

FEMININE IMAGES: FROM ALLEGORY TO REALISM

For this upcoming edition of TEFAF, Walter Padovani will present a series of hitherto unpublished paintings and sculptures which represent feminine subjects from allegories, portraits and historical context.

A refined terracotta group of the *Allegory of Abundance* by Giuseppe Maria Mazza (1653-1741) introduces us to the culture of early 18th century Bologna, where the production of small-scale terracottas destined for private collectors became well established. The sinuous figure, dressed after the antique, holds in both hands a cornucopia filled with fruits, the symbol of wealth and fertility.

We follow on from the allegorical to the secular, with a portrait painted by Angelika Kauffmann (1741-1807), one of the most famous of the neo-classical painters, of Marchesa Orsola Priuli Maccarani, in whose Roman salon gathered artists and literati, including our artist upon her return from London. Our portrait shows the sitter, her dark languid eyes turned towards the viewer, seated with her arm adorned by a thin gold bracelet set with red gemstones on an armrest covered with red velvet, in a white silk Grecian style dress in the empire-line fashion of the time as imported by Napoleon at the beginning of the century.



(1)



(2)



(3)

From a few decades later we offer a large scale watercolour by the Mantuan artist Giovanni Sanguinetti (1789-1867), *The Generosity of the Roman Women*, a rendition in 16th century style of an episode inspired by Charles Rollin's *Histoire romaine*, which celebrates the women of ancient Rome who overcome their vanity by stripping themselves of their jewels and ornamentation for their love of their homeland. It was described at the time as a "quadro pregevolissimo...con i volti leggiadri di quelle donne" (an exquisite painting...with the elegant faces of those women).

Lastly, we move on to the end of the 19th century where Antonio Tantardini, one of the major exponents of Milanese sculpture, merges the romanticism of Hayez with the realism of Vincenzo Vela. The marble group, *The Wounded Friend*, depicts a charming three-year-old girl holding in her lap a kitten with a bandaged paw. Through photography of the time, we are able to ascertain that a version with a puppy was presented at the Centennial International Exhibition in Philadelphia in 1876.

Our sculpture, in such an excellent condition, allows us to fully appreciate the complete virtuosity of the artist in his realistic rendering of the child's dress, her hair, her flesh and the fur of her four-legged friend.



(4)



1_Giuseppe Maria Mazza

(Bologna, 1653 - 1741)

Allegory of Abundance

1730 ca.

Terracotta; height 30 cm



2_Angelika Kauffmann

(Coira, 1741 - Rome, 1807)

Portrait of Marchesa Orsola Priuli Maccarani

1803-1805 ca.

Oil on canvas; 93,5 x 78,5 cm



3_Giovanni Sanguinetti

(Mantua, 1789 - Rome, 1867)

The Generosity of the Roman Women

1821-1822

Pencil and watercolor on paper; 88 x 159 cm



4_Antonio Tantardini

(Milan, 1829 - 1879)

The Wounded Friend

1876 ca.

Marble; height 70 x 30 x 27 cm

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