THE LIMNER COMPANY



FRANCISZEK SMIADECKI

Portrait of a Gentleman, wearing black coat and white lawn collar with tassels

Circa: late 17th century

Oil on metal

Oval, 46mm (1.8 in) high

Later silver frame with spiral cresting

Very little is known about Franciszek Smiadecki, who was born in either Poland or Russia. He is thought to have been tutored by Alexander Cooper (1609-1660) in Sweden and worked primarily in oils on copper or vellum. The work of Smiadecki has only really gained deserved recognition in the last fifty years, and like many other portrait miniaturists working in oils, he did not always sign his work, making the possibility for the study of his *oeuvre* limited.

His characteristic style, with the sitter's features heavily defined, has aided the identification of this example. Another two, both of King Charles II, sold by Philip Mould & Co., were datable to circa 1670-75, based on the appearance of the king, which related most closely to oil portraits by Sir Peter Lely (1618-80) of this date.

Like the present example, however, most portraits by Smiadecki do not reply on large portraits and appear to have been painted *ad vivum*. It is possible that Smiadecki can be more convincingly associated with the circles of draughtsmen and engravers than with the court oil painters of the period.