

Vittorio Reggianini (1858 - 1938)

The new dress

Signed, lower right: *V Reggianini*

Oil on canvas

29½ x 39½ in – 74.9 x 100.3 cm

Frame size

34¾ x 44½ in – 88.3 x 113 cm

Artist description:

Vittorio Reggianini was born in Modena in 1858, studying in his native city and subsequently becoming a Professor at the Academy. Although a painter of genre and allegorical scenes he is known first and foremost as a painter of late 18th century historical genre. This very specific genre proved enormously popular from the last quarter of the 19th century throughout Europe, and particularly in Great Britain, for the dazzling virtuosity of its leading exponents.

With its emphasis on beauty, elegance and above all luxury, this genre conjured up visions of a Golden Age, an age tarnished by the harsh realities of the Industrial Revolution, ironically, the source of the very wealth of the collectors to which this genre was so appealing. Reggianini moved to Florence in the late 19th century where he would have greater access to Europeans and Americans on the Grand Tour, potential patrons.

Florence, where Reggianini exhibited was home to a number of artists specialising in the ‘silks and satins’ school, so called due to the excellence with which they were able to render the texture of these fabrics. Reggianini along with Arturo Ricci (1854-1919) and Frederic Soulacroix (1858-1933) being the leading exponents of the genre. This genre reflected the aspirational tastes of the rapidly expanding number of collectors in Europe and the United States. Reggianini proved to be enormously successful and died in Florence in 1938.