

COLNAGHI

ESTABLISHED 1760

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A PEARL OF A PAINTING

The Oyster Eater by Henri Stresor Returns to France with Bernheimer-Colnaghi for the XXVth *Biennale Des Antiquaires*

A painting that once belonged to Cardinal Joseph Fesch (1763-1839), the half-brother of Napoleon's mother, Letizia Ramolino Bonaparte, is among the superb selection of Old Masters being shown by Bernheimer-Colnaghi at the XXVth *Biennale des Antiquaires* in Paris from **15 to 22 September 2010**. (Stand no. S02)

The Oyster Eater, which shows a young man caught in the act of eating an oyster, was painted by **Henri Stresor** (1613?-1679) and has an asking price of **1.75 million euros**.

Very little is known about the life of this artist. Said to be of German extraction and to have lived in Paris from 1644, he painted in the style of the Le Nain brothers and executed several portraits of Louis XIV and other high-ranking members of Parisian aristocracy.

Cardinal Joseph Fesch formed one of the largest private collections of paintings in the early 19th century comprising some 16,000 works, the finest of which were displayed in his Roman residence, the Palazzo Falconieri. When some of his collection was sold in 1844 after his death, the catalogue ascribed this painting to Antoine Le Nain, and this was accepted until 1993, when Pierre Rosenberg published a new catalogue raisonné of works by the Le Nain brothers. Doubts were raised over the traditional attribution, and cleaning revealed Stresor's signature on the left corner of the cloth.



Henri Stresor (Paris 1613?-1679 Paris)
The Oyster Eater
Oil on canvas, 107 x 89 cm

It is appropriate that this venerable firm should come to Paris in its 250th anniversary year as its remarkable story began in that city in 1760 when Colnaghi was founded by an enterprising firework manufacturer, Giovanni Battista Torre. Today it is the world's oldest commercial art gallery and the only survivor of the grand Old Master galleries in London's Old Bond Street, having been acquired by Konrad O. Bernheimer in 2002.

Other highlights being offered by Bernheimer-Colnaghi include *The Ill-Matched Lovers* by Lucas Cranach the Elder and Studio (1472-1553) (asking price 680,000 euros), a portrait of James Byres by Anton Von Maron (1733-1808) (asking price 510,000 euros) and a delightful pair of landscapes by Jean-Baptiste Pillement (1728-1808) (asking price 545,000 euros).

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19/8/2010