



PROANTIC
LE PLUS BEAU CATALOGUE D'ANTIQUITES

the Roman Charity, Italian School, C. 1650, Oil On Canvas, Inspired By Guido Reni.



2 700 EUR

Signature : suiveur de Guido Reni

Period : 17th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Oil painting

Width : 64cm

Height : 74cm

Description

Roman Charity Italian School, c. 1650, oil on canvas, 55 × 47 cm, Inspired by Guido Reni Blackened and gilded wooden frame, 74 × 64 cm. This striking work illustrates the theme of Roman Charity, a moral and humanist subject highly prized in 17th-century Baroque painting. The composition depicts a young woman offering her breast to a starving old man--a gesture of absolute compassion, symbolizing filial piety and devotion. The painter, anonymous but clearly trained in the tradition of the Bolognese masters, draws direct inspiration from Guido Reni's famous model, whose canonical version was widely circulated throughout Italy beginning in the mid-century. Description of the Work The scene, framed from the waist up, stands out against a dark background that highlights the

Dealer

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softness of the flesh and the golden light of the drapery. The young woman's face, with its calm and melancholic beauty, is rendered with a delicacy typical of Bolognese painting: smooth modeling, a pearly complexion, and downcast eyes. The old man, by contrast, is rendered with realistic vigor: a gray beard, pronounced features, and an expression of silent gratitude. The contrast between these two figures--youth and old age, purity and poverty--conveys the full moral tension of the subject. The color palette, dominated by warm tones of brown, ochre, and ivory, reveals a subtle mastery of chiaroscuro, inherited from Caravaggism but softened by the classical sensibility characteristic of the Reni school.

Historical Context Painted around 1650, this version is part of the widespread popularity of the theme of Caritas Romana, inspired by an episode from ancient literature recounting the story of Pero feeding her father Cimon in prison. This subject, both moving and edifying, embodies the Christian virtues of charity, sacrifice, and filial love, and was taken up by numerous Italian artists--from Guido Reni to Giovanni Francesco Barbieri, known as Guercino, and Giovanni Battista Crespi. The work reflects the 17th-century taste for emotionally charged moral scenes, in which feminine beauty serves as a vehicle for virtue and compassion.

Provenance This painting comes from an Italian collection, likely from the north of the peninsula, where these depictions of Roman Charity were particularly prized in devout and humanist circles. Its style, treatment of light, and the softness of the woman's face suggest a Bolognese or Roman origin, within the circle of a painter trained in the tradition of Guido Reni.