



Saint Anthony In Polychromed And Gilded Lime Wood - Swabia, Early 16th Century



7 500 EUR

Period : Before 16th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Painted wood

Height : 54,5 cm

Description

This charming limewood statuette represents the very popular Saint Anthony, dressed in the hooded habit of the Antonine Hospitaller Order. Popularized by the Golden Legend of Jacques de Voragine, this 3rd century Egyptian hermit withdrew into the desert to live his faith in poverty and chastity. After resisting the assaults of the Devil and triumphing in the manner of Christ, he taught the rest of his life to disciples who visited him to listen to him preach and join in his prayers. Upon his death, his relics were first transferred to Constantinople before joining an abbey in Dauphiné around the middle of the 11th century that became famous under the name of Saint-Antoine-en-Viennois. It is around this place that the community of the Antonines is organized, erected as a religious hospital order under Pope

Dealer

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Boniface VIII in 1289 and specialized in welcoming sick people suffering from contagious diseases (the plague, leprosy, "the mal des Ardents" etc.). Here, our saint is represented old, according to iconographic tradition. He carries in his left hand a book alluding to the Antonite rule and must have held in his right a Tau or a bell, two of his usual attributes as illustrated by a print dated from the years 1460-1470, preserved at the University Library of Salzburg. At his feet appears a pig, the saint's favorite attribute. The latter would allude both to the diabolical wild boar of the desert that Anthony would have domesticated and which would have subsequently become his most faithful companion, but also to the pigs of his order which were the only ones able to move freely in the streets, adorned with a bell. This animal can be found at the foot of the saint on a German bas-relief from the beginning of the 16th century acquired by the Musée de l'Oeuvre Notre-Dame in Strasbourg from the Galerie Sismann in 2014. From a stylistic point of view, our work is similar to the Swabian productions of the first half of the 16th century and more particularly to a very beautiful Saint James from the Landesmuseum in Zurich. This sculpture from a church in the county of Aargau, between Bern and Zurich, presents a similar treatment of the drapes of the saint's cloak, but also of the beard and hair with wavy locks chiseled into hooks. In addition, this Saint James shares the same physiognomy as our Saint Anthony, marked by a face with an elongated oval. Hollowed out on its reverse, our sculpture must have once adorned the shutters of an altarpiece, as a pendant to other saints.