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Giovanni Bernardo Carbone (genoa, 1616-1683), Portrait Of A Gentleman, Ca. 1650



9 000 EUR

Period : 17th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Oil painting

Width : 94,5

Height : 121

Description

Giovanni Bernardo Carbone (Genoa, 1616 - 1683) Portrait of a Gentleman, ca. 1650 Oil on canvas, 121 x 94.5 cm - with frame, 144 x 119 cm Critical analysis by Prof. Giacomo Montanari "...with his beautiful portraits, however, he even leads connoisseurs astray into mistaking them for works by Van Dyck": thus Carlo Giuseppe Ratti described, in his **Vite de' pittori, scultori, ed architetti genovesi** (1768), the portrait painting of Giovanni Bernardo Carbone, a master highly regarded even by his contemporaries. The artist trained in the workshop of Giovanni Andrea De Ferrari during the 1630s, a period in which the Genoese figurative art scene was marked by intense external influences and vibrant processes of cultural exchange. In particular, the Flemish

Dealer

Ars Antiqua srl

Antiquaire généraliste

Tel : +39 02 29529057

Via C. Pisacane, 55 - 57

Milano 20129

influence--fueled by the presence of eminent figures such as Rubens (in Genoa during the first decade of the 17th century) and, later, Van Dyck, as well as by an established community of Dutch painters, offered expressive models grounded in a refined and opulent naturalism, capable of satisfying the demands of aristocratic patrons eager for images that would reaffirm their social prestige. In this context, Carbone was able to assimilate and rework with intelligence--and at times with shrewd skill--the teachings of De Ferrari and Domenico Fiasella, along with influences drawn from Van Dyck and Jan Roos, as well as the stylistic contributions of Valerio Castello and Domenico Piola. The portrait genre thus enjoyed considerable popularity, and Carbone established himself as one of the most sought-after painters, distinguishing himself through his ability to adapt the Van Dyck style to the expectations of the most modern Genoese nobility. The painting depicts an unidentified aristocrat, captured in the act of turning his head and gaze to the left, as if suddenly distracted by the entrance of a figure into the scene. Emerging vividly from the dark background are the red drape--which occupies the right side of the scene and echoes typical Van Dyck techniques--and the vibrant tablecloth spread across the small table. The figure's left hand rests on the tablecloth, while his right hand hangs in midair. His attire features elegant slit sleeves, complemented by white cuffs and a white collar, fastened at the neck by a small ornament hanging over his chest. The face, which suggests an age of no more than thirty, has a lively, slightly flushed complexion, accentuated by full, deep-red lips pressed together in a composed and impassive expression. The work reflects the formal characteristics of Genoese portraiture that developed beginning in the late 1620s, derived largely from the example of Van Dyck, who was active in Genoa between 1621 and 1627, and shared by other Flemish painters such as Jan Roos and Jan Hovaert, who were active in the same circle in subsequent

years. Beyond these influences, however, the painting clearly reveals the hand of an artist with a solid Genoese training, such as Carbone. His distinctive style emerges in the vibrant, restless brushwork that defines and illuminates the textile surfaces, as well as in the fleshy and lifelike rendering of the hands and face. The red tones of the drapery find a precise counterpart in the Virgin's robe in the *Madonna with the Sleeping Child* housed at the Strada Nuova Museums in Genoa. Similarly, the attention to skin tones and the everyday, concrete rendering of lips, hands, and gazes are found in the Portrait of Lucrezia Pallavicino, painted around 1658 on the occasion of her marriage to Giovanni Giacomo Brignole, which serves as a terminus ante quem for dating the canvas. By the very end of the 1550s, Carbone had become fully independent and capable of imprinting a strong personal style on his works, without, however, renouncing his Van Dyckian heritage. The painting under consideration can be placed in an early phase of this process, around 1650, when it was still firmly rooted in the compositional schemes and technical characteristics that had so decisively defined Genoese portraiture.