



Portrait Of A Gentleman In A Blue Cloak & Portrait Of A Lady C.1697, Fine Carved Gilded Frames

18 650 EUR



Signature : Thomas Murray (1663-1735)

Period : 17th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Oil painting

Width : 85

Height : 96

Depth : 7

Description

These fascinating portraits are exquisite examples of portraiture in England during the end of the seventeenth century. Painted by Thomas Murray, who can be described as one of the most successful and talented artists during the last part of the seventeenth century; it is not surprising that Murray painted the portraits of King William III, Queen Mary, Queen Ann as well as several other high-ranking individuals. They are noteworthy in their excellent state of preservation and their remarkable quality; they are amongst Murray's finest works, and are presented in an outstanding carved and gilded antique frames, which are fine work of art in themselves. The sitters are most likely husband and wife as he is inclined to be elegantly attired in a blue silk dress over a white frilled chemise and a striking crimson mantle.

Dealer

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The right facing stance of the gentleman and the lady slightly inclined to our left, suggests that the couple were married, according to the traditional rules of marriage portraiture at the time. The portrait genre was valued particularly highly in English society. Neither landscapes nor allegorical pictures were ever priced so highly at exhibitions and in the trade as depictions of people, from the highest aristocracy to scholars, writers, poets and statesmen. These portraits can be dated to circa 1697 based on the fashionable hair and clothing styles. The lady's russet coloured dress is held in place on the bodice by a huge diamond and gold brooch, the azure silk scarf is suspended in the air and flows off the pictorial space, a deliberate attempt by the artist to create a sense of movement, away from a 'standard' portrait. The gentleman wears a shimmering striking blue cloak over a white lace cravat, his hair is worn natural instead of a wig. The strong and vibrant blue pigment in his cloak is indicative of the remarkable state of preservation of this portrait; blue pigment from this period today often appears faded and abraded. This is a very fine example. Murray's work retains an individual style and easily distinguishable by a refined and elegant manner. He also favoured the exaggerated horizontal flowing mantle for both his female and males' sitters, as seen in our portrait of the lady, and also placed male sitters with the shoulder prominently facing the viewer. This illustrates the studio practice at the time; when an artist found success with a formula they were not afraid to repeat it. Murray's earlier work is similar to John Closterman, who was a fellow pupil, and many consider this period to be his finest. Thomas Murray was born in Scotland but moved to London to study with a member of the De Critz family. Later he was a pupil of the English portraitist John Riley (1646-1691), who was court painter to King William III and Queen Mary, and was practising as a painter on his own in the 1680s. In 1691 he took over Riley's studio when

that artist died in 1691 and he established a very successful practice. The Rev, James Dalloway accounted that Murray "was remarkable for his personal beauty and for the elegance of his manner" and he was also noted to have been hard working, courteous and popular with his customers. Murray invested wisely in property and raised a considerable sum by lending money; when he died in 1735, he left around £40,000. He had no children and he bequeathed his money to a nephew with instructions that his monument, with a bust, should be erected in Westminster Abbey, provided that it did not cost too much - but his nephew decided that it was indeed "too expensive" and the plan did not proceed. He is buried in St. Paul's Church in Covent Garden, London. Murray's work is represented in many British country houses and private collections, the National Portrait Gallery London, Royal Society and Middle Temple in London, and in the Uffizi Gallery in Florence. Each painting offered for sale by Titan Fine Art has been assessed by a professional conservator prior to going on sale. Thus, all paintings are in good condition, requiring no work, and can be hung and enjoyed immediately. Measurements: Height 96cm, Width 85cm, Depth 7cm framed (Height 37.75", Width 33.5", Depth 2.75" framed)