



Vincenzo Gemito (naples, 1852-1929), Bust Of A Philosopher



3 400 EUR

Period : 19th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Bronze

Height : 49

Description

Vincenzo Gemito (Naples, 1852 - 1929) Bust of a Philosopher Bronze, 49 cm high Signed:

GEMITO Vincenzo Gemito's *Bust of a

Philosopher* represents one of the pinnacles of

his portraiture: the work depicts a mature man,

captured in a moment of intense inner

concentration: his gaunt face, absorbed gaze, and

long, flowing beard create an image of great

psychological power, in which idealization gives

way to a penetrating exploration of the human

soul. The surface of the bronze is modeled with

an almost painterly sensitivity; light flows over

the strands of hair, the folds of the beard, and the

facial features, bringing the material to life with

remarkably natural effects. While evoking figures

from the classical tradition, the subject does not

appear as an abstract type, but as a real presence,

Dealer

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captured in his individuality and intense emotional depth. Vincenzo Gemito was born in Naples in 1852 to unknown parents who left him at the Pia Casa dell'Annunziata. He was taken in by Giuseppina Baratta and, even as a child, showed a precocious talent for drawing and modeling. At the age of nine, he entered the studio of Emmanuele Caggiano, where he began copying plaster models, and later continued his training under Stanislao Lista. An independent spirit who resented academic rules, he soon chose to work independently, sharing a studio with his friend Antonio Mancini. As early as 1868, he received significant recognition for **The Gladiator**, which was purchased by the king. Between 1873 and 1880, he enjoyed a period of extraordinary success, founding his own foundry, creating famous portraits, and staying in Paris, where he cemented his international reputation. In 1881, partly following the death of Matilde Duffaud, he returned to Naples, finding solace in Anna Cutolo, his favorite model, and in his work. From this Neapolitan period come **Carmela**, **Zingara Maria**, **Narciso**, the world-famous **Acquaiolo**, and **Il Filosofo**, with which he won first prize at the International Exposition in Paris. The subject of the philosopher accompanied Gemito for several years and underwent various interpretations, including those now housed at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston and at Palazzo Zevallos in Naples. An interesting comparison can also be made with the painting depicting the same figure in profile, now in the collection of the Fondazione Cariplo, where the psychological exploration is conveyed through color and brushwork rather than sculptural modeling. The rendering of the bronze surface also recalls the Portrait of Mariano Fortuny housed at Palazzo Zevallos, in which the material seems to come to life through a free and energetic technique. A similar attention to natural detail emerges in the **Bust of a Fisherman** at the National Gallery in London, although there a youthful freshness prevails, whereas in **The Philosopher** a

meditative solemnity dominates. The *Bust of Amedeo of Savoy*, now in a private collection, also shares this ability to blend physiognomic accuracy with expressive intensity. In all these works, Gemito demonstrates a profoundly modern conception of sculpture, capable of combining the legacy of tradition with a direct and engaged observation of reality.