



PROANTIC
LE PLUS BEAU CATALOGUE D'ANTIQUITES

French School, Circa 1680-1700, Darius' Tent After Charles Lebrun



6 800 EUR

Signature : École française, vers 1680-1700

Period : 17th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Oil painting

Length : 92 cm, 113 cm avec le cadre

Width : 63 cm, 85 cm avec le cadre

Description

French school, circa 1680-1700, the tent of Darius after Charles Lebrun. Lined canvas, 92 cm by 63 cm. Antique frame 113 cm by 85 cm. This elegant composition is inspired by one of the most emblematic models of the Grand Siècle, the famous Tente de Darius by Le Brun, painter to Louis XIV. The subject, taken from the story of Alexander the Great, celebrates the conqueror's clemency towards the family of Darius III. Produced towards the end of the 17th century, this work testifies to the exceptional diffusion of Le Brun's model, thanks in particular to engravings by Gérard Edelinck. Here, the artist offers a sensitive expressiveness of the female figures and the richness of the drapery. The quality of its execution and the accuracy of its

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composition, this painting perfectly illustrates the output of Parisian painters trained at the Académie Royale. It is a refined testimony to French classical taste at the end of the 17th century. The original by Charles Le Brun at the Châteaude Versailles: The Tent of Darius, painted around 1660-1661 by Charles Le Brun, is one of the most important works of French painting of the 17th century. Produced under the reign of Louis XIV, it is part of a vast artistic program designed to assert the grandeur of royal power. Le Brun, then First Painter to the King and Director of the Académie Royale of Painting and Sculpture, played a decisive role in developing a visual language in the service of the monarchy. The subject of the painting is taken from ancient history and depicts a famous episode in the life of Alexander the Great. After his victory over the Persian king Darius III at the Battle of Issos, Alexander received the defeated king's family. Darius' mother, believing she was addressing the king, prostrates herself before Hephaestion, her companion. Alexander relieves her and forgives her for her mistake. The scene thus illustrates an essential virtue of the ideal sovereign: clemency in victory. Through this ancient subject, Le Brun develops a veritable political allegory. Alexander becomes an exemplary figure Louis XIV can recognize himself in: a powerful king, but also a just and magnanimous one. The work thus contributes to the construction of the image of the absolute monarch, by associating him with the great heroes of Antiquity. But the importance of The Tent of Darius goes far beyond political content. The painting is also a masterly demonstration of Le Brun's aesthetic theories, in particular his expression of the passions. Each character embodies a specific emotion: fear, supplication, surprise, compassion or nobility of soul. Faces, gestures and attitudes are carefully made

the scene immediately legible and intelligible. This approach, taught at the Académie, became a cornerstone of classical history painting in France. The composition itself is exemplary in its clarity and balance. The group of supplicant women unfolds on the left, while Alexander and his soldiers occupy the right. In the center, the meeting the dramatic tension. This rigorous construction, combined with great expressive richness, made it a model for artists of the period. The work enjoyed considerable popularity thanks to the Gobelins tapestries and engravings, notably those by Gérard Edelinck. These reproductions enabled the composition to circulate widely in Europe and was studied, copied and adapted by numerous painters. It thus became a teaching tool and a prototype for academic history painting. With its ambition, narrative clarity and expressive power, *La Tente de Darius* stands out as a manifesto of French classicism. It synthesizes the artistic, political and theoretical of the reign of Louis XIV, while exerting a lasting influence on several generations of artists. The numerous copies and variants testify to its success and central role in the formation of academic taste.