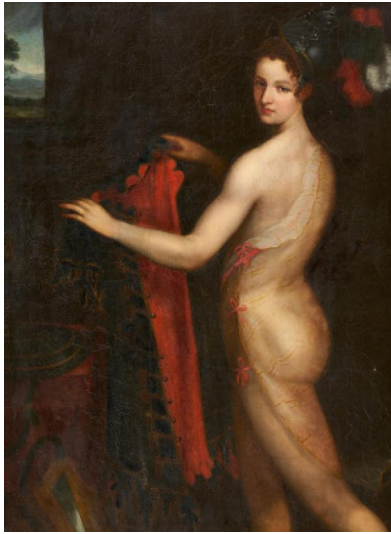


Lot 944



Auction Fine Art

Date 02.06.2021, ca. 14:27

Preview 27.05.2021 - 10:00:00 bis
30.05.2021 - 18:00:00

FONTANA, LAVINIA
1552 Bologna - 1614 Rome

Circle

Title: Minerva.

Technique: Oil on canvas.

Mounting: Relined.

Measurement: 149 x 116cm.

Frame/Pedestal: Framed.

Verso:

On the stretcher an old attribution to Alessandro Varotari.

Provenance:

Private ownership, Germany.

The Bolognese painter Lavinia Fontana is known for her portraits and devotional scenes. In addition to these genres, she also created some paintings with profane, more erotic-mythological themes. Galatea, Venus and Minerva are the heroines of these paintings. Minerva in particular was considered the subject of two paintings created around 1604 (Bologna, private collection) and 1613 (Rome, Galleria Borghese, inv. no. 7). In both paintings the goddess is depicted naked or with a transparent curtain allowing a view of her body. She is three-quarters turned towards the viewer. With her hands she lifts a tunic she is about to put on; shield and armour lie at her feet.

The present painting is a derivative of the first version with the naked Minerva, painted by an artist active in the first half of the 17th century, probably from the circle of Lavinia Fontana herself. The first version was so popular, in fact, that a poem entitled "La Pallade ignuda della famosa pittrice Lavinia Fontana [The naked Minerva of the famous painter Lavinia Fontana]" was dedicated to it, written in Rome in 1605 by Ottaviano Rabasco. Perhaps the poem made the painting so famous that it was copied or derived in the first decades of the 17th century and that Lavinia Fontana executed a second version with a naked Minerva a decade later.

We are grateful to Daniele Benati, Bologna, Maria Teresa Cantaro, Rome and Patrizia Tosini, Rome, for confirming the attribution of the present painting on the basis of a high-resolution digital photograph.

Estimate: 6.000 € - 8.000 €; Hammer: 5.000 €
