THE LIMNER COMPANY



CAREL DE MOOR (II) (1655 - 1738)

Portrait of a Young Gentleman with Blonde Hair, wearing deep blue cloak over a shirt with a lace collar

Circa: circa 1675

circa 1675

Oil on copper

Oval, 83 mm (3 $^{1}/_{4}$ in) high

Later ebonised recutangulatr wood frame with gilded border

Despite the skill of the artists painting oil portraits on a miniature scale in the second half of the 17th century, few of them signed their work. Consequently, attributions can be challenging, however, this late 17th-century Dutch portrait shows the influence of Carel de Moor (1655–1738), particularly his early small-scale and oval works produced in Leiden. See for example, de Moor's Self-Portrait (c. 1675–1680) in the Rijksmuseum (fig.1).[1]

De Moor trained under Gerrit Dou, Frans van Mieris, and Godfried Schalcken and excelled at small-format portraits (often oil on copper as here), painting with blended brushwork and meticulous attention to textures. Here, the luminous, deep blue velvet cloak can be compared to De Moor's treatment of rich fabrics and the fashionable attire from the 1670s and 1680s when he was painting his own youthful elegance.

In the early stages of his career, de Moor was working very much in the tradition of the Leiden fijnschilders ("fine painters"). Born in Leiden, he was the son of an art dealer and frame maker (Carel de Moor (I)). According to Arnold Houbraken, he initially studied in Leiden with Gerrit Dou (1613-1675),

before a period in Amsterdam with Abraham van den Tempel (c.1622-1672). He then returned to Leiden to study with Frans van Mieris the Elder (1635-1681), before completing his training under Godfried Schalcken (1643-1706) in Dordrecht.

De Moor joined the Leiden Guild of St. Luke in 1683, and eleven years later, together with Willem van Mieris (1662-1747) and Jacob van Toorenvliet (1640-1719), founded the Leidse Tekenacademie, where artists could draw from live models. His focus on portraiture, and his reputation in this area, introduced him to European courts. Charles VI, The Holy Roman Emperor (1685-1740), knighted de Moor in 1714, and he is also thought to have been patronised by Peter the Great of Russia (1672-1725). He also completed a self-portrait for Cosimo III de' Medici's gallery in Florence; a double portrait of Prince Eugene of Savoy and one of the Duke of Marlborough, commissioned through Count Philipp Ludwig Wenzel von Sinzendorf.[2]

Over time, his style loosened - particularly after he was appointed headman of the Guild of St. Luke for the first time in 1688. By this stage, de Moor's technique had started to become slightly freer and looser than many of his Leiden contemporaries, a development that culminated in the late, painterly self-portrait of 1703.[3]

[1] The Rijksmuseum object number for Carel de Moor's oil-on-panel Self-Portrait (c. 1675–1680) is SK-A-1746.

[2] The catalogue raisonné, 'Carel de Moor (1655–1738), His Life and Work' by Pamela Fowler and Piet Bakker (Primavera Pers, 2024), shows that eighty-four of the 118 accepted paintings are portraits.

[3] Held in the collection of Museum De Lakenhal in Leiden (inventory number S 4526).