

ANTONACCI LAPICCIRELLA

ROMA

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Highlights

PAINTINGS SECTION | STAND 318

The Sultan's Favourite: amid seduction and theatricality in the Harem

Francesco Hayez's **newly rediscovered masterpiece**, *Interior of a Harem* (1840), is an important addition to the catalogue of this great Italian artist, a protagonist of the *Romanticism*. In this striking painting, made for one of his major Austrian patrons, Countess Nákó of Vienna, Hayez takes us into a world of refined seduction and theatricality, with a subject that was very dear to him and very fashionable throughout Europe at the time. In the main group, the sultan is complacently gazing at a magnificent Western woman who has just joined the harem, whose youth and purity embody **ideal beauty**. Portrayed with a grace that expresses all of her femininity, the protagonist is Hayez's favourite muse, who had already appeared in other iconic works by the artist such as *Odalisca* and *Malinconia*. Around her, other odalisques help to create a romantic and sensual atmosphere. The painting closes around an extraordinary scene, of a **great scenic effect**, framed by the painter between a rich curtain, a wooden backdrop typical of the Harem, and a softly blurred landscape on the horizon. The skilful use of perspective and the contrast between light and shadow add depth and magic to the scene. Painted at the height of Hayez's success, this work is a refined example of **19th-century Orientalism** in its ability to enhance female beauty in all its nuances and to depict the sumptuousness of costume with almost miniaturist precision.



Francesco HAYEZ
(Venice 1791 – Milan 1882)
***Interior of a Harem*, 1840**
Oil on canvas, 84 x 108 cm
Signed lower right

Provenance:

Countess Nákó of Vienna; private collection.

De László: portrait of a ‘modern’ woman of the Roaring Twenties.

With her hair slicked back and her lips picked out in carmine lipstick, the general appearance of this elegant woman typifies the clear-cut modernity of inter-war women. Germaine Gien (1895-1989) married Léon Bélugou (1865-1934) in 1919. It was to her husband, that the painter dedicated the portrait of his wife two years after their marriage. Gien was 26 at the time.

De László, a painter of European high society, appreciated mainly for his portraits in which he represented aristocrats, royals, and prominent figures of his time, here deviated in part from his more conventional works, distinguishing himself for an intimate quality and an emotional introspection. In this portrait, the artist adopted a less formal and more fluid painting style compared to his official portraits, with vibrant brushstrokes that suggest an atmosphere of free spontaneity and through which he explored a more personal, informal dimension. In her baggy shirt with its plunging neckline, and a modern androgynous hairstyle known as *à la garçonne*, much in vogue in the Roaring Twenties, Gien embodies the **emancipated modern woman**.



Philip Alexius de LÁSZLÓ

(Budapest 1869 – London 1937)

Portrait of the singer Germaine Gien, 1921

oil on canvas, 73.3 x 54.5 cm

Signed, dated and dedicated lower right: *de László / Paris 1921 Xbre / a mon ami Belugou*

Provenance:

From the private collection of Germaine Gien (1895-1989) and Léon Bélugou (1865-1934); private collection.

Literature:

Programme of Germaine Gien's recital at the de László's house in London, 'At Home'. *Mrs. de Laszlo*, reproduced on the cover.

Antonio Mancini: the unique “Double Grid” technique

This half-figure of an elderly man with a long white beard seems eager to exit the canvas from the right-hand side. The artist's free and rapid brushstrokes acquired ever-greater consistency and body to form real reliefs, especially in the lower part of the painting. The painted surface very clearly shows traces of the “double grid”, a **unique method of painting** from life that Mancini adopted from the mid-1880s and which consisted of first placing a grid frame in front of the model and then a second one of exactly the same size and with exactly the same arrangement of the cords directly on the canvas. This allowed him to paint with a long brush at a certain distance, frame by frame, as in an abstract work in which the whole composition only comes together at the end.





Antonio Mancini

(Rome 1852 – 1930)

Ritratto di vecchio – Portrait of an old man

1896 – 99 c.

Signed lower left: *A Mancini*

Oil on canvas, 62 x 50 cm.

Provenance:

Private collection

Literature:

Antonio Mancini. Catalogo ragionato dell'opera. La pittura a olio, pag. 286, n.443 (dated 1895)

The uniqueness of Carlo Finelli's *Graces*: *First time lucky!*

Three young female figures are portrayed at the precise moment in which their delicate adolescent lines are evolving towards the more sensual and mature curves of femininity.

Finelli decided to sculpt this life-size work directly into the marble, '*alla prima*', that is, without the aid of a reference plaster model, in an exceptional practice for the time and whose boldness, admitting no errors or time for regret, immediately evoked the technique of the great Michelangelo. However, Finelli never finished the work, which he always kept hidden from visitors to his studio and it only became known after his death. The unfinished nature of the *Three Graces*, limited to the base and the girls' feet, is a unique case in the sculpture of the time and, as a result, is full of charm.



Carlo FINELLI

(Carrara 1782 – Rome 1853)

The Three Graces

Carrara marble, 158 x 119 x 67 cm

Provenance:

The artist to 1853; upon Finelli's death to Filippo Massani; then by descent to his daughter Anna Massani Camuccini and her husband Giambattista Camuccini, Palazzo Camuccini, Cantalupo in Sabina Italy; then by descent in the Camuccini family to the collection of Baron Vincenzo Camuccini.

Exhibition:

Equilibrium, by Stefania Ricci and Sergio Risaliti, Florence, Museo Salvatore Ferragamo, 19 June 2014 - 12 April 2015, p. 114; *DOPO CANOVA: Percorsi della scultura a Firenze e Roma*, curated by Sergej Androssov, Massimo Bertozzi and Ettore Spalletti, Cucchiari, Carrara, 8 July - 22 October 2017.



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ANTONACCI LAPICCIRELLA FINE ART

Antonacci Lapicciarella Fine Art was founded in 2012 as a result of the merger of two historic art galleries that have been present on the international market for several generations.

Specialising in outstanding paintings, drawings and sculptures by the great masters, the gallery's eclectic collection covers a wide period, from the end of the 18th century to the first half of the 20th century. From the great protagonists of Neo-Classicism to the landscapes painted *en plein air* by foreign artists in Italy, from the dreamy atmospheres of Symbolism to the floating scenes of Magic Realism, the gallery pays particular attention to Italian and Northern European artists.



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