**Portrait of a Man, probably Isaac Holmes**

**Date**
about 1755

**Primary Maker**
Jeremiah Theus

**Medium**
oil on canvas

**Description**
In this bust-length Portrait of a Man (Probably Isaac Holmes) the sitter is placed inside a trompe l’oeil oval frame that is decorated with brown painted spandrels. Although he faces front, he is turned slightly to the viewer’s left. He wears a white wig with five tight curls visible on the proper right side of his face. More of the wig is visible on the right side, where there are vertical and horizontal curls, indicating that the wig gradually increases in length. The sitter wears a white neck cloth and a tan, collarless coat that is unbuttoned to reveal a black, patterned silk waistcoat. There are soft folds in the coat fabric. Three tan, cloth-covered buttons are visible on the left side and five buttonholes at the right. The waistcoat is fastened with six small black buttons. There is a dusting of white wig powder on the proper left shoulder of the coat. The sitter’s face is rendered in considerable detail. His flesh tones are warm and contain areas of pink on the cheeks, chin, and forehead, which is high and smooth. A shadow from the wig falls along the left side of his face. His eyebrows are dark gray, and there are gray shadows beneath his brown eyes. The sitter’s proper right eye appears larger and rounder than his left one. There is a wart or mole on the right side of the nose. The furrow between the nose and mouth is crooked. A thin layer of gray paint around the mouth and chin suggests beard stubble. His thin lips are pressed together and are slightly downturned. He has a double chin. Overlapping paint layers reveal that Theüs rendered the face first and then the wig and neck cloth. Although the overall ground layer is gray, this layer does not show through in the shadows under the eyes and around the mouth. These areas were given semipaque applications of gray-brown and reddish-brown paint. There is no evidence of an imprimatura layer under any part of the figure. Typically, Theüs used little impasto or none at all, but here there is some white opaque paint on the buttons. He added gray-blue and pink paint for the shadows in the folds of the neck cloth and a darker gray paint, applied wet-on-dry. He painted the black paisley pattern on the gray waistcoat after the gray paint had dried, and he finished with the brown coat. There are no visible brushstrokes. The olive-green background varies in shade to the left of the sitter, especially near the face, where it is a lighter yellow-green.

**Dimensions**
canvas: 75.6 x 62.9 cm (29 3/4 x 24 3/4 in.)