

Fernand Toussaint (1873-1956) - A Naked Woman with a Fan



Oil on canvas signed bottom left

Dimensions : H. 31.5 x W. 39.3 inches (With frame: H. 39.3 x W. 47.2 inches)

Fernand Toussaint is the most representative Belgian portrait painter of the Roaring Twenties. From the age of fifteen, he studied at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Brussels under one of the leading Flemish Orientalist painters, Jean-François Portaels. With this rigorous master, he acquired a rigorous and innovative drawing technique. Highly gifted, Fernand Toussaint moved to Paris at the age of 18, to take classes with the Belgian master of the belle époque, Alfred Stevens.

Exhibiting at the Salon des Artistes Français de Paris from 1901, Fernand Toussaint was soon appreciated for his elegant social portraits; he also produced a number of nudes, and flower paintings in which he also excelled. An artist with refined, aristocratic tastes, Toussaint remained under the influence of the great French masters of female portraiture, such as Nicolas Lancret and Maurice Quentin de La Tour, but also of the English masters George Romney and Thomas Gainsborough. Her work can be found in several museums in Belgium.

In 1929, the leading Parisian magazine L'Illustration devoted a special issue to Fernand Toussaint for the Salon de Paris, awarding him a gold medal for a portrait of a woman.

Our painting

This is a large-format nude of a woman. While Toussaint left us a large number of portraits, nudes are much rarer and more sought-after. As is often the case with this demanding artist, the composition of the painting is elaborate: the young woman, with her elegant posture, holds a fan in her hand, while

roses are arranged on her dress. The woman's body, with its subtle complexion, forms a diagonal that perfectly structures this important work.

