



Didier Barra Messina And The Port: A "bird's-eye View" By The Franco-flemish Painter, C. 1630.

15 000 EUR



Period : 17th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Oil painting

Width : 120 cm

Height : cm.77

Description

Painting depicting the city of Messina from a bird's-eye view, along with its harbor. The layout of the harbor bears a direct resemblance to a 16th-century painting depicting the harbor of Messina by Pieter Bruegel the Elder, in which the outer end of the harbor terminates, as in this painting, with a tower. A modification was later introduced to create a protruding arm-like structure, to further enclose and protect the harbor--a feature we find depicted in engravings from the first half of the 17th century. The painting, executed in two-tone shades of green and brown and their variations, rendered in a quick, non-meticulous manner, leads us to attribute the work to a Franco-Flemish master active in Rome and Naples, and likely also in Messina and Sicily. The kings of Spain loved to

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display their distant possessions to their court, and these rare bird's-eye-view depictions represent extremely rare historical documents, which have now become true toponymic "archeology." This work, dating to the first half of the 17th century, appears to be painted in the style of Didier Barra (1590-1652) and François de Nomè, known as "Monsù Desiderio" (1593-1624), both from Lorraine and friends, from the city of Metz, among whom there is still some uncertainty today regarding the attribution of authorship with certainty, even though the early 17th-century painter who most enjoyed painting seascapes of ports is Didier Barra. It would be decisive to establish the painting's date with certainty, since if it were found to have been created after 1624--the year of Monsù Desiderio, the attribution to Didier Barra would be undisputed, as he preferred to depict bird's-eye-view portraits of ports, of which we have a vast collection.