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19thc Mahogany Mother-of-pearl Inlaid Oriental Crucifix Cross From Indochina



400 EUR

Period : 19th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Gilted wood

Description

This stunning 19th-century crucifix is a rare example of Christian devotional art from French Indochina, specifically the Tonkin or Macao regions, where Catholic missions and local artisans intersected to create a unique synthesis of Eastern and Western religious iconography. Known as a croix apostolique incrustée (apostolic inlaid cross), it is intricately carved from rich mahogany and lavishly inlaid with mother-of-pearl, a decorative technique that reflects both Chinese and Vietnamese artistic traditions. Unlike typical European crucifixes, this cross does not display the figure of Christ but instead features highly detailed vegetal and floral motifs symbolizing eternal life, divine creation, and the beauty of faith. The ornate inlay includes depictions of lotus flowers, grapevines,

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Saint-Gilles 1060

chrysanthemums, and stylized foliage, each carrying theological symbolism. The cross's clover-shaped terminals--a design element often used in liturgical art--suggest the presence of the Holy Trinity. These types of crucifixes were commonly crafted in missionary schools or artisan workshops under Catholic patronage in the 1800s, serving as altar pieces or devotional objects in homes and chapels. They are not only spiritual objects but also artifacts of cultural syncretism, representing the spread of Christianity into East Asia and the incorporation of local artistic language into religious practice. This beautiful object invites meditation and veneration while serving as a testament to faith transcending geography, uniting traditions in devotion and craftsmanship. Measurements 48 cms x 26 cms Condition: The cross is in très bon état (very good condition). The mahogany wood is structurally sound and exhibits a rich, even patina. The mother-of-pearl inlay is largely intact with only minor natural aging and light wear, consistent with its age. The back shows some wear marks and a historic hanging hook, but there are no visible cracks or repairs. A fine and well-preserved devotional piece.-----

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