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LE PLUS BEAU CATALOGUE D'ANTIQUITES

## French School Of The Second Half Of The Eighteenth Century - Close House Scene

3 800 EUR



Period : 18th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Oil painting

Length : 94

Width : 63

### Description

In a reception room, a brothel madam accompanied by a young prostitute welcomes a client whose refined appearance suggests he is an aristocrat. A partially open door leads to a bedroom, which the beautiful woman enters through a second entrance. The intimate and even prosaic character of the bathroom is suggested by the presence of a bidet near which an sponge and enema syringe are placed, with mules on the floor and clothes hanging. The madam's wide-open pocket, ready to receive the client's money, evokes her role as a brothel madam. Her dress, with its length revealing her ankles, accentuates the sensual and even erotic aspect of the scene. The artist enjoys playing with contrasts, juxtaposing suggested sensuality with the previously mentioned trivial elements, such as the

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commode chair placed between the two women. Furthermore, the presence of the dog, usually considered a symbol of fidelity, contributes to a paradoxical situation.

Some perspective errors suggest that the painter is an amateur, likely a client himself, which makes this scene particularly exceptional for its originality. In fact, aside from Pierre Antoine Baudouin, known for his light compositions, few artists dared to depict this type of subject. However, the theme of the brothel would be taken up by artists of the late 19th century, as shown in the works of Toulouse-Lautrec and Constantin Guys.

Finally, the attention to detail provides important information about the furnishings. For instance, the seat, curved leg of the fireplace, and painted door top, all in the Louis XV style, testify to the increasing trend of collecting in this era. However, the Louis XVI style also makes an appearance, as evidenced by the mirror above the hearth.

Here, we have a true testimony of the past that sheds light on the history of prostitution and the way these secret places were arranged.

Didier Foucault: "The libertine aristocracy has raised its head; it will not lower it again before 1789."