

**LE CABINET DE M. POUILLAIN – PRIVATE COLLECTION
CATALOGUE OF ENGRAVINGS OF MASTERPIECES OWNED BY
FRENCH COLLECTOR ANTOINE POUILLAIN**



A hardbound private collection catalogue of one hundred and twenty beautiful engravings of old master paintings – the highlights of a large, eighteenth-century French collection sold at auction in 1780. Many of the masterpieces depicted are now in major museum collections.

Collection de Cent Vingt Estampes, Gravées d'après les Tableaux & Dessins qui composoient le Cabinet de M. Poullain, Receveur Général des Domaines du Roi, Décédé e 1780; Précédée d'un Abrégé historique de la Vie des Auteurs qui la composent' Dédiée a M. le Comte d'Orsay. Paris: Basan et Poignant, 1781. Hardcover. 120 plates (engravings) & 22 pages of text.

A book of one hundred and twenty engravings of old master paintings from the collection of Antoine Poullain (d. 1780), accompanied by short biographies of the artists. The book was compiled by French engraver Francois Basan (1723-1797), and the individual engravings were made under Basan's direction by young artists, both male and female.¹ The artists represented in Poullain's collection include Claude Lorrain, Cornelius de Vos, Jan Steen, Gabriel Metsu, Paulus Potter, Paulo Veronese, Rembrandt, Peter Paul Rubens,

Anthony van Dyck, and Jean Wynants. The book is dedicated to art collector Pierre-Gaspard-Marie-Grimod, le Comte d'Orsay (1748-1809).

Poullain's collection was sold in an auction held from March 15-21, 1780 at Hotel de Bullion in Paris, directly following Poullain's death. The sale included 254 lots of paintings, drawings, prints, natural history specimens, sculptures, porcelain, furniture, chandeliers and candlesticks, jewels, musical instruments, and other decorative arts. A catalogue, compiled by J.B.P. le Brun, was published to accompany the sale.² Many of the paintings found their way into important museum collections, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Rembrandt's *The Toilet of Bathsheba*), the Art Institute of Chicago (Rubens's *The Holy Family with Saints Elizabeth and John the Baptist*), and the National Gallery of Art in Washington D.C. (Veronese's *The Annunciation*, via the Samuel H. Kress Collection). Despite the illustriousness of his collection, details about Poullain's life are scarce, save for his title of "Receveur Général des Domaines du Roi", an official tax collector and money lender.

The book is in good condition, with obvious wear to the cover and spine, and some foxing on the edge of each page.

\$2,300.00

Notes:

1. A full list of engravers can be found in the collection database of the Museum of Fine Arts Boston under the entry for the museum's copy of this book.
<http://www.mfa.org/collections/object/collection-de-cent-vingt-estampes-grav%C3%A9es-dapr%C3%A8s-les-tableaux-dessins-qui-composoient-le-cabinet-de-m-poullain-receveur-g%C3%A9n%C3%A9ral-des-domaines-du-roi-d%C3%A9c%C3%A9d%C3%A9-en-1780-250921>
2. Le Brun, Jean Baptiste Pierre. *Catalogue raisonné des tableaux, dessins, estampes, figures de bronze & de marbre, & morceaux d'histoire naturelle; qui composoient le Cabinet de feu M. Poullain... Suivi d'un abrégé historique de la vie des peintres don't les ouvrages formoient cette collection Par J.B.P. Le Brun. Le catalogue des vases, porcelains, meubles de boule & autres effets précieux, est de Ph. F. Julliot, etc.*. Paris, 1780.