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Antonio Zanchi (este, 1631 - Venice, 1722), Study Of A Male Face



2 600 EUR

Period : 17th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Oil painting

Width : 22

Height : 27,5

Description

Antonio Zanchi (Este, 1631 - Venice, 1722) Study of a Male Face Oil on canvas, 27.5 x 22 cm Frame 36 x 30.2 cm The second half of the 17th century in Venice saw a contrast between the so-called "Tenebrosi" and "Chiaristi": the former were advocates of Tintoretto-style chiaroscuro shading, while the latter championed greater tonal clarity. The dramatic use of color that the Tenebrosi--whose style was epitomized by the painting of Luca Giordano--employed as a defining feature of their pictorial language was also shaped by its adoption by visiting artists working in the city. Thus Giovan Battista Langetti, for example, who had been influenced by Ribera's teachings, secured the commission for the altarpiece of the Venetian church of the Terese, blending the master's shadow-laden

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stylistic elements--evoking Caravaggio--with those of the indomitable Tintoretto. Antonio Zanchi worked in a similar vein, pursuing the aesthetic of the "fraglia tenebrosa" (the "dark brotherhood") while distinguishing himself through his highly personal, calligraphic treatment of color. Having become acquainted with the painting of Tintoretto (1518-1594), he was able to appreciate his influence by participating in the decoration of the Scuola Grande di San Rocco, where the master had been engaged in creating his most famous cycle depicting episodes from the Old and New Testaments: There, Zanchi created two extraordinary canvases separated by an architectural pilaster (The Virgin Appears to the Plague Victims), placed on either side of the Grand Staircase, alongside works by Pietro Negri and Giovanni Antonio Fumiani. This commission led the artist to showcase his talent in numerous Venetian churches: notable examples include the three canvases depicting the Stories of the Virgin on the ceiling of Santa Maria del Giglio (1690-1696), as well as the decoration of the Church of the Blessed Virgin of Health (1700-1709). In the Bergamo area, then part of the Venetian Republic's territories, Zanchi left behind a painting of Moses Bringing Forth Water for the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore; at the same time, he established relationships with numerous Bavarian princes. This painting depicts an evocative, close-up portrait of a man's head. It is possible to hypothesize that the work was conceived as a sketch for a subsequent, larger canvas featuring multiple figures, or that it is a standalone study of a typified male figure intended to figuratively convey an evocative state of mind. The painting can be compared to other works by the artist characterized by the same chiaroscuro contrast, in which the vividness of the colors is counterbalanced by the evocative bewilderment of the portrayed figures. Of particular note are *Joseph Interpreting the Pharaoh's Dreams* (private collection and Wawel

Castle Collection, Kraków) and *Abraham Teaching Astrology to the Egyptians* (Church of Santa Maria del Giglio, Venice). The same realism, evident in the expressive grimace of intense engagement, can be seen in *The Death of Socrates* and *The Death of King Josiah* (private collections), as well as in the exceptional *Sisyphus* (The Mauritshuis, The Hague). In the paintings *Tomiris with the Head of Cyrus* (Ceschina Collection, Venice) and *Abraham and Isaac* (private collection), on the other hand, the same taut anatomical rendering is evident, with a strong light that sets the surfaces ablaze.