



Attributed To Biagio Pupini (active 1525-1575), Two Captives And A Trophy Of Arms, C. 1535



8 500 EUR

Signature : Attribué à Biagio Pupini (act. 1525 - 1575)

Period : 16th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Paper

Width : 14

Height : 12

Description

Attributed to Biagio Pupini Bologna, active 1511-1551 Two Captives Seated on Either Side of a Trophy of Arms Circa 1535 Pen and brown ink, brown wash and opaque white heightening on brown-prepared paper 120 × 140 mm Inscriptions on the mount: "FRANCESCO PENNI dit le FATTORE", in a later unidentified hand; on the reverse, "Acheté à [M?]olard" and "P. Collin", followed by his characteristic flourish. Provenance: P. Collin, called Collin l'aîné, Paris, his signature and flourish on the reverse of the mount (Lugt L.454); his collection offered for sale in Paris on 20-21 February 1832; whereabouts subsequently unknown; AZ Auction-Millon Belgium, Brussels, 10 September 2020, lot 64, as attributed to Giovan Francesco Penni, where acquired by the present owner. This

Dealer

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small and particularly refined sheet depicts two nearly nude captives seated on either side of a trophy of arms. The symmetrical arrangement of the figures, the shallow pictorial space and the importance given to the decorative elements suggest that the drawing records a painted architectural decoration, probably executed in grisaille or chiaroscuro. The technique, combining pen, brown wash and extensive opaque white heightening on prepared paper, was clearly intended to evoke the appearance of an antique relief or a Roman façade decoration. The bodies are modelled through alternating masses of brown and white, while the trophies, draperies and ornamental details are described with a particularly delicate pen line. The most compelling comparison is with Biagio Pupini's *Two Barbarian Prisoners Seated before a Trophy of Arms* in the Museo Nacional del Prado. That drawing, executed after a decoration by Polidoro da Caravaggio for the façade of the Palazzo Ricci in Rome, presents a remarkable similarity in subject, function and technique. A Bolognese artist deeply influenced by Roman art, Pupini repeatedly copied and adapted compositions by Raphael and Polidoro da Caravaggio, as well as antique reliefs and sarcophagi. Several drawings within his established corpus employ, as here, coloured paper, brown washes, delicate pen contours and opaque white heightening used as an active modelling substance. The former attribution to Giovan Francesco Penni, recorded in the inscription on the mount, reflects the historical association of the sheet with the wider dissemination of Roman and Raphaelesque decorative language. It appears, however, to rest on a later inscription rather than on any documented connection with Penni's established corpus. Through its subject, technique and probable function as a ricordo of a monumental Roman decoration, the present sheet may be convincingly related to the graphic work of Biagio Pupini. A date of circa 1535 is consistent with the artist's activity and with the circulation

of models derived from Polidoro da
Caravaggio. A detailed scholarly report, including
illustrated comparisons and museum references,
is available upon request.