

KLAAS MULLER

GERARD TER BORCH

Portrait of a Man with a Black Hat

Gerard ter Borch (1617–1681) was one of the most refined painters of the Dutch seventeenth century. Born in Zwolle, he received his first training from his father and later broadened his artistic outlook through travels across Europe. Ter Borch became renowned for his intimate genre scenes and portraits, distinguished by a subtle palette, delicate handling of light, and a keen sensitivity to gesture and expression. His paintings are marked by elegance, psychological depth, and exceptional technical skill, particularly in the rendering of skin and textiles.

This portrait of a man wearing a hat, painted on panel, exemplifies these qualities. The sitter faces the viewer directly and meets our gaze with quiet self-confidence, creating a sense of immediacy and silent dialogue. His restrained pose and understated attire suggest dignity without ostentation.

The color scheme is refined and harmonious, composed of carefully balanced tones, while the subtle fall of light gently models the face, giving the features clarity and depth without strong contrasts. The smooth surface of the panel enhances the precision of Ter Borch's brushwork and contributes to the intimate character of the work. Rather than a display of status, the portrait becomes a concentrated study of presence and inner life.

We are grateful to Dr. Guido Jansen for the authentication to Gerard Ter Borch, Dr. Jansen dates the work around 1650.

Oil on oval panel, 19,9 x 16,5 cm

