



## French School, 18th Century, Portrait Of A Gentleman Holding His Hat, Oil



2 100 EUR

Period : 18th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Oil painting on paper

Width : 27

Height : 34

### Description

French School 18th Century Portrait of a gentleman holding his hat Oil on paper transferred on wood panel 34 x 27 cm In a beautiful vintage wood frame with some lacks in the mould, 44 x 39 cm On the back are two old labels. The first, probably handwritten in the 19th century, reads: 'Etude de F. Drouais pour le portrait de Lavoisier vers 1764, représenté dans son costume habituel et portant son chapeau sous le bras' (Study by F. Drouais for the portrait of Lavoisier c. 1764, depicted in his usual attire and carrying his hat under his arm). The other label, from a sales catalogue, reads 'Portrait presumed of Lavoisier'. Of course, the information on the back of the panel should be treated with caution. While the subject was likely a contemporary of Antoine Lavoisier (1743-1794), surviving portraits of this

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scientist do not resemble our gentleman.

Similarly, the mention of François Drouais (1727-1775) confirms that our painting dates from the second half of the 18th century. A more recent attribution has been suggested, which makes much more sense. One might consider Marianne Loir (1705-1783), a female portrait painter whose style and manner of depicting her subjects is very similar to that seen in this work. There is a great deal of gentleness in the way this gentleman is depicted, which evokes a feminine quality. The striking thing about this portrait is the lifelike effect, as if this man had been captured in the middle of a gallant conversation. It appears as if he has been caught in motion, turning towards the painter to speak to him. Another notable feature is the attention to detail in painting his coat and hat. Finally, the colour scheme is very appealing, with the contrast between the golden brown of the vest and the beautiful blue-green background. All of these features evoke the mastery and style that would be expected of a skilled artist of the time. More generally, it is this that gives meaning to these different attributions: this portrait is characteristic of the period corresponding to the reign of Louis XV, when models were depicted in a freer and much more natural manner. The fact that this gentleman is painted outdoors reflects this idea of freedom and naturalness.