

ANTONACCI LAPICCIRELLA

FINE ART

The GALLERIA ANTONACCI LAPICCIRELLA FINE ART at TEFAF MAASTRICHT 2020

Press Release

Rome-based Galleria Antonacci Lapicciarella Fine Art will once again be showing, for the tenth year running, in the PAINTINGS SECTION of TEFAF Maastricht 2020, the world's most important art and antiques fair.

The stand will be hosting a selection of fifty works of painting and sculpture, masterpieces by international artists covering a range of over two centuries from the Neoclassical era to the first half of the 20th century. Italy, France, Switzerland, America, Germany and Belgium are all represented by works with different histories and cultural backgrounds, interacting in a harmonious dialogue forged by their common denominator as works of museum standard.

The goal of addressing a select audience of curators, collectors and art enthusiasts has prompted Francesca Antonacci's and Damiano Lapicciarella's Gallery to present a prestigious selection whose highlights include, in chronological order, a hitherto unknown, extremely rare and very substantial corpus of works by Giovanni Battista CAMUCCINI, one of the rarest Italian artists to have taken part in the international trend in *en plein air* painting that put down roots at the turn of 19th century; a new bronze version, fresh on the market and chronologically earlier, of the celebrated sculpture *The Caress* in the Pitti Palace in Florence, a work by animalier sculptor Serio TOFANARI; three magnificent masterpieces by the great Roman artist Giulio Aristide SARTORIO; and finally, a work of international calibre by the Surrealist painter Félix LABISSE.



Giulio Aristide SARTORIO (Rome 1860 - 1932)

A Morning at the Seaside, 1927, oil on canvas, 91x202 cm

The tour of the Galleria's stand is theme-based, visitors being greeted by an extremely important work by Giulio Aristide SARTORIO entitled *A Morning at the Seaside*, dated 1927. This large painting, from a private collection in New York, is a work of major international breadth and importance, embodying one of the happiest periods in Sartorio's artistic career, in which he successfully embraced both the luminous palette and clear seascapes of the great Valencian artist Joaquín Sorolla y Bastida, whose work had earned him universal praise at the Venice Biennale exhibitions of the period. Sartorio shared with Sorolla the ability to reproduce the changing light at different times of the day, a boldly photographic approach and a skill in capturing day-to-day gestures with astonishing realism. *A Morning at the Seaside*, shown at a one-man exhibition held at the Galleria Pesaro in Milan in 1929, is a masterpiece in which Sartorio adopts an extremely luminous and very intense colour range strongly characterised by warm, golden hues, to portray his wife, the actress Marga Sevilla, and their children on the beach at Fregene. The work marks a stylistic turning point by comparison with the large *Frieze for the Milan International of 1906* (three of the panels from which are on display at the start of the Galleria's stand) that was to forge his public reputation in the first decade of the 20th century.



Giovanni Battista CAMUCCINI (Rome, 1819 – 1904)

View of Monte Mario from the Tiber, c. 1840, oil on canvas, 34,5x46,5 cm

The tour of the stand continues with a kind of **"exhibition within the exhibition"** comprising a **hitherto unknown collection of twenty-seven oil paintings on canvas or paper and six drawings, displayed by the Galleria Antonacci Lapicciarella for the very first time at TEFAF Maastricht 2020, painted in the first half of the 19th century by Roman landscape artist Giovanni Battista CAMUCCINI.** The son of Vincenzo Camuccini, Italy's greatest Neoclassical painter, Giovanni Battista's role in art history is important not only in an Italian context but also, indeed above all, at the international level, with several of his works now on display in the world's leading museums, including the National Gallery in London and the Metropolitan in New York, as well as in the most prestigious private collections built around *en plein air* painting. **Taking his cue from the example set by the two greatest masters of *en plein air* painting, or oil-sketching from nature, Pierre Henri de Valenciennes and Thomas Jones,** Giovanni Battista Camuccini was the only Italian, along with his master Giambattista Bassi, to have proven capable of sharing in their subjects, their atmospheres, their Romantic choices and their grasp of the study of nature. **This rare and substantial nucleus of works is accompanied by a monographic catalogue on the artist produced by the Galleria to shine fresh light on the outstanding talent of Giovanni Battista Camuccini, who produced superbly sophisticated views of the Roman countryside and of the area around the Lago di Albano characterised by the warm light of lakeside landscapes, Romantic views capable of vying with the work of the leading international players in the new season of *en plein air* painting that took hold between the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century.**



