Daniel Katz Gallery

ANTIQUITY TO THE TWENTIETH CENTURY



Hubert Le Sueur (Paris c.1580 - 1658)

A Term, representing a Philosopher, probably Plato

Circa: c.1636

17th century

132cm high

This extraordinary and rare gilt bronze figural term once adorned a grand chimneypiece as one of a pair of figural jambs within a royal or noble domestic setting. The figure's pensive gaze, with his hand clutching his beard, suggests that he was intended to represent an ancient philosopher, most likely Plato. Recent technical analysis and stylistic comparisons of examples found in England indicate this bronze was cast in London by the French émigré and Royal Sculptor to King Charles I, Hubert Le Sueur. The bronze was previously owned by Francis Edward Stonor (1900-1968), the cousin of Lord Camoys of Stonor Park, who amassed an important art collection, including many Renaissance and Baroque bronzes, during the decades that followed the Second World War. Stonor was the owner of the tea emporium Jacksons of Piccadilly, and his personal wealth allowed him to indulge his passion for art. Starting in the 1940s, he acquired furniture, paintings and silvergilt - mainly of the 18th century - which he housed in his flat in St John's Wood, north London. It was during this time that the bronze was reputedly acquired from the collection of the Dukes of Richmond and Lennox, whom coincidentally themselves are directly descended from King Charles II via his French mistress, Louise de Kerouaille. At his death, Stonor had no direct heirs, and the bulk of the collection, including the bronze term, was left to his cousin, the 7th Baron Camoys, and subsequently moved to Stonor Park. The term was sold by Lord Camoys at Christie's, London, in 1987 whereby it was purchased by Daniel Katz. The precise origin of this remarkable bronze remains unknown; however, its evident age, quality and illustrious pedigree suggest it was worthy of a most prestigious setting in England in the opening decades of the 17th century.

Provenance

By repute, the collection of the Dukes of Richmond and Lennox

Francis Edward Stonor (1900-1968)

His sale; Sotheby's, London, July 27, 1956, lot 69 (unsold)

Inherited by his cousin, Thomas Stonor, 7th Baron Camoys (1940-2023), and at Stonor Park, Oxfordshire, by 1968.

Christie's, London, December 8, 1987, lot 175, sold by the above.

Daniel Katz, London, 1988

Hubert de Givenchy (1927-2018), acquired from the above.

His Sale; Hubert de Givenchy Collectionneur: Chefs-d'oeuvre | Masterpieces, Christie's, Paris, 14 June 2022, lot 41

Exhibitions

The Burlington House Fair, Burlington House, London, 12-21 March 1982

Literature:

C. Avery, Hubert Le Sueur: The 'Unworthy Praxiteles' of King Charles I, The Volume of the Walpole Society, Vol. 48, 1980-1982, pp.135-209.

The Connoisseur: An Illustrated Magazine for Collectors, January 1960, A Taste for Splendour: and Mr. Francis Stonor, pp. 212-217, pictured p.214, pl. 3.

J. Musson, 'Stonor Park', in Country Life Magazine, 5 April 2001, pp. 80-85.

M. M. Reese, Goodwood's Oak: Life and Times of the Third Duke of Richmond and Lennox, London, 1987.

G. Zelleke, 'From Chantilly to Sèvres: French Porcelain and the Dukes of Richmond', in The French Porcelain Society, VII, 1991.

B. Rosasco, The Herms of Versailles in the 1680s in The Princeton University Library Chronicle, Vol. 76, No. 1-2 (Winter 2015), pp. 145-175 (31 pages).

C. Campbell, Andrea Palladio's five orders of architecture (London, 1729), ed. Colen Campbell, pl. [XXXVI]