



The Four Seasons - Carved And Gilded Wooden Statuettes From The 17th Century

3 500 EUR



Period : 17th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Gilted wood

Height : 28 cm

Description

NORTHERN ITALY (Venice?) - Rare complete set of allegorical statuettes in carved and gilded wood illustrating the Cycle of the Seasons as pendants - Spring and Summer represented by female figures; Autumn and Winter by male figures. Endowed with their respective attributes (flowers, sheaf of wheat, cornucopia and grapes, fire) as defined by the humanist tradition (Iconologia, 1593 by César Ripa), they are set on a molded quadrangular base. Anonymous work from the 17th century.

THROUGH THE SEASONS -Performed by the cheerful vivacity of Spring and the serene magnanimity of Summer, the lively ardor of Autumn, and the melancholic reverie of Winter, this attractive suite of Statuettes, marked by the hallