

Delphin Enjolras (1857-1945) - Young nude woman in an orientalist setting



Oil on canvas, signed lower right

Dimensions : H. 54 cm x W. 73 cm (with frame: H. 76.5 x W. 95.5 cm)

Delphin Enjolras was born in Ardèche in 1857. He showed a great aptitude for drawing from an early age. In 1882, he continued his studies in Puy-en-Velay. Three years later, he entered the École Nationale des Beaux-Arts in Paris, where his teacher was Gérôme, one of the greatest French orientalists of the second half of the 19th century. He also studied with watercolorist Gaston Gérard at the Paris drawing schools. In the 1890s, he moved to the South of France and quickly mastered the pastel technique for portraits of aristocratic ladies. His mastery of richly colored pastels earned him the nickname "painter of reflections" : lamp light, fireplace flames, the glow of illuminations. He enjoyed great success in France and abroad. Enjolras exhibited at the Salon des Artistes Français, of which he became a member in 1901.

While Delphin Enjolras produced a large number of pastels, he also produced superb oil paintings, which are rarer and cost far more than pastels. A journalist writing about his work in 1900 said : "Enjolras' compositions, both in the charm of the subject and in the coloring, exude an impression of freshness and youth that only he can produce, and which are the cause of the favor with which they are received by those who love impeccable forms and beauty."

This large painting is an Orientalist scene. While Enjolras left us a profusion of female portraits in bourgeois interiors, the artist also produced a few Orientalist scenes, as rare as they were highly appreciated. This superb nude has been created with particular attention to rich decor, oriental hangings, bearskin and the lovely composition of fruit on a tray. The languid posture and skin tone of the reclining young woman are remarkable. The effects of light and shadow on the body testify to

Enjolras' immense talent, a talent that is unfortunately underestimated due to the large number of works he produced in almost mass production and of relative interest.

This painting is in perfect condition, on its original canvas and in a Regency-style gilded wood frame.

Museums :

Musée des Civilisations de l'Europe et de la Méditerranée in Marseille (MuCem),

Le Puy en Velay

Avignon

Museum of Fine-Arts, San Francisco

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