



## Van Dyck's Workshop (antwerp, Early 17th Century) - Study Of A Bearded Man's Head



30 000 EUR

Period : 17th century

Condition : Etat d'usage

Material : Oil painting

Length : 34

Height : 46

### Description

Studio of Van Dyck (Antwerp, early 17th century) Study of a Bearded Man's Head Oil on canvas, 46 x 34 cm Inscribed on the reverse of the stretcher: "Etude de ... / vente du ... ;

Jordaens" and

numbered "117" Provenance: Private

collection This oil study of an elderly, bearded man in profile belongs to the tradition of Flemish tronies from the early 17th century--character heads painted from live models. Long attributed to the circle of Jacob Jordaens, the painting has recently been reexamined and closely associated with early head studies by the young Anthony van Dyck (1599-1641), during his formative years in the studio of Peter Paul Rubens. The aged model--with his prominent nose, grey beard, and deeply lined forehead--is recognizable as the

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same sitter featured in several autograph studies by Van Dyck. He notably appears in *Two Studies of a Bearded Man* (c.1616-17, Snijders&Rockoxhuis, Antwerp) and the *Study Head* at the Louvre (MI 916), both executed with swift brushwork and an economy of means typical of Van Dyck's early style. Though originally preparatory in function, these studies transcend their utilitarian purpose through their psychological depth and painterly vigor. The present sketch, through its refined modelling, sensitive lighting on the sitter's grey hair, and underlying draftsmanship, appears to originate from Van Dyck's studio or immediate circle. Several artists in his milieu, such as Jan Cossiers, Theodoor Rombouts, and Gerard Seghers, continued this practice of live-model studies, often borrowing the same physiognomic types developed by Van Dyck and his master Rubens. Like those works, this painting bears witness to the acute naturalism embraced by Antwerp painters in this period, who sought lifelike models to populate their religious and historical compositions. The repeated use of this particular model in Van Dyck's paintings--including his depictions of Saint Jerome and Abraham--testifies to the enduring value of such tronies in the studio. This catalogue entry was made possible thanks to the insightful contributions of Christopher Brown, Nico van Hout, and Brecht Vanoppen, whose observations greatly informed the proposed attribution.