

	Object:	Portrait of a Man
	Museum:	Szépművészeti Múzeum Dózsa György út 41. 1146 Budapest
	Collection:	Régi Képtár
	Inventory number:	REK_1384

Description

Thanks to Giorgione's new style Venetian painting rose to become the greatest rival in Italy to Tuscany. News of it spread to Rome too, and thus one of his best pupils, Sebastiano, received an invitation to the papal court. Here he came under the spell of Michelangelo's classical, epic heroism, which he tried to combine with the leisurely poetry inherited from Giorgione. And when Michelangelo left for Florence, and Raphael died a couple of years later, Sebastiano became Rome's leading painter. This extraordinary portrait, perhaps of a scholar, was painted shortly after he arrived in Rome. The Venetian legacy still predominates: in spite of the man's tangible, monumental presence he seems to fade in from the mist of some nostalgic poem. The soft atmospheric effects and the twilight hues cast an enigmatic aura about him, although in the rigorous composition Sebastiano had already departed from his master. Piombo's masterpiece is one of the greatest achievements of Renaissance portraiture. But Károly Pulszky, founding director of the museum, was vilified for the purchase, and finally driven to suicide. Pulszky acquired the picture as a Raphael, and his witless political opponents thought that the quality of a work of art is determined by the reputation of its author. The Portrait of a Man is today one of the emblems of the museum, and perhaps this fact may serve as a late appeasement for the excellent connoisseur, and as a memento to the public that lives under the spell of 'great names'. Axel Vécsey

Basic data

Material/Technique:	wooden / oil
Measurements:	115 x 94 cm

Events

Painted	When	1512-1514
	Who	Sebastiano del Piombo (1485-1547)

Where

Keywords

- Painting