



18th Century, Bergamo School Portrait Of Giuseppe Masalia, Organ Maker



4 800 EUR

Period : 18th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Oil painting

Width : 72

Height : 86

Description

18th century, Bergamo School Portrait of Giuseppe Masalia, organ maker, 1773 Oil on canvas, 86 x 72 cm The painting, dated March 1773, represents an exemplary testimony to the "painting of reality" of the Lombardy area, vigorously fitting into the naturalistic groove that made artistic production between Bergamo and Brescia famous. The work portrays Giuseppe Masalia at the age of seventy, as solemnly declared by the upper inscription: GIUSEPPE MASALIA FABRICATOR D'ORGANI AGED 70 MARCH 1773. The subject is captured with extreme dignity clutching an organ pipe, an iconographic attribute that ennobles his profession and defines his social and technical identity. Stylistically, the canvas stands as a tribute to the great tradition of Bergamo

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portraiture, which finds its ideal founder in Giovan Battista Moroni. Of the sixteenth-century master, the author of this canvas recovers his capacity for psychological introspection and descriptive honesty: as in Moroni's famous "portraits of a profession" (think of the famous Tailor), here too the sober clothing and neutral background serve to bring out the truth of the individual. There is no room for rhetorical idealization; instead, a formal rigor dominates, harking back to the concreteness of Giacomo Ceruti's faces (Pitocchetto) and the sensitivity of light in Fra' Galgario, key figures in understanding the evolution of the genre in 18th-century Lombardy. The figure of Giuseppe Masalia emerges as a prominent exponent of the prestigious Bergamo organ-building district. His specialization as a reed "manufacturer" required a rare synthesis of skills: from mastery of metallurgy (necessary for casting tin and lead alloys) to geometric and acoustic precision. At a time when Bergamo dominated the European scene with the Serassi and Bossi workshops, the Masalias operated as specialists of excellence, ensuring sound quality through a technique perfected over generations of workshop work.