

## Search 1203

**Auction    Fine Art****Date**    17.11.2023, ca. 15:03**Preview**    10.11.2023 - 10:00:00 bis  
13.11.2023 - 18:00:00

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POZZOSERRATO, LUDOVICO  
(‘Lodewijk Toeput’)  
ca. 1550 Antwerp - ca. 1605 Treviso

attributed

Title: Distinguished Lady at the Spinet.  
Technique: Oil on canvas.  
Mounting: Relined.  
Measurement: 86 x 76cm.  
Frame: Framed.

Provenance:  
Private ownership, Indonesia (formerly Germany).

Venetian society during the Renaissance was very ambivalent. On the one hand, there were the narrow moral barriers erected by society and the church. On the other, the "Serenissima" offered a legalised system of permissive entertainment to the crowds who visited it as travellers, merchants and pilgrims. The courtesans - more than ordinary prostitutes - were hierarchically divided into classes. At their head were the "cortigiane oneste", the respectable courtesans; ladies educated in music, poetry and dance, who were generously kept by one or more suitors. They inspired painters and poets and were - at least superficially - integrated into society. Such a "Cortigiana onesta" is presented as a half-figure in this painting. The richly adorned and finely dressed young woman is making music on a keyboard instrument. She has turned her head to the side and is looking out of the picture at an angle with a dreamy gaze. Behind her chair stands a bearded man holding a coin, a gold ecu, between his fingers in his left hand. He holds his right hand in front of his neck with the palm facing his body so that his index and middle fingers are under his throat. Over his dark clothes with a white collar he wears a brown cowl, not quite defined. The background of the room is covered by a green curtain. Only at the right edge of the picture is a carefully decorated fruit platter with a high-stemmed tazza on a white table.

This still life is - apart from stylistic features - a clue that led to the possible attribution of the painting to Lodovico Pozzoserrato. This painter, born Lodewijk Toeput in the Netherlands, travelled to Italy in the 1570s after training with

Marten de Vos. He worked in Tintoretto's studio and finally settled in Treviso, not far from Venice, at the beginning of the 1580s, after working in Florence and Rome. Gallant scenes, mostly in front of spacious garden, terrace or landscape backgrounds, were his speciality and he liked to compose these Venetian social scenes with still lifes in the Dutch manner.

The scene presented cannot be interpreted quite clearly. The man looks greedily at the courtesan. The gesture with his hand under his throat and the slightly open mouth seem to illustrate his rising lust, the anticipation of sex for sale. The sweet and juicy fruits of the still life can equally be seen as symbols of the physical pleasures of love. If the coverlet worn by the man is interpreted as a cleric's robe, the event takes on yet another moral connotation.

Estimate: 10.000 € - 15.000 €; Hammer: 7.300 €

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