Félix LABISSE (Marchiennes 1905 – Neuilly sur Seine 1982)

Jean-Louis Barrault in "The Trial", 1947, oil on canvas, 73,2x91,8 cm

A great deal of space **has also been allotted to the landscape theme** with paintings by Willem WELTERS, Karl Wilhelm DIEFENBACH, Johann Jakob FREY and Randall MORGAN, while the **portrait section** includes a magnificent **painting by the Surrealist artist Felix LABISSE** depicting Jean-Louis Barrault in "The Trial", **dated 1947. The sitter** is the French actor and director **Jean-Louis Barrault** (Paris 1910–94), **portrayed in the role of Joseph K in Franz Kafka's *The Trial*.** Thanks to the considerable international renown of both the artist and the sitter, the portrait was **shown at the Venice Biennale in 1948**, just a year after it was painted, but this was to be only the first stage in an extremely long tour that led the work to be shown in the most important museums around the world, until it finally reached the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Douai, France, in 2006. **Labisse's entire output**, including this superb portrait, exudes the **aesthetic of Surrealism**: dreamlike, disconcerting and peopled with hybrid creatures. The strange, nightmarish ambiance of *The Trial* is explicit in this painting. The monochromatic green palette, the lack of any human presence apart from the theme depicted, and the colour that appears to beckon one to follow the path of death, as in the novel, are all elements used to illustrate the distressing and absurd world with which the sitter had to cope after being unfairly accused of a crime of whose very essence he was unaware.



Sirio TOFANARI (Firenze 1886 – Milano 1969)

The Caress, c.1909, lost wax cast, h 25x70x55 cm

The tour of the Galleria's stand winds up with a **very rare corpus of works representing to perfection the *animalier* theme that spread like wildfire on the international scene from the late 19th century to the first three decades of the 20th**. In addition to a pair of charcoal drawings depicting two *Lionesses* by the Tuscan artist Romano DAZZI, of particular note is a **bronze entitled *The Caress* by the internationally renowned sculptor Sirio TOFANARI, which can be dated to the first decade of the 20th century**. **The Galleria unearthed the bronze on display in a private collection in Florence of which it had been a part since it was first cast**, having been bought directly in the artist's workshop by his acquaintance Licurgo Bertelli.

According to his family, Tofanari destroyed the cast after producing the sculpture, and so when he was due to take part in the 8th Venice Biennale he decided to create a second copy, asking Bertelli to lend him the statue so that he could use it to model the new version. Bertelli, however, refused. **Thus the bronze on display at TEFAF Maastricht 2020 is earlier than the version of *The Caress* produced in 1909 and shown alongside the *Young Lionesses* in Room Five at the 8th International Art Exhibition of the City of Venice**. **It was on that occasion that the work was acquired by the Galleria d'Arte Moderna in the Pitti Palace in Florence**, where it is still on display to this day. **Yet it differs from that version in terms of the colour of its patina, of the shape of the base which is ovoid rather than square, and of the handling of the sculpted surface which is coarser and more uneven in our piece**.

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Resulting from the merger of two historic art galleries that had been in the market for generations, the **Galleria Francesca Antonacci Damiano Lapicciarella Fine Art** has become a focal point over the years for enthusiasts and collectors of paintings of the "Grand Tour" and of drawings and sculptures by European artists from the late 18th to the mid-19th centuries, while also devoting particular attention to the work of early 20th century artists. It also has an area for hosting exhibitions that are frequently of museum quality. The gallery shows at the most prestigious art and antiques fairs, including the TEFAF in Maastricht; TEFAF in New York; the Salon du Dessin in Paris; the Biennale des Antiquaires at the Grand Palais in Paris; Fine Art Paris; Highlights in Munich; the Biennale Internazionale dell'Antiquariato at Palazzo Corsini in Florence and the Mostra Internazionale di Palazzo Venezia in Rome. Over the years, many of its works have entered important and numerous collections in museums and private locations.

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