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Bottega Degli Spadino, Still Life With Fruit, Pumpkin, And Monkey

6 000 EUR



Period : 17th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Oil painting

Width : 73

Height : 55

Description

Spadino Workshop (Rome, late 17th century - early 18th century) Still Life with Fruit, a Pumpkin, and a Monkey Oil on canvas, 55 x 73 cm With frame, 64 x 81 cm The canvas in question represents a significant example of Roman Baroque still life from the turn of the 17th and 18th centuries, a period of peak popularity for this decorative genre intended for the art collections of the Roman aristocracy. The work can be attributed to the renowned Castelli family, known as the Spadinos. The composition is structured around a dense pyramid of vegetation that emerges with sculptural force from a dark background, clearly influenced by Caravaggio. The painting technique reveals the "style" typical of the Spadinos, characterized by a dense, textured brushstroke capable of rendering the

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surface texture of the fruits: note the rendering of the split figs, the bluish glazes on the skins of the plums, and, above all, the masterful depiction of the grape clusters, whose berries are defined by small touches of pure light that simulate their transparency and plumpness. The lighting, which strikes the scene from the side, not only shapes the volumes but also accentuates the dramatic contrast between the brightness of the fruit and the density of the surrounding shadows. The inclusion, on the left, of a primate--probably a macaque--adds a lively, narrative element to the composition. The animal, rendered with a more feathered brushstroke to depict its fur, serves as a link between the viewer and the inanimate object, in keeping with a taste for the exotic and the anecdotal that was widespread in Roman Baroque art. The painting finds clear parallels in several authentic works by Giovanni Paolo Castelli, specifically the compositions preserved at the Galleria Spada in Rome, where Castelli explores the theme of autumn fruit with the same attention to microscopic detail. Although the quality of the execution strongly points to the hand of the master, the involvement of the workshop--in particular his son Bartolomeo Castelli the Younger--cannot be ruled out. The latter inherited his father's repertoire, maintaining the same use of light while at times simplifying the formal solutions. In this canvas, however, the skillful handling of whites and the rendering of glass-like transparencies indicate a very high level of quality, worthy of Giovanni Paolo's mature period. The work thus stands as a valuable document of Roman collecting tastes, bearing witness to the Spadino family's ability to synthesize Nordic naturalistic rigor with Italian scenic exuberance.