors", circa 1860. Oil on canvas, 30 x 60 cm framed, 70 x 100 cm including frame. Signed "E. F." lower right. The canvas depicts a group of Arab men on horseback; the background is an arid landscape reminiscent of the vast lands of North Africa, visited by the artist during his numerous travels in Algeria. The Berber men are portrayed in traditional clothing and weapons; Fromentin's attention to detail is almost documentary, a precociously ethnographic approach uncommon among artists of the time: orientalists, in fact, often sacrificed historical veracity for aesthetic beauty, sought after by European buyers fascinated by exoticism. The picturesque compositions here give way to a respectful and composed vision, which ennobles

Dealer

Phidias Antique

Furniture, paintings, works of art

Tel : 0039 0522 436875

Mobile : 0039 335 8125486

Fax : +39 0522 436875

Via Roma n. 22/A

Reggio Emilia 42100

the figure of the Berber horseman. The light in the work is intense, almost dazzling; the chromatic palette is dominated by a warm palette of earthy tones, ochres, and browns, which help evoke the heat of the desert.

BIOGRAPHY Eugène Fromentin was born in La Rochelle in 1820, the son of a wealthy family. His father, Pierre Fromentin-Dupeux, was a doctor and an amateur painter, and from his father's passion, Fromentin learned the basics of art. After a brilliant education in his hometown, Fromentin moved to Paris, where he graduated in law in 1834. However, his strong artistic vocation led him to abandon his profession as a lawyer and enter the studio of landscape painter Jean-Charles Rémond (1795-1875). He later apprenticed to another French artist, Louis Nicolas Cabat (1812-1893). In 1846, secretly from his family, he left for Algeria, where he was fascinated by the desert landscapes and the local population, joining the Orientalist movement that had emerged at the Salon a few years earlier. The following year, he participated in the annual exhibition of the Parisian institution with landscapes inspired by sketches in his travel notebooks, such as *Mosque near Algiers* and *The Gorges of Chiffa*. In 1849, he presented several paintings at the Salon, including *Women of Algiers*, for which he received a prize. Three years later, he returned to Algeria with his new wife, undertaking the second of his three trips to the region, on an archaeological expedition that allowed him to closely study the local customs, habits, and landscapes. His works reflect a meticulous, almost ethnological, research, as demonstrated by the writing of various travel journals subsequently published in magazines, such as *Un été dans le Sahara* (1854) and *Une année dans le Sahel* (1857). While continuing his painting career, Fromentin embarked on a brief literary career, publishing his autobiographical novel *Dominique* in 1863. In 1876, he applied for a position at the Académie française, but lost to the engraver and art critic Charles Blanc in the

commission's vote. That same year, he published a work of art criticism dedicated to the old masters of 17th-century Flemish art, such as Rubens and Rembrandt, *Les maîtres d'autrefois* (1876). He died after a brief illness. Specializing in Orientalist subjects, his works are held in major French museums, including the Louvre, the Musée d'Orsay, and the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Reims.