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Sebastiano Guzzone (militello, 1856 - Florence, 1890), Interior With Costumed Figures, 1885

3 600 EUR



Period : 19th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Oil painting

Width : 41,5

Height : 26,5

Description

Sebastiano Guzzone (Militello, 1856 - Florence, 1890) Interior with costumed figures, 1885 Oil on panel, cm 26.5 x 41.5 Signed and dated lower left: "Guzzone, Rome, '85" Sebastiano Guzzone represents one of the most fascinating and gifted figures in the Sicilian artistic panorama of the second half of the nineteenth century. His biographical and creative parable is part of the delicate epochal transition that redefined the balance of power and cultural hierarchies of the European continent, making him a privileged observer, if not a significant player, of his time. Originally from Militello in Val di Catania, the heart of the Sicilian province where he was born in 1856, Guzzone grew up in a family of small landowners. His initial training was entrusted to his uncle, the priest, Don Rosario, a figure of

Dealer

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conservative political orientation who, however, maintained close ties with the liberal elite, represented by Salvatore Majorana Calatabiano, a future minister in the governments of the historical Left. Thanks to this network of influential protectors and the precocious graphic talent already admired by local masters --including names such as Salvatore Grande, Emanuele Fagone, Nicolò Culosi and Francesco Sinatra -- the young artist had the opportunity to move to Rome at a very young age, to further his studies at the Accademia di San Luca, under the guidance of masters such as Tommaso Minardi, Francesco Podesti and Cesare Mariani. His Roman training was instrumental in the development of a style that, although starting from academic rigor and purist drawing, was able to open itself to a vibrant brushstroke and an almost "pre-Impressionist" use of light, often compared to the atmospheres of the great Mariano Fortuny. A moment of great creative happiness was his participation in the 1885 edition of the historic carnival in Rome (also mentioned by Dumas in *The Count of Monte Cristo*), together with the painter Salvatore Franciamore and the architect Ernesto Basile, who were entrusted with the task of setting up a carnival float representing Sicily. The work not only won first prize, but was greatly admired abroad, especially in France - where he became friends with the photographer Nadar- and in England, where it was present in four exhibitions of the Royal Academy. Guzzone's production was distinguished by a refined versatility that saw him excel as much in portraiture as in genre painting and costume painting, as can be seen in the work presented here. In this eighteenth-century interior scene, signed and dated 1885, the artist demonstrates extraordinary mastery in the tactile rendering of the fabrics of the clothes, the golden reflections of the Rococo furnishings and the velvets, infusing the narrative with a vitality that captures and engages the viewer. It is no coincidence that his career led him to exhibit

successfully not only in Italy, but also in Paris and London, entering the circuit of the prestigious art dealer Goupil, who at the time dictated the tastes of international collecting. Despite his premature death in Florence in 1890, which interrupted a career at the height of his maturity, Guzzone's legacy is today evidenced by important museum presences. Among his most significant works preserved in public institutions, particularly noteworthy are *The Sick Shepherd* and *The Portrait of the Baroness of Sangiuliano* at the Ursino Castle in Catania, as well as the canvases housed in the Civic Gallery of Modern Art in Rome. His hometown, Militello, also pays homage to him through a rich collection of drawings and studies at the local Civic Museum named after him, which allow us to appreciate the intellectual genesis of his sumptuous oil paintings. In these locations it is possible to observe how the artist managed to balance the aristocratic elegance of the subjects with a profound psychological sensitivity, making Sebastiano Guzzone a protagonist of the lyrical realism of nineteenth-century Italy.