

Lot 945



Auction	Fine Art
Date	02.06.2021, ca. 14:27
Preview	27.05.2021 - 10:00:00 bis 30.05.2021 - 18:00:00

GENTILESCHI, ARTEMISIA
1593 Rome - ca. 1654 Naples

Title: Saint Mary Magdalene.
Date: Ca. 1645-1650.
Technique: Oil on wood.
Mounting: Parquetted.
Measurement: 68 x 48cm.
Frame/Pedestal: Framed.

Certificate:
Riccarno Lattuada, Rome, 30.03.2021.

Provenance:
Private ownership, Germany.

This work presents Saint Mary Magdalene as penitent: After her conversion and encounter with Jesus, she lived as a hermit in southern France, near Marseilles, where she preached the Gospel. The cult of the penitent Magdalene has fascinated many artists, who saw her as the female equivalent of John the Baptist. She is usually depicted in ragged clothing, similar to that of St. John, or is covered only by her long hair. Her outer beauty has left her, her face is marked by fasting and nightly prayer vigils, but she shines with inner beauty, for she has found peace and joy in the Lord. This previously unknown painting has been in a private collection for about 50 years, where it was attributed to the Florentine painter Carlo Dolci. It has recently been recognised by Riccardo Lattuada as a work by Artemisia Gentileschi, with the indication that it is a work from the collaboration between Artemisia Gentileschi and her apprentice Onofrio Palumbo and was probably executed in the last phase of the painter's life. It is therefore a valuable addition to the corpus of paintings by the most famous artist of the seventeenth century.

Around 1640-41, after working with her father Orazio in London, Artemisia went to Naples, where she spent the last phase of her life. In Naples, her works were sought after by collectors and patrons, and to meet the ever-increasing demand, the painter had to recruit collaborators, especially when it came to executing smaller passages of larger works. Her collaboration with painters such as Bernardo Cavallino, Onofrio Palumbo and Domenico Gargiulo is well known and well documented.

The life of Onofrio Palumbo, who was involved in the execution of this painting but not in its conception (which is

instead entirely the responsibility of Artemisia Gentileschi), is described by the painter and biographer of Neapolitan artists Bernardo De Dominici. The historiographer reports that Palumbo studied first with Battistello Caracciolo and then with Artemisia Gentileschi when the painter settled in Naples. This news has recently found archival confirmation: two payment vouchers from 1653 and 1654 actually attest to a collaboration between the two artists, i.e. in the same years of the execution of the present painting.

Mary Magdalene, together with Judith and Susanna, is one of Gentileschi's favourite female figures, which she painted in many versions, both in portrait and landscape format, throughout her career.

We are grateful to Riccardo Lattuada, Neapel, for suggesting the attribution of the present painting on the basis of a high-resolution digital photograph.

Estimate: 30.000 € - 40.000 €; Hammer: 40.000 €
