



Portrait Of A Lady By François Eisen (1695-1778) Signed & Dated 1748, 18th-century Frame



15 800 EUR

Signature : François Eisen (Bruxelles, vers 1695 - Paris, après 1778)

Period : 18th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Oil painting

Width : l. 85 cm

Height : h. 103 cm

Description

François Eisen (Brussels, c. 1695 - Paris, after 1778) Portrait of a Lady with a Fan, 1748 Oil on canvas: 80 × 62.5 cm Signed and dated on the marble of the table: "peint par f. Eisen / peintre du Roy. 1748" Period 18th-century carved giltwood frame with reeds and shells (regilt) Provenance-Christie's, Paris, 22 June 2006, lot 50- Lempertz, Cologne, 15 May 2010, lot 1710 The painting is recorded under no. 116135 in the RKD database (Rijksbureau voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie / Netherlands Institute for Art History) <https://rkd.nl/images/116135> Dated 1748, our portrait belongs to one of the most brilliant moments of the reign of Louis XV, when the court, under the growing influence of Madame de Pompadour, cultivated a refined taste for elegance, the arts and luxury. Elegantly seated

Dealer

Galerie Nicolas Lenté

Old Masters from 16th to 18th century

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within a palatial interior, the young woman wears an exceptionally sumptuous toilette, the exuberance of its fabrics and ornament conveying the refinement of eighteenth-century high society. She delicately holds an ivory fan, both a fashionable accessory and a mark of social distinction. In the foreground, two books and an opened letter rest upon the marble of her writing table, evoking the intellectual and epistolary pursuits of a lady of high rank. The painter takes particular care to convey the richness of her attire and the vibrancy of its colours, while delicately modelling the features of her face. Her powdered hair is gathered beneath an elegant lace cap, adorned with flowers that lend her appearance a pastoral touch. The precision of the drawing in the rendering of the lace is combined with a freer brushwork in the treatment of the folds of the pink satin and the play of light across its surface. The moiré ribbons fastening the sleeves further enrich the ensemble. Her expression, at once reserved and self-assured, is enhanced by the softness of the modelling and the light gently touching her face. A powerful light falling from the left sets the figure against the architectural background and draws the eye towards the face, hands and luminous bodice, lending the composition an almost theatrical presence. Painted in 1748, the work belongs to a particularly important period in François Eisen's career. Having settled in Paris in 1745, following his training in the former Southern Netherlands and a period in Brussels, the artist, already around fifty years old, was gradually establishing himself among Parisian clientele. Only three years after his arrival, he signed the present work as "peintre du Roy" ("Painter to the King"), a remarkable indication of the position he sought to occupy within the Parisian art world. 1748 was also an emblematic date in the reign of Louis XV. Madame de Pompadour, who had become the King's official favourite in 1745, was then assuming an increasingly influential role in the artistic life of the Court and Paris. The connection

with François Eisen is particularly interesting through his son, Charles Eisen, a young artist active in Parisian circles who would later become close to Madame de Pompadour and serve as her drawing teacher. In this context, the richness of the sitter's attire, her bearing and the palatial setting make it plausible to consider her as a lady belonging to the Marquise's wider circle, although her identity cannot presently be established.

While it is impossible to assert that this connection played a role in the commission of the present portrait, it nevertheless reflects the artistic network in which the Eisen family was then moving. During this Parisian period, François Eisen continued to practise portraiture extensively before gradually turning towards the small genre scenes, galant and mythological subjects that would later become particularly associated with his name. His talent brought him access to distinguished aristocratic clientele: a few years later he would portray princely figures and, in 1757, execute the equestrian portraits of Maria Theresa of Austria and Francis Stephen of Lorraine. These works testify to the esteem in which he was held within aristocratic circles, although they were not commissions placed directly by the Imperial Court. Our portrait therefore constitutes a valuable testimony both to the early Parisian career of François Eisen and to Parisian society under Louis XV. It captures the moment when the artist was establishing his reputation among a sophisticated clientele, before gradually adapting his production to the changing Parisian taste for small genre scenes, galant compositions and anecdotal subjects with which his name would subsequently become closely associated.

Related works: Portraits by François Eisen (1695-1778): - Equestrian Portrait of Maria Theresa of Austria, Queen of Hungary (1717-1780), signed and dated 1757, Musée Lorrain, Nancy. - Equestrian Portrait of Francis Stephen of Lorraine, signed and dated 1757. - Portrait of François-Hugues-Emmanuel-Ignace, Prince of Nassau-Siegen, oil on canvas, 229 ×

124 cm, signed; Tajan, Paris, 28 January 2014, lot
59.