



19TH CENTURY ITALIAN OIL PAINTING
"MADONNA OF THE HARPIES" AFT
ANDREA DEL SARTO

\$16,000

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Decorate a living room, library or study with this important antique painting. Created in Italy circa 1850, and set in the original carved gilt wood frame, the hand painted canvas titled "Madonna of the Harpies", depicts the Virgin Mary holding her Child, our Lord, Jesus Christ; She is flanked by Saint John the Evangelist, and either Saint Francis or Saint Bonaventure. The large religious painting is in excellent condition commensurate with age and use, and adorns wonderful colors with very fine details. Madonna of the Harpies (Italian: Madonna delle Arpie) is an altarpiece in oils by Andrea del Sarto, a major painter of the High Renaissance. It was commissioned in 1515 and signed and dated by the artist in 1517 in the inscription on the pedestal; it is now in the Uffizi in Florence. It was praised by Vasari, and is arguably the artist's best-known work. The Virgin is standing on a pedestal which includes harpies sculpted in relief, from which the painting takes its name. At least Vasari, and presumably his Florentine contemporaries, thought they were harpies; some modern art historians think that locusts are represented, in a reference to the Book of Revelation; either way they represent forces of evil being trampled on by the Virgin. It is a "sacra conversazione" showing the Virgin and Child flanked by putti angels and two saints (Saint Bonaventure or Francis and John the Evangelist). Compared to the stillness of earlier paintings of similar groups, here the "dynamism of the High Renaissance was inimical to the static quality of 15th-century art", so that "a composition of fundamentally classical purity is animated by a nervous energy in the figures to produce an unsettling impression of variety." It was completed in 1517 for the church of the convent and hospital of San Francesco dei Macci in Florence; this was run by the Poor Clares and is long closed, but the church building survives. The figures have a Leonardo-like aura, with a pyramid shaped composition. The harpies, figures from pagan mythology (or locusts), here represent temptation and sin, which the Virgin has conquered and stands upon.[4] The Christ Child is shown as unusually old, and has an athletic contrapposto pose. He looks down to the putti, and all three have a "mischievousness" that contrasts with the serious, abstracted, air of the adults. The main character in the Kürk Mantolu Madonna ("Madonna With A Fur Coat"), a novel written by Turkish writer Sabahattin Ali, is a depiction of the Virgin Mary in Madonna of the Harpies. Measures: 54"W x 67.5"H.