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Portrait Of Françoise-athénaïs, Marquise De Montespan, Henri Gascard (Paris 1635 - Rome 1701)



7 700 EUR

Signature : Henri Gascard (Paris 1635 - Rome 1701)

Period : 17th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Oil painting

Width : encadré 98 cm.

Height : encadré 91 cm.

Description

Workshop of Pierre Mignard  
(1612-1695)Attributed to Henri Gascard (Paris 1635-Rome 1701)Portrait of Françoise-Athénaïs, Marquise de Montespan (1640-1707), favourite of Louis XIV of FranceOil on canvas (79 x 86 cm. - In frame 91 x 98 cm.)Full details of the painting ([click HERE](#))The painting depicts Françoise-Athénaïs de Rochechouart de Mortemart, Marquise de Montespan (Lussac-les-Châteaux, 1640 - Bourbon-l'Archambault, 1707), a French noblewoman better known as Madame de Montespan, the most famous mistress of King Louis XIV of France.Belonging to one of the oldest and most noble families in France, the House of Rochechouart, Madame de Montespan was called by some "the true Queen of France"

Dealer

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during her love affair with Louis XIV of France because of her pervasive influence at court during that period. She was one of the most emblematic and fascinating figures of the Sun King's court, celebrated by her contemporaries as a woman of extraordinary beauty: with her blonde hair, blue eyes and crimson lips, she was the perfect embodiment of beauty according to the standards of the time. Next to her is Cupid on a cloud, the god of love, ready to shoot his arrow at her, alluding to her amorous control over Louis XIV between 1667 and 1680. The practice of portraying royal mistresses as goddesses was also a way of legitimising their influence at court, elevating them to icons of fashion and eternal beauty. The portrait, in particular, is based on a composition created by Pierre Mignard's workshop and now in Versailles (Musée national des Châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon), which depicts Madame de Montespan as Venus, flanked by her young son Cupid (<https://collections.chateauversailles.fr/#/query/678e7719-364b-4c8e-a65a-20939d96d8ce>). The noblewoman is portrayed reclining, elegantly dressed in a silk dressing gown adorned with lace, with pearls in her hair and around her neck, stylistically reflecting the figurative culture of the French Grand Siècle, characterised by a Baroque classicism aimed at exalting the court of the Sun King. Pierre Mignard is known to have portrayed Madame de Montespan on several occasions, often with allegorical themes. There are works attributed to his workshop that show Montespan crowned by Cupid, emphasising her "power" and influential beauty at court. Numerous portraits were dedicated to her by the greatest painters of the time, reflecting her position as the "absolute" favourite at the court of Louis XIV and celebrating her legendary beauty and lavish taste, in which she was often portrayed as a classical goddess. Famous examples include Charles Beaubrun's portrait depicting her as Diana the Huntress, or the French painting in the Pitti Palace in Florence, which also shows her as

Diana the Huntress, surrounded by cupids and dogs (<https://catalogo.cultura.gov.it/detail/HistoricOrArtisticProperty/0900126047>), and finally the portrait of Montespan as Iris by Louis Elle, also in Versailles (<https://pop.culture.gouv.fr/notice/joconde/000PE007085>). Returning our attention to our canvas, it is likely that it is a work from the workshop of Pierre Mignard himself, generically datable to the last quarter of the 17th century: specifically, in our opinion, it would be plausible to link it to Henri Gascard (1635-1701), a pupil and collaborator of Mignard, from whom he learned the elegant and idealised style typical of French classicism of the period. A highly successful French portrait painter in the 17th century, he often worked "in the manner of" or as a follower of Mignard, and many 17th-century works are now the subject of attribution debate between the two artists or their respective workshops.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:** The painting is sold complete with a pleasant gilded frame and comes with a certificate of authenticity and a descriptive iconographic card. We take care of and organise the transport of purchased works, both in Italy and abroad, through professional and insured carriers. If you would like to see this or other works in person, we would be delighted to welcome you to our new gallery in Riva del Garda, at Viale Giuseppe Canella 18. We look forward to seeing you! Please contact us for any information or to arrange a visit, we will be happy to assist you. Follow us on: <https://www.instagram.com/galleriacastelbarco/?hl=it> <https://www.facebook.com/galleriacastelbarco/>