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Presumed Portrait Of Jules Frison (1796-1864), Student At The Imperial Lycée Of Brussels, Circa 1800



1 850 EUR

Period : 19th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Oil painting on wood

Description

Oil on wooden panel; carved and golden wooden frame of the period 35 × 27 cm (excluding frame); 52 × 44 cm (with frame) Note This portrait of a child in imperial school uniform is part of the visual culture disseminated in the territories administered by the French Empire at the beginning of the 19th century. Represented mid-length in front of a neutral brown background, the young model wears a red dress with a stand-up collar and golden buttons, inspired by the Napoleonic military codes adopted by imperial high schools. The economy of composition and the frontality of the gaze reflect a desire for moral sobriety and civic elevation characteristic of imperial educational iconography. The work is traditionally identified as representing Jules Frison (1796-1864). An old

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inscription on the back - "Jules Frison student of the Lycée Impérial de Bruxelles 1806-1808" - links the portrait to the period of formation of the model. Historical comment The representation of students in uniform in the former southern Netherlands remains relatively little documented compared to contemporary French production. This portrait is thus a significant testimony to the integration of local elites into the Napoleonic educational system. The image of a Belgian notable future still as a child reveals the continuity between imperial structures and the actors of national construction after 1830. In this context, the work goes beyond the simple family commemorative function to be part of an iconography of civic youth inherited from neoclassical ideals. Stylistic and technical analysis The pictorial treatment, characterized by a soft modeling of the face and a more synthetic execution of the costume, refers to a workshop production influenced by the French painting of the Consulate and the Empire. The narrow palette and uniform background correspond to a late neoclassical aesthetic widely spread in provincial or academic workshops. State of conservation The paint is preserved in a remarkable original condition, without visible retouching. The golden frame, contemporary of the work, contributes to the historical coherence of the whole and is an element rarely preserved for a portrait of a child from the First Empire. Bibliography Michel Vanwelkenhuyzen, Some moments in school life, *Studia Bruxellae*, 2023/1 (n°13), Museums and Archives of the City of Brussels, p. 53-106.