

MID-CENTURY OIL ON CANVAS PAINTING IN GILT FRAME SIGNED MLA AFTER LEON BONNAT

$1,425

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This figurative painting was created after French painter Leon Bonnat, where he painted "La Fille Romaine a La Fontaine" in 1875! Set in a carved ornate gilt wood frame, the art work depicts a barefoot tanned-skin woman with wind-swept hair clothed in traditional gypsy dress, with a full skirt and apron that rise above her ankles and a billowing white shirt accented with gold jewelry, leaned over and drinking water from a large, elegantly carved marble fountain, with mountains in the distant background. Details throughout the clothing and facial expression are beautifully and artistically executed, with a blue, green, red, yellow, white palette. The canvas is signed "MLA" in the lower right. This painting is in excellent condition with rich, deep colors throughout and wonderful carvings in the patinated frame decorated with high relief motifs. Léon Joseph Florentin Bonnat (1833-1922) was a French painter, Grand Officer of the Légion d'honneur and professor at the Ecole des Beaux Arts. Roman Girl at a Fountain 1875; this picture is one of the last genre scenes that Bonnat produced before he turned exclusively to portraiture. He probably agreed to paint the work for collector Catharine Lorillard Wolfe about 1873. Bonnat won a medal of honor in Paris in 1869, going on to become one of the leading artists of his day. Bonnat went on to win the Grand Officer of the Légion d'honneur and became a professor at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in 1882. Bonnat was quite popular with American students in Paris. In addition to his native French, he spoke Spanish and Italian and knew English well, to the relief of many monolingual Americans. In May 1905 he succeeded Paul Dubois as director of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. Julius Kaplan characterised Bonnat as "a liberal teacher who stressed simplicity in art above high academic finish, as well as overall effect rather than detail." Bonnat's emphasis on overall effect on the one hand, and rigorous drawing on the other, put him in a middle position with respect to the Impressionists and academic painters like his friend Jean-Léon Gérôme. In 1917, Bonnat was elected into the National Academy of Design as an Honorary Corresponding member. Bonnat's vivid portraits of contemporary celebrities are his most characteristic works, but his most important works are arguably his powerful religious paintings, such as his Christ on the Cross (now in the collection of the Musée du Petit Palais in Paris, but not currently on display), Job (in the Musée Bonnat), St Vincent Taking the Place of Two Galley Slaves (at the church of Saint-Nicholas des Champs in Paris), and the large Martyrdom of St Denis for the Pantheon in Paris. However, he received few commissions for religious and historical paintings, and most of his output consists of portraits. He also produced genre paintings of Italian peasants, and a small number of Orientalist scenes. Measures: 23.5" W x 27.5" H.

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