



Still Life Spadino



22 000 EUR

Signature : Giovanni Paolo Castelli dit Spadino

Period : 17th century

Condition : Parfait état

Material : Oil painting

Length : 50

Width : 90

<https://www.proantic.com/en/1262953-still-life-spadino.html>

Description

Oil painting on canvas measuring 50 x 99 cm without frame and 62 x 111 cm with coeval frame, depicting a still life of fruit by the painter Giovanni Paolo Castelli known as Spadino (Rome 1659 - 1730).

This magnificent canvas, hitherto unpublished to my knowledge, depicts a display of fruit set out in the open at the edge of a wood (apples, peaches, black and white pizzutella grapes, two split watermelons and a plum), and at the edge of a stream, with a hilly landscape opening up to the left.

The fruit is placed in the foreground, very close to the viewer's point of view, and occupies, with its bright and festive colours, most of the field of

Dealer

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vision.

The painter does not seek a particular spatial geometry or constructive scheme, but indulges in a skilful and brilliant chromatic weaving of the surfaces, by means of a pictorial material applied with exceptional fluidity and vibration, if you like, even sensual in its luminous and 'tactile' corpulence in the taste of the full Baroque.

The quality is excellent and the style appears surprisingly free and evocative, although it retains traces of the old Flemish naturalism typical of Roman Baroque still life painting, strongly influenced by the work of Abraham Brueghel, as evidenced, for example, by the tiny drops of visible dew, or the luminous reflections on grapes or the flesh of watermelons.

These are all elements that undoubtedly indicate as its author one of the most important specialists of this pictorial genre in late Baroque Rome:

Giovanni Paolo Castelli known as Lo Spadino.

The painting in fact appears to be entirely typical of the painter's mature work, i.e. towards the end of the 17th or beginning of the 18th century (the chronological collocation is suggested by the similarities with the work of another great contemporary still life specialist, Pietro Navarra), and can easily be compared, for example, with the painter's best compositions, many of which are now in the Montefortino Art Gallery, such as the one illustrated below, which undoubtedly appears to be by the same hand and very similar in its morphological solutions.

In the latter, see for example the conformation of the watermelon split in half, a substantial element in the scenographic construction of the painting, almost identical to those visible in the painting studied here (which derive from the models of Abraham Brueghel) and constructed through the same textural drafting, mellow and with darting rises of white lead in correspondence with the

luminous areas, just as the morphology of other fruits, from grapes to apples, appears to be very similar, characteristic in the search for a form that is more evocative than descriptive.

As is well known, Giovanni Paolo Castelli belonged to a family of still life specialists prominent in Rome in the second half of the 17th century (although he was originally from the Marche region), and he achieved considerable fame immediately, as evidenced by numerous inventories of the most important Roman families (he had painted for the Chigi family as early as 1689) as well as the lists of the well-known exhibitions at San Salvatore in Lauro, in which his works frequently appear, thanks also to the widespread distribution of his paintings by his brothers-in-law Giovanni and Tommaso (brothers of his wife Apollonia de Marchis), who were art dealers by profession. In 1725, Cardinal Benedetto Pamphili owned no less than eleven Spadino paintings, several others were owned by Spada and Rospigliosi; many were also kept in Naples and Florence (e.g. by the Corsini family), a sign of a fame that had expanded far beyond the city borders.

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Mr. Riccardo Moneghini
Art Historian