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Auction Fine Art

Date 19.05.2022, ca. 11:07

Preview 13.05.2022 - 10:00:00 bis
16.05.2022 - 18:00:00

SPERA, CLEMENTE
1662 Novara (?) - 1742 Milan

Title: Christ Appears to St Peter.
Date: ca. 1705-1710.
Technique: Oil on canvas.
Mounting: Relined.
Measurement: 73 x 73cm.
Frame/Pedestal: Framed.
Provenance:
Private ownership, Germany.

Clemente Spera was probably born in Novara, where he received his training from the quadrature painter Pietro Francesco Prina. In 1690, he settled with his wife and numerous children in Milan, where he lived until his death. In the lively Milanese milieu of "specialized" painters, Spera was known as a "ruinist" who devoted himself to the pictorial representation of classical architectural ruins and often collaborated with the Genoese Alessandro Magnasco, also active in Milan, and other painters.

The two works at hand are considered to be well-done results of Spera and Magnasco's collaboration, highly appreciated by collectors and described and praised in art historical sources. In such works, Magnasco's interventions (objects hanging from columns, statues in niches, figures peering out from ruins) blend harmoniously with Spera's architecture, forming a balanced whole with it.

Spera's clients included several Milanese noble families: due to the decorative character of his often large-scale works, they were suitable for decorating the walls of aristocratic residences. Pairs of large and small paintings were often made, in which the architectures are arranged in mirror image, betraying Spera's unified planning.

The two works reveal the artist's distinctive language: majestic classical ruins are outlined with precise perspective and an abundance of decorative detail, enlivened by soft, gentle brushwork. The incidence of light on the details of crumbling walls, arches, broken lintels overgrown by vegetation reveals in Spera a particular sensitivity to the poetics of ruins, anticipating the taste of the second half of the 18th century.

We thank Laura Muti, Venice, for confirming the attribution of the present painting on the basis of a high-resolution digital photograph.

Estimate: 8.000 € - 10.000 €; Hammer: 8.000 €
