Antoine Bronzi - Portrait Of A Second Empire Officer - Oil On Canvas - Signed And Dated 1861



1 200 EUR

Signature : BRONZI Antoine (1814 - 1895, France)

Period : 19th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Oil painting

Width : 48 cm, 58 cm encadrée

Height : 60 cm, 70 cm encadrée

Description

Antoine BRONZI (1814-1895)Portrait of an officer of the Second Empire, decorated with the Legion of Honor, 1861Oil on canvas, oval formatSigned "Bronzi" on the right, vertically near the epaulet, and dated 1861 below59 x 48 cm - 70 x 58 cm with frameVery good condition, original canvas on its oval key-frameWood and gilded stucco frame, late 19th century, in very good conditionA white five-pointed cross, a wide red ribbon, and then a whole row of medals: this is where the eye begins. This soldier is a Knight of the Legion of Honor, and he wears several commemorative medals alongside it. In 1861, France had emerged from the Crimean War (1854-1856) and the Italian Campaign (1859). These decorations most likely reflect those years of military service.The collar of the tunic is

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embroidered with gold leaf. This detail distinguishes him from a mere line officer: it indicates an officer of a specific corps, most likely the general staff. His tunic is midnight blue, almost black, with a double row of gold buttons and gold epaulets. During the Second Empire, posing in full dress uniform before a painter was almost a rite of passage for an officer. The portrait marked a promotion, a decoration, or a return from the campaign, and was then displayed in the family parlor.The face reveals more than the uniform. The man is in his fifties, with a high forehead and a graying mustache. His eyelids are heavy, his gaze somewhat weary, and a faint smile softens his features. Bronzi does not seek to portray him as a static hero. He paints an experienced, self-assured man, without any stiffness.The olive-green background, rendered in loose brushstrokes, brings out the complexion and the gold of the collar. The artist has discreetly placed his signature vertically, right next to the epaulet.The oval frame is worthy of the subject: a garland of oak and laurel leaves, tied with ribbons, surrounds a thin row of pearls. The oak and laurel are symbols of strength and glory, which are perfectly suited to this military portrait.ConditionVery good condition. Original canvas, not re-stretched, on its oval key-frame. A few old stains on the reverse of the canvas, which do not affect the painted surface. Late 19th-century wooden frame with gilded stucco, in very good condition.The ArtistAntoine Bronzi (1814-1895) was a French painter whose life remains poorly documented. His known body of work consists mainly of southern landscapes and Orientalist scenes. This portrait of an officer is a rare piece in his oeuvre.Work on view at the gallery (07240)Shipping: Please contact us for shipping rates within France and internationally.