



Portrait of a Scholar

Date

ca. 1515

Primary Maker

Lucas Cranach the Elder

Medium

Oil on wood

Description

Lucas Cranach, court artist to Frederick III of Saxony (r. 1486-1525) and intimate friend of the leader of the Protestant Reformation Martin Luther (1483-1546), was the most prolific Northern European portrait painter of his generation. Although to date, the Lowe's portrait has not been incorporated into Cranach's established oeuvre, scholars have always attributed the work to the master's hand. The sitter has been identified as a scholar on the basis of his black cap, presumably that of a doctor of philosophy, and his heavy, black fur-lined robe. That he was a very rich scholar is evident from the luxurious

appearance of the sitter's clothing, emphasized by the multiple folds of expensive silk brocade sleeves that cover the man's hands. The Lowe's painting is comparable in style with Cranach's signed portrait of the successful merchant and city alderman, Moritz Büchner, of ca. 1520 in the collection of the Minneapolis Institute of Art. As in the portrait of Büchner, Cranach's Portrait of a Scholar masterfully conveys the sitter's sense of confidence and pride in his social status and apparent prosperity.

Dimensions

Sight: 16 x 10 3/8 in. (40.6 x 26.4 cm) Framed: 23 x 17 3/8 x 2 1/4 in. (58.4 x 44.1 x 5.7 cm)