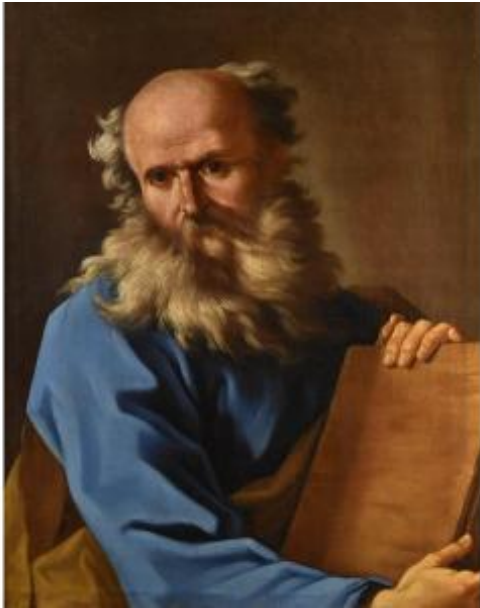




## Portrait Of The Philosopher Democritus, By Giovanni Battista Beinaschi (fossano, 1634 - Naples, 1688)



5 900 EUR

Signature : Giovanni Battista Beinaschi (Fossano vers 1634 - Naples 1688)

Period : 17th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Oil painting

Width : encadré 75 cm.

Height : encadré 95 cm.

### Description

Giovanni Battista Beinaschi (Fossano, c. 1634 - Naples, 1688) Portrait of the philosopher Democritus (holding a book with a white cover) Oil on canvas (82 x 64 cm - Framed 95 x 75 cm.) Details of the painting ([click HERE](#)) The painting depicts a striking image of the Greek philosopher Democritus, portrayed as a mature man holding a book--a symbol of a life devoted to study--and is presented here as a pendant to the portrait of the philosopher Heraclitus (see photo in the details). This type of subject matter, dedicated to the great philosophers or scholars of antiquity, was very popular in the figurative tradition and among collectors of the 17th century: in our case, we have one of the two central figures of pre-Socratic philosophical thought, often paired due to their opposing yet

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complementary views of the human condition. If we examine the iconography of the two philosophers, Heraclitus and Democritus, in detail, the portrait presented here follows the tradition that generally contrasts the brooding and contemplative nature of the former with the more open and detached attitude of the latter toward the ever-changing world. This contrasting attitude toward reality and the human condition has made them symbolic figures in philosophy and a favorite subject of various artists, especially during the Baroque era, due to their strong symbolic value and their implications for the interpretation of the human condition (1). In this particular painting, Democritus--"the atomist philosopher"--casts a fixed and detached gaze at the viewer, which represents his view of life. According to his philosophy, in fact, all of reality is merely a meaningless dance of atoms, and it is therefore futile to strive to find meaning in existence. There is no need to agonize over the absurdity of the world; rather, one should distance oneself from passions and approach them with lightheartedness. The viewer is captivated by the enigmatic nature of his expression, and the book with the white cover that the philosopher holds in his hand becomes a symbol of this. As for the style of the work in question, the scholar is depicted with a deeply dramatic composition in a vigorous, Baroque style, featuring striking facial features. Backlighting effects and a magical chiaroscuro atmosphere lend dynamism to the figure, who is turned toward a light source that gently illuminates his face. By examining the characteristics and relevant details, we can attribute the work to the late-Baroque painter Giovan Battista Tiepolo (1696-1768), whose prolific career was centered between Rome--where he received his training--and Naples. Nevertheless, he traveled frequently throughout his career between Turin, Parma, perhaps Bologna, and Genoa, absorbing diverse artistic influences from each place. Although he

initially showed a penchant for Roman classicism, this influence was soon supplanted by an increasingly pronounced shift toward the Baroque cultural movement.(1) We can find many examples of this interesting iconography in art, such as in Hendrick ter Brugghen's "Heraclitus and Democritus" (1619, owned by Christie's, London, [https://www.christies.com/en/lot/lot-6298681?ldp\\_breadcrumb=back](https://www.christies.com/en/lot/lot-6298681?ldp_breadcrumb=back)), or in Gregorio Preti's work on the same subject (<https://mattia-preti.it/279-eraclito-e-democrito/>).

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:The work is sold complete with a gilded wooden frame and comes with a certificate of authenticity and a descriptive iconographic sheet.We arrange and organize the shipping of purchased works, both within Italy and internationally, using professional and insured carriers. It is also possible to view the painting at our gallery in Riva del Garda; we would be delighted to welcome you and show you our collection of works.Please feel free to contact us, with no obligation, for any additional information.Follow us on:INSTAGRAM <https://www.instagram.com/galleriacastelbarco/?hl=it>FACEBOOK <https://www.facebook.com/galleriacastelbarco/>