



**PROANTIC**  
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## Old Master Drawing Filippo Pedrini (bologna 1763 - 1856) Academy Study Of A Male Nude



2 750 EUR

Period : 19th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Paper

Description
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Pier Leone Ghezzi (Communanza 1674 - 1755  
Rome)

Caricature of Monsieur Jean François de Gervasy

Black chalk, pen and brown ink, 261 x 182 mm  
(10.2 x 7.2 inch); laid down onto a sheet washed  
light blue and with framing lines in brown ink

Cut-out inscription 'M. Gervasi' laid down onto  
the mounting sheet, which is further numbered  
'45' (brown ink, top right), and inscribed 'Ghezzi'  
(pencil, lower right)

Provenance

Lamberto Vitali (1896-1992)

Dealer
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Ghezzi was the godson of Carlo Maratta, and was trained by his father, Giuseppe Ghezzi (1634-1721), who was a secretary to the Roman Accademia di San Luca. Pier Leone himself joined the Accademia in 1705, and painted an Allegory of Gratitude as his submission picture. He executed frescoes in the Villa Falconieri at Frascati, but is much better known today for his amusing and characterful caricature portrait drawings, which take many of Rome's artistic and intellectual community as their subjects. Among his sitters were Vivaldi, Pergolesi, Locatelli and many others.

Ghezzi was a prolific draftsman and many of his caricatures were given away or sold by him during his lifetime. Many caricatures were bound in albums, and when the artist died several albums of caricatures remained in the possession of his wife. In 1755, the director of the French Academy in Rome wrote to the Marquis de Marigny that Ghezzi's widow was unwilling to break up the albums and was asking two sequins for each caricature.<sup>1</sup> A near-intact album with 47 full-page portraits and 64 portrait busts is preserved in the Pierpont Morgan Library, New York.<sup>2</sup> The Morgan album is dated 1780 and was apparently only assembled then, twenty-five years after the artist's death. Another large collection of caricatures by Ghezzi is in the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Rome.

This well-preserved and strong drawing depicts Jean François de Gervasy, who was drawn by Ghezzi on at least two other occasions. All that is known about the sitter comes from an inscription on a drawing in the Codice Ottoboniano, 'Monsieur Gervasi Medico Francese e lo condusse con se' il V. Cardinal di Rovian [Rohan] nel Conclave di Innocenzo XIII et io Cav. Ghezzi lo feci per mia memoria il di 16 Luglio 1724.'<sup>3</sup> Gervasy was physician to

Armand-Gaston-Maximilien de Rohan (1674-1749), elected cardinal in 1712. Rohan participated in the conclave of 1721, electing Pope Innocent XIII, and again in the conclave of 1724, which elected Pope Benedict XIII. In 1725 he blessed the wedding of King Louis XV.<sup>4</sup> Another caricature of Gervasy, holding medical utensils, was included in an album of caricatures formerly in the Braybrooke collection (see last fig.).<sup>5</sup> Our drawing is likely to have been executed in 1721 or 1724, at the occasion of one of the conclaves.

The present drawing was previously owned by the scholar and collector Lamberto Vitali, whose collection included the '300 Dollar Leonardo', which the collector bought in a sale in Milan in 1982, and which is now in the Pinacoteca di Brera, Milan, along with other drawings from his collection.<sup>6</sup>

1. Jacob Bean and William Griswold, 18th Century Italian Drawings in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York 1990, p. 83.

2. Nineteenth Report to the Fellows ... 1978-1980, New York 1981, p. 194.

3. 'Monsieur Gervasi, French medic came with the Cardinal Rohan to the Conclave of Innocent XIII and I, Cavaliere Ghezzi made this from my memory on 16 July 1724'; Codice Ottoboniano Latino 3115 (containing 202 caricatures, executed between 1724 and 1727), Vatican Library, Rome, no. 126; see Maria Cristina Dorati da Empoli, Pier Leone Ghezzi. Un protagonista del Settecento romano, Rome 2008, pp. 218 and 344.

4. See André and Fernand Combaluzier, *Épiscopologie française des temps modernes*, 1592-1973, Paris 1974, pp. 471-72.

5. Pen and brown ink, 321 x 223 mm; the album was dispersed at Sotheby's, London, 10 December 1979, lot 131, repr.

6. Carmen Bambach (ed.), Leonardo Da Vinci Master Draftsman, exh. cat. New York (Metropolitan Museum) 2003, pp. 91-92.