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Title: Judith with the Head of Holofernes

Date: ca. 1670-1680

Period: Baroque

Related People:

Artist/Maker: [Pietro Dandini](#)

Attribution: Pietro Dandini, Italy, 1646-1712

Culture: Italian

Medium: oil on canvas

Dimensions: Sight: 53 x 39 in. (134.6 x 99.1 cm)

Framed: 61 1/2 x 47 1/2 x 3 in. (156.2 x 120.7 x 7.6 cm)

Credit Line: Gift of George Farkas

Provenance: Donated to LAM in 1951 by George Farkas, New York, NY.

Description: The biblical story of Judith, the Jewish widow who saved the Israelites by beheading Assyrian general Holofernes, was an enormously popular subject in European literature and art from the Middle Ages. In addition to her importance as a heroine and defender of her people, Judith was considered a precursor of Christian triumphs, a prefiguration of Christ's victory over death, the Devil, the Virgin and the Church, and the embodiment of many sterling virtues. Judith with the Head of Holofernes illustrates the immediate aftermath of the gruesome slaying. Judith holds the bloodied sword with which she has decapitated Holofernes, but she has not yet given the general's head to her maid servant, who has placed it in a basket in preparation for leaving the enemy camp. The heroine's beauty, fine clothes, and bared breast remind the viewer of the sexual entrapment that lead to the downfall of Holofernes. Her lifeless head appears less threatening than the grotesque gargoyle on the stool where Judith stands.

Place Made: Florence

Object Number: 51.003.000

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