



## Erasmus Quellinus (antwerp 1607-1672), Allegory Of The Vanity Of Life Or Youth



16 000 EUR

Signature : Erasme Quellinus II (Anvers 1607 - 1672)

Period : 17th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Oil painting

Width : encadré 98 cm.

Height : encadré 135 cm.

<https://www.proantic.com/en/1418674-erasmus-quellinus-antwerp-1607-1672-allegory-of-the-vanity-of-life-or-youth.html>

### Description

Erasmus Quellinus II (Antwerp 1607 - 1672)  
Vanitas (as an Allegory of the Vanity of Life or of Youth)

Oil painting on canvas - cm. 121 x 84, in the frame cm. 135 x 98

The work is accompanied by an in-depth study written by prof Emilio Negro, from which we present some extracts.

YOU CAN FIND ALL THE SINGLE DETAILS DIRECTLY AT THE FOLLOWING

LINK: <https://www.antichitacastelbarco.it/it/prodotto/erasmus-quellinus-ii--vanitas>

The theme of the painting that we propose is a

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singular and rare "Vanitas", a subject of strong moral value which, in the pictorial field, refers to a composition with symbolic elements alluding to the theme of the transience of life, and therefore intent on soliciting the viewer to meditation on the transience of human destiny and on the fragility of worldly pleasures.

These subjects, which had particular success in the Flemish context, are works of great charm, interesting to study and often difficult to decipher; protagonist of our canvas we see a capricious little love, sitting on a sarcophagus, a sort of pictorial anthropomorphic Carpe Diem (seize the fleeting moment), who invites you to meditate on the transience of life and to enjoy the moments of happiness it grants; this regardless of the alternating fortunes of fate, symbolized by the putto's foot trampling the gold coins, the precious fabric, the scepter, the ermine stole, the skull, the hunting horn and the books.

Next to him is a still life of multicolored flowers, collected in a crystal vase, whose presence takes on a clear allegorical meaning, since they constitute the metaphor of the transience of youthful beauty which, like fresh flowers, is destined to wither. .

Particularly noteworthy is the stone sepulcher on which the sweetheart sits, on which stands the acronym "DMS", to be dissolved in the Latin phrase "Diis Manibus Sacrum", that is to the sacred gods of hands, corresponding to the invocation carved on the tombstones. of the last paganism, addressed to the spirits of the deified ancestors.

Another very interesting detail is the white sheet that emerges from the pages of the voluminous closed psalter, in which the Latin phrase is traced in beautiful seventeenth-century calligraphy: "Defecerunt sicut fumus dies / mei Psal J.97" to translate: "my days almost smoke they have

vanished "(Psalter, Psalm 1. 97), equivalent to another exhortation to reflect on the short duration of existence.

With regard to the pictorial origin of the composition in question, it should be noted first of all that it is an interesting replica, with some modifications, of a four-handed work by Erasmus Quellinus the Younger (the figure of the putto) and Daniel Seghers (the still life).

Of the same composition is also known a version entitled 'Allegory of the passage of Youth', passed by Sotheby's in Amsterdam as Cornelis Schut and Daniël Seghers (12.12.1991, Old master Paintings and Drawings, lot 218, Price EUR 16,630, then sold to London as Thomas Willeboirts Bosschaert (Sotheby's 16.12.1999, lot 59, hammer price: EUR 126,592 / £ 80,000).

Here the link of the painting:

<https://rkd.nl/en/explore/images/record?filters%5Bkunstenaar%5D=Willeboirts+Boschaert%2C+Thomas&query=&start=33>

And again the Vanity attributed to Thomas Willeboirts Bosschaert and passed to Vienna by Dorotheum (17/10/2007, E estimated: EUR 18,000-24,000, link:

<https://www.invaluable.com/auction-lot/thomas-willeboirts-boschaert-bergen-op-zoom-1613-228-c-ms7xg...#>

As for the painting in question, we can compare its realization to a capable Flemish artist of the Grand Siècle, attentive to the rendering of details and faithful to the teachings learned thanks to the study of the compositions created by the best seventeenth-century masters: in our canvas, in fact, clear post accents stand out. -Caravaggesque and post-Rubensian, typical of the pupils of Wallerant Vaillant; peculiar stylistic features that are captured in the effective contrasts of light and in the fluid pictorial mixture and balanced colors.

These reasons make it possible to connect this

Vanitas to the modus operandi of the aforementioned Erasmus Quellinus the Younger (Antwerp, 1607-1678), one of Rubens' closest collaborators in the 1630s, here assisted by the intervention of a valid collaborator trained in inside his active workshop.

Descending from a renowned family of artists (since his father was the painter Erasmus Quellinus the Elder) Erasmus Quellinus II worked mainly in Flanders where his activity is testified by the numerous compositions similar to ours, attributed to him and kept in the most important public and private collections. In addition, he was the head of an established atelier in which numerous students were trained including his children and grandchildren. It is true that in the canvas in question, credibly destined to adorn the walls of a noble residence of a collector, writer or humanist, an accurate painting emerges, especially in the insistent search for details, in warm colors, which are specific qualities of the best works performed. from Erasmus.