



"ruth" By G.b. Lombardi, Marble Sculpture, Italy, 1864



48 000 EUR

Signature : G.B. Lombardi

Period : 19th century

Condition : Bon état

Width : 42,5 cm

Height : 188 cm

Depth : 36 cm

Description

This significant marble sculpture depicts Ruth, an iconic figure from the Old Testament who embodies faithfulness, humility, and devotion. The young woman is shown seated in a contemplative and introspective pose, leaning slightly forward. Her head is bowed, her gaze lowered, as if absorbed in silent meditation. Her facial features are regular and idealized; Ruth is not portrayed as an individual but elevated to the status of a moral archetype. The young woman is dressed in a simple tunic, cinched at the waist and featuring soft folds. A veil covers her head and falls over her shoulders, reinforcing the idea of modesty and her connection to a rural, biblical world. In her right hand, Ruth holds a sheaf of wheat, an essential iconographic attribute that directly references the biblical episode in which

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Ruth gleanes in the fields of Boaz. This detail anchors the figure within a specific narrative while symbolizing abundance, patience, and the virtue of hard work. The position of the sheaf, which hangs slightly downward, complements the overall downward movement, reinforcing the work's melancholic and meditative tone. The base, rendered in a sober yet slightly naturalistic style, suggests uneven ground reminiscent of a field. The sculpture rests on a column with a rotating mechanism. The work is part of an iconographic tradition that, beginning in the 18th century and especially in the 19th century, emphasized both a moral and a sensitive interpretation of female biblical figures. It stands at the intersection of several influences: an ancient heritage in the idealization of forms, Christian sensibility in the choice of subject, and a shift toward a more intimate expressiveness that foreshadows developments in 19th-century sculpture. This sculpture is representative of the Italian sculptor Giovanni Battista Lombardi (1823-1880); the quality of the carving, the expressiveness, the softness and regularity of the lines, as well as the treatment of the drapery are remarkable.

Biography Giovanni Battista Lombardi (1823-1880) was an Italian sculptor known for his Neoclassical and Romantic works, which were particularly popular in the 19th century. He studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Brescia and later at the Academy in Milan. Under the guidance of Lorenzo Vela, he followed the Italian artistic tradition rooted in Neoclassicism, influenced by masters such as Antonio Canova. He settled in Rome, then a major center of European sculpture. There he developed an international career, attracting an aristocratic and bourgeois clientele--notably British and American--and produced busts, statues, and funerary monuments, which were in high demand at the time. Several sculptures of veiled young women demonstrate his technical mastery of translucent marble. Lombardi belongs to a generation of Italian sculptors who carried on

the neoclassical legacy while incorporating a more emotional dimension characteristic of Romanticism. His works reflect a balance between classical idealization and delicate realism. His sculptures are held in private collections and museums in Europe and the United States, such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York ("Susanna," 1869, inventory no. 94.10.2a-c, and "Veiled Woman," 1869, inventory no. 1984.463) Bibliography Alfonso Panzetta, *Dizionario degli scultori italiani dell'ottocento e del primo novecento*, Umberto Allemandi & C., 1994, Volume One, p. 167, and Volume Two, p. 111