

Lot 911



Auction	Fine Art
Date	02.06.2021, ca. 14:07
Preview	27.05.2021 - 10:00:00 bis 30.05.2021 - 18:00:00

RUSSIAN COURT PAINTER
18th C.

Title: Portrait of Dmitry Mikhailovich Golitsyn the Younger.
Technique: Oil on canvas.
Mounting: Relined.
Measurement: 101 x 80cm.
Notation: Signed and dated left on the globe: Paint Par A Pain [?] 1777.
Frame/Pedestal: Framed.

Provenance:
Private ownership, Germany.

In contrast to the other two paintings from the same collection, the present portrait is not mentioned in the "Verzeichniss der gräflich von Eckartschen Malereiensammlung zu dem 2. Fideicomiß auf Leonberg" of 24 July 1826.

Prince Dmitri Mikhailovich Golitsyn or Gallitzin (Abo 1721 - 1793 Vienna) was a diplomat, philanthropist and prominent Russian art collector from the Golitsyn family.

In the late 1750s he resided in Paris, where he headed the Russian embassy during the Seven Years' War. Towards the end of his tenure, he commissioned the famous French portrait painter François-Hubert Drouais (Paris 1727 - 1775), the favourite painter of Louis XV and his mistresses, to paint his own portrait, which was completed in 1762 and is now in the Pushkin Museum in Moscow. In Drouais' portrait, the Prince is shown in three-quarter view, sitting in an armchair and resting his right arm on a small table. In his hand he holds a letter, while behind him is a small globe on which the artist has placed his signature and the date of execution.

The present painting was painted fifteen years later, in 1777, as can be read on the wooden strip supporting the globe: "Peint par A Pain [?] 1777". Prince Golitsyn was then in Vienna as Russian ambassador, where he was held in high esteem by Empress Catherine I, who awarded him the Imperial Order of St Andrew the Apostle for negotiating the first partition of Poland with Emperor Joseph II of Habsburg (1772). In 1777, therefore, this "updated version" of Drouais' portrait was created, which is very similar to the painting by the French painter, although in contrast to the first version, the Russian prince wears the blue ribbon of the Order of St Andrew in the present depiction.

But who is the artist who created this second version? No French painters are known who can be directly associated with the name "Pain". Jean-Jacques Petit proposes the hypothesis that the creator of the second portrait was a non-

French artist who, inspired by the first painting, updated the inscription on the globe by removing the name of the creator of the previous version, namely Drouais. However, since he knew French poorly, he may have written "pain" in imitation of "peint", meaning "painted". Probably the letter "A" preceding this word is the initial of his surname. It could therefore be Ivan Petrovich Argunov (Moscow 1729 - 1802), an outstanding portrait painter from the time of Catherine II. However, as there is no further evidence for this attribution, it is more correct to attribute this portrait to a Russian painter from the time of Catherine II.

We are grateful to Jean-Jacques Petit and Laurent Hugues, Paris, for suggesting the attribution of the present painting on the basis of a high-resolution digital photograph.

Estimate: 10.000 € - 20.000 €
