



Bernardo Strozzi (1581-1664)



35 000 EUR

Period : 16th century

Condition : Bon état

Description

Bernardo Strozzi (1581-1664) Philosopher Oil on canvas 90 x 70 cm The work is accompanied by a critical note by Camillo Manzitti. The half-length depiction of saints, philosophers, and anchorites, according to the most common

Counter-Reformation iconography, was often requested of Bernardo Strozzi. He excelled in this work for the expressive vigor he imbued in his faces, which were examples of a humanity interpreted with great realism, free from any conventional or mannered pathos, but where the severe expressiveness was accentuated in the deeply wrinkled complexions and thick beards, which imbued the faces with an air of importance and solemnity. Fundamental, especially in the mature years to which this work (oil on canvas, 90 x 70 cm) undoubtedly belongs, is the use of

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light, learned early on from studying works of the Caravaggesque school, which Strozzi had the opportunity to admire in the rich collections of Genoa. Here, the light falls obliquely, as if from a sort of skylight, revealing in the austere cave a lively image and the pensive pose of an elderly figure, whom the absence of a halo suggests may be a philosopher, immersed in the reading of a heavy volume. Bernardo's extraordinary mastery is expressed in his rapid, textured brushstrokes, which effectively highlight the most expressive features of every detail of his work. This rapid, brushstroke-like technique, free of refinements and corrections, allows for a structural use of color that constructs form without relying on preliminary drawings to define the boundaries of the fields. Thanks to his bold execution, it's easy to follow the entire path of his brushstrokes, which intersect and overlap without blending, each with unerring coherence and constant functionality to Bernardo's innate sense of form, a summary that never yields to chance. If the painter's progressive evolution is easily recognizable in the style that characterizes his works throughout his early career, from the latter part of his third decade onwards, his manner has varied little. It is therefore not always easy to distinguish what was produced in the last years in Genoa from the work carried out in Venice, where Bernardo moved in 1633, to escape the persecution of the Capuchin friars who wanted to bring him back to convent life. In this painting, however, the architectural plinth in the background, an unusual element in Genoese works, when Bernardo depicted the figures against a dark background, completely devoid of accessory details, following the example of Caravaggio, seems to suggest that this work belongs to his later Venetian years.