



Portrait Of Monsieur De La Ville At His Desk



4 500 EUR

Period : 18th century

Condition : En l'etat

Material : Oil painting

Width : 130

Height : 110

Description

French School, mid-18th century Oil on canvas This refined portrait depicts a distinguished gentleman in powdered wig and formal attire, seated at an ornately inlaid writing desk. The setting evokes the cultured atmosphere of the Enlightenment: heavy draperies, shelves of books, and a poised stillness. The subject turns toward the viewer with composed assurance, as if interrupted mid-sentence. In his right hand he holds a document, while the desk bears a silver inkwell, a quill, and a twin-flame candlestick -- symbols of intellectual and administrative life. The painting is a tribute to the identity of the *homme de lettres* and statesman, immersed in an orderly, rational, Enlightenment world. His pose is both composed and relaxed, in keeping with official portraiture of the 18th century. The

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details of the silver-grey satin coat, golden buttons, and dark embroidery are rendered with remarkable precision, as is the delicate modeling of the flesh tones. Inscription Lower left, on the desk front: "M. de La Ville, un des 40 de l'Académie Française, Ministre du Roi, Intendant en Normandie, 1741" The inscription identifies the sitter as Monsieur de La Ville, one of the 40 members of the Académie Française, minister to the King, and intendant in Normandy. This is likely Jean-Baptiste de La Ville (1704-1758), a man of letters and diplomacy under Louis XV, and author of Enlightenment-era historical writings and state memoirs.