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Auction	Fine Art
Date	19.11.2020, ca. 14:33
Preview	13.11.2020 - 10:00:00 bis 16.11.2020 - 18:00:00

VIGNALI, JACOPO
1592 Pratovecchio - 1664 Florence

Title: St. Francis of Assisi in Meditation.
Technique: Oil on canvas.
Measurement: 71 x 56cm.
Frame/Pedestal: Framed.
Certificate:
P. Benassai, Florenz, am 04.09.2020, available as a copy.

Provenance:
Private ownership, Switzerland.

In the foreground of the painting is St. Francis of Assisi with the hood of the religious garment on his back. In his hands he holds a small cross and looks at a human skull resting on a rock in front of him. Behind him is the undergrowth of a forest, while on the right side a hilly landscape can be seen, from which the head of the saint and the cross stand out clearly. The sublimity of the carefully modeled male head and the mystical expression characterize this work. This allows us to locate the author within the Florentine school of 17th century painting, which stands out, especially in the first half of the century, for the almost constant graphic basis of its works and for a peculiar inclination to devote feelings, both religious - as in the present painting - and earthly. This tendency can be traced back to artists between the last decades of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the following century, such as Gregorio Pagani and above all Ludovico Cardi, known as Cigoli, whose works were a source of inspiration for most of the artists settled on the banks of the Arno.

The clear emphasis on the contrast between light and dark and the use of colour accents on the ear, cheek and right hand to animate the figure, but above all to heighten its emotional state, are the hallmarks of the painter Jacopo Vignali. After visiting the workshop of Matteo Rosselli in Florence between the first and second decade of the 17th century, Vignali went to Rome in 1625. There he expanded his knowledge by encountering the works of Caravaggio and his circle, but also of Rubens and the young Guercino, whom he probably remembered when he began to adopt his characteristic coloured shadows (see here the lips). There are numerous comparisons of the present canvas with paintings that Vignali painted between the third and fourth decade: The meditative head of the saint is reflected in the

painting with Tobias and the Angel (Florence, Museo di San Marco, 1622) and in that of Christ in the "Vision of Saint Bernard" (Florence, San Simone, 1623), and also shows similarities with other works by the artist, including the protagonist of the contemporary "Cyparis" (Strasbourg, Musée de la Ville; the representation of the dense forest is also similar).

The majesty of the skull and the bravura with which it was painted are reminiscent of Rubens, the initiator of a painting style that developed rapidly and lived on colour. He was active in Italy in the first decade of the 17th century, but kept his legacy alive there by continuing to send works, among which the large canvas of the aftermath of the war, which reached Florence in 1638 (Florence, Galleria Palatina), played an important role.

We are grateful to Paolo Benassai, Florence, who confirmed the attribution of the present painting based on a high-resolution digital photograph.

Estimate: 8.000 € - 10.000 €
