



Portrait Of The Ballerina Santina Olivieri, Known As "la Reggiana," In The Role Of Leda - Antoine Pe



20 000 EUR

Period : 18th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Oil painting

Description

"Expert report prepared, executed, and signed by Dr. Arabella Cifani"Below:The painting depicts one of the most famous and prominent divas of 18th-century Europe: Santina Olivieri, known as La Reggiana, elegantly dressed in a gown with a plunging neckline. A swan in love, adorned with flowers, approaches her sensually. The work alludes to the myth of Leda and the swan, which tells how Zeus, having transformed himself into a swan, seduced Leda, wife of Tyndareus, king of Sparta, on the banks of the Eurotas River. From this union, after Leda laid her eggs, the divine twins Pollux and Helen (whose beauty sparked the Trojan War) were born, and the mortal twins Castor and Clytemnestra, sons of Tyndareus, born on a subsequent night when Leda shared her bed with her husband. This myth, which explores the

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themes of divine love, seduction, metamorphosis, and the birth of central figures in Greek mythology, became a classic subject in Renaissance art and beyond, captivating many artists, including Leonardo da Vinci. In this specific case, the beautiful Leda is portrayed by a famous Italian ballerina who had a brilliant career in Germany, where she became a true diva: Santina Olivieri, known as La Reggiana. Relatively little is known about this dancer. Born in Reggio Emilia (hence her nickname), she married Pierantonio Gratarol (1738-1785) at the age of twenty-two. He was the ambassador of the Most Serene Republic of Venice to the court of Naples and already possessed a considerable dowry. Gratarol was an adventurer with a dissolute lifestyle, which later led to his exile and a death sentence in Venice. In 1744, she is mentioned as the season's prima ballerina at the Teatro Obizzi in Padua, but she also performed at numerous Italian theaters. Between 1747 and 1748, she resided in Naples at the Teatro San Carlo, where she performed in at least four ballets under the direction of Gaetano Grossatesta, choreographer and impresario of the Real Teatro San Carlo. Benedetto Croce recounts that "in November 1751, the ballerina Santa Olivieri, known as Reggiana, was ordered to leave Naples due to a lack of work. She fainted, etc. But Count Giorgio Azzo Migli Orucci di Petrella Nientzlawski, a patrician nobleman of the Kingdom of Poland and a free baron of the Palatinate of Kraków, intervened. He wished to settle in Naples with his son Antonio, who had married Reggiana in Rome. This gentleman with his many titles was denied permission" (Teatri, f. 9). The rest of this episode in Olivieri's life is unknown. What is certain is that in early 1752 she was in Vienna, then in Berlin, where her success was such that Antonio Pesne was commissioned to paint a portrait that adorned Frederick II's bedroom in Potsdam. The Italian ballerina was engaged by the Berlin Court Theater from April 8, 1752, to May 12, 1753, and performed for the

first time before the king in Potsdam on August 20, 1752. Highly admired, she was the subject of numerous portraits depicting her in her roles. Antoine Pesne portrayed her in particular as Leda and Cleopatra. The ballerina later returned to Italy and died in Treviso on November 13, 1786. Period: 18th century Origin: France Dimensions: With frame: Height 130 cm; Width 110 cm; Without frame: Height 96 cm; Width 77 cm Condition: Excellent Documents: Certificate of authenticity and appraisal issued by Dr. Arabella Cifani Assistance: We are available to answer any questions, provide further information, or supply additional images. Shipping: Available in Italy, Europe, and worldwide. Affordable prices, maximum security, and comprehensive support. (To be arranged privately.) Have a great day! Goglia Antiques