



Pair Of Marble Busts - Italy - Late 17th Century

12 000 EUR



Period : 17th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Marble

Width : 18 cm

Height : 38 cm

Description

This beautiful pair of busts represents two people of advanced age. Made of marble, we can attribute them to the sculptor famous for his allegorical representations: Orazio Marinali and his workshop. The latter, born in 1643, is one of the most famous Venetian sculptors of the 17th century. Through his work, he wanted to respond to the injunctions of the idealized mannerism of the late Renaissance. This is why his sculptures have a realism where the expression of his characters is brought to its peak. The elegant woman is wearing a headband which holds her hair back; however, a thin strand comes off her hairstyle to fall delicately down her neck, this adds an effect of realism to the whole. Like this, we can even better admire the work on the folds of the model's face. Her cheekbones are

Dealer

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prominent, her eyes lively and her deliberately somewhat toothless smile forms a coherent whole with the other bust. She perhaps evokes the allegory of Prudence, characterized on the one hand, by her great age and on the other, by her look ready to see the slightest danger, a quality that she was only able to acquire thanks to her seniority. . It is therefore a positive treatment of old age that the artist gives us here. The man could be a philosopher or a scientist, his broad forehead allows us to suggest this. Indeed, at that time, philosophers were always represented like this, a symbol of their wisdom. Her hair at the back is not finished, as if the artist knew that her work would be placed against a wall to adorn a living room and therefore this part would not be visible. Despite everything, the hair and beard treatment is quite remarkable. The technique used to achieve this result is the use of the drill bit, a type of drill bit operated by hand using a bow. This tool has been used since Antiquity to reach recesses, clear difficult-to-access parts and rough out small diameter grooves by forming cylindrical cavities. Slow but precise, the bit is intended for very fragile places and hard materials such as wood, stone and marble. The drill bit technique brings movement and depth to the whole. The man, laughing, can get closer to Democritus, in fact this Greek philosopher had the characteristic of always having fun with human stupidity, which he managed to do by taking a step back thanks to his great age. We can also wonder if the artist wanted through these works to show a form of allegory of time passing thanks to the old age of these two characters. Indeed, representing old age in sculpture is not a classic topos, but it allows us to break with the codes of the time to show realism for the benefit of Beauty. The artist deliberately accentuated the facial features to create almost repulsive characters. Despite the first impression of incomprehension in the face of this, the viewer is quickly taken with tenderness for this smiling couple. We can sense in the expression of their

faces a certain dramatization, typical of Baroque sculpture. Franz Kafka, an Austro-Hungarian writer rightly said that "Happiness suppresses old age".