



## Immaculate Conception In Marble - Genoa - Late 17th Century



50 000 EUR

Period : 17th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Marble

Width : 37 cm

Height : 80 cm

Depth : 23 cm

### Description

This magnificent white marble sculpture represents the Immaculate Conception. It dates from the late 17th century and is of Italian origin, more precisely from the city of Genoa. This sculpture represents the Virgin Mary according to the theme of the Immaculate Conception, in a typically Baroque interpretation. Mary is depicted standing, her arms drawn towards her, in an exacerbated gesture of divine acceptance. She is wrapped in a loose, flowing cloak, with dynamic folds that create an upward movement. Beneath her bare feet, she tramples a writhing serpent biting an apple, a symbol of original sin. We also find the presence of two clouds at the front and back of the base. It thus symbolizes an allegory taken from the Apocalypse, a symbol of her heavenly purity. The balance between Baroque

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theatricality and spiritual grace is perfectly mastered here. This sculpture is characteristic of the late Baroque of Genoa, where a controlled theatricality is expressed. The composition demonstrates great finesse with an alternation of full and empty spaces, particularly in the Virgin's bound hands. Indeed, they intertwine in a gesture of contemplation, a true technical feat. The fluid movement of her cloak is particularly visible in the draperies, which animates the figure with an inner impulse in a great feeling of lightness and spiritual elevation. Her face is imbued with great gentleness with refined features, marked by a straight nose, expressive eyes and luscious, parted lips. The finesse of execution is even found on the scales of the serpent at her feet, worked in a precise and detailed manner. This sculpture is thus the incarnation of the sacred in matter, becoming alive and spiritual in contact with the sculptor. At the back of her head is an orifice, which indicates the past presence of a crown of stars, a direct reference to the iconography of the crowned Immaculate Conception. The cult of the Immaculate Conception began in the 7th century in Spain and subsequently developed widely in Christian art in the 14th century. It reached a true peak in the Baroque period, especially in Genoa where Mary was venerated as the protector of the city and of sailors setting out to sea. Thus, this work was probably intended for an urban niche or a private altar, illustrating popular piety. Many Italian sculptors have represented this theme, but after much research, this sculpture can be attributed to the entourage of Filippo Parodi. He is one of the greatest sculptors of Genoa in the 17th century, known for the complexity of his draperies and sculptures marked by great delicacy. Born into a family of sculptors, he began as a wood carver before gradually turning to marble work. In this work, Parodi, heir to Bernini's style and influenced by Pierre Puget, succeeds in infusing marble with an almost supernatural vitality. He gives the material an expressive fluidity, capable of arousing emotion

and spiritual elevation in the viewer. He will develop a great artistic focus symbolizing the Genoese Baroque, which subsequently radiated throughout Europe. The sculptor also used the technique of the trepan, a drilling tool operated by hand using a bow. This tool, used since Antiquity, can reach reinforcements, clear hard-to-reach areas, and rough out grooves by forming cylindrical cavities. This slow and precise technique is intended for fragile areas in materials such as wood, stone, and marble. This immaculate conception achieves extreme refinement within the typological framework of the Virgin in flight, combined with remarkable skill in the treatment of marble. A true technical feat, this sculpture is a formidable demonstration of the skill and genius of Genoese artists at this time.