



## Portrait Of An Aristocratic Gentleman In Armour C.1700; Jean Baptiste De Medina, Oil On Canvas



4 950 EUR

Signature : Atelier de Jean Baptiste de Médine (1659-1710)

Period : 17th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Oil painting

Width : 78

Height : 90

Depth : 5

### Description

Studio of John Baptiste de Medina (1659-1710) The sitter in this portrait, presented by Titan Fine Art, is shown with the grandiloquence characteristic of the English School of painting. The sophisticated gentleman is portrayed wearing an ingeniously embellished armour, a white cravat, and an abundance of cascading curls falling below his shoulders - his heroic visage and martial-like characterisation are suitably reflected in these costly items. This portrait proclaims to every onlooker that this man is both authoritative and important but such fine and ornate armour was not actually used on a battlefield and thus its portrayal here was largely symbolic. It is the archetypal bust-length portrait for a wealthy male during the last quarter of the seventeenth century and first quarter of the

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next. The subject is said to be the Scottish lawyer and commissioner to parliament, David Erskine, the 13th Laird of Dun. He was known for his considerable experience and distinguished piety. Born in 1672 near Montrose in Angus, he pursued his studies at the universities of St. Andrews and Paris. He became a member of the Faculty of Advocates in 1698 and quickly gained prominence. He represented Forfarshire at the Convention of Estates in 1689 and was also active in the parliaments of 1690, 1691, 1693, 1695, and 1696, where he opposed the Union. In November 1710, he assumed his position as an ordinary lord under the title of Lord Dun, and in 1714, he was appointed a Lord of Justiciary. Although a Jacobite at heart, he was incredibly influential in the Hanoverian regime. It is remarkable that Erskine kept his allegiances hidden, and this resulted in him keeping his life and his lands after 1745 when so many Scottish families were torn apart and stricken by the conflict. He died on May 26, 1758. The House of Dun was the family estate that had passed through generations of the Erskines. They had owned the estate for over 300 years before the sitter in our portrait commissioned William Adam to replace it in a show of wealth and influence in 1743. In 1980, the 21st and last Laird of Dun, died without an heir and left the house and contents to the National Trust of Scotland. The painter Sir John Baptiste de Medina was born in Brussels in 1659 to a Spanish officer stationed in the Netherlands. He began his career as an apprentice to François Duchatel before relocating to London around 1686 where he employed several assistants in his Drury Lane studio. Although he specialised in portraiture, Medina also illustrated an edition of *Paradise Lost*, which was published in 1688, and created various subject paintings. He counted several members of the Scottish aristocracy amongst his clients and in 1694 he was persuaded to visit Edinburgh to paint their wives and families, eventually settling there permanently. With virtually no competition in

Scotland, Medina was the most prominent Scottish portraitist for the rest of his life, charging £5 for a head and £10 for a half-length. Around 1700, William Aikman joined Medina's studio and likely assisted with a commission from the Royal College of Surgeons for a series of 29 member portraits between 1697 and 1708. After obtaining naturalisation, Medina was knighted. With his distinctive, informal baroque manner, he captured a generation of Scottish society and was knighted in 1706 by the last Scottish parliament before the Act of Union. He died in Edinburgh at approximately 51 years of age in 1710. The treatment of the hair, and most particularly, the armour, is adeptly painted with precision and shows the commensurate skill of the artist. Measurements: Height 90cm, Width 78cm framed (Height 35.5", Width 30.5" framed)