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Portrait Of William Chiffinch - John Riley (1646-1691)



11 400 EUR

Signature : John Riley (1646-1691)

Period : 17th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Oil painting

Width : 63.5cm

Height : 76cm

Description

Another version of this can be found in the Dulwich Picture Gallery LondonChiffinch followed his older brother, Thomas, into service as a royal servant and was a page of the backstairs to Queen Catherine of Braganza in 1662. He succeeded to most of his brother's court offices upon Thomas' death in 1666, including being appointed Surveyor of the King's Pictures, page of the bedchamber and Keeper of the Privy Closet. Chiffinch became indispensable to Charles II and was known for his mastery of intrigue; he handled the payments to the king from France under the Secret Treaty of Dover. His nefarious practices were mentioned in printed libels of the day such as "Sir Edmonbury Godfrey's Ghost1, 1678:It happened, in the twilight of the day,As England's monarch in his

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closet lay,And Chiffinch stepp'd to fetch the female prey.The sitter was page to Charles II's bedchamber and keeper of the private closet. Delighting in intrigue of every kind, and gaining the confidence of courtiers and mistresses, Chiffinch was at the centre of the court's dissolute activities. His roles included smuggling in undesirables and mistresses, accepting bribes on behalf of the King and receiving the secret pension paid by the court of Louis XVI. As the King's go-between he was known to all in the royal circle, including Pepys, with whom he sometimes held backstairs revels over wines and pickled herring or cold chickens. (Diary.)He married Barbara Nunn, and his only daughter married Edmund Villiers, 1st Earl of Jersey. He was MP for Windsor 1685-87.John RileyJohn Riley began practising painting at a young age, which probably meant he was independently wealthy. Riley trained with the German portrait painter, Gilbert Soest (1605-81), and the English artist, Isaac Fuller (?1606-72); one of his earliest portraits is of William Chiffinch.He became a fashionable society portrait painter and the leading portraitist of his day alongside Kneller. At the height of his success, in the 1680s, afterthe death of Lely, Riley charged £40 for a full-length portrait, a considerable amount of money at this time. In 1689, together with Godfrey Kneller, he was appointed Painter and Picture Drawer in Ordinary to King William III and Queen Mary, though there are no known portraits by him of either as sovereign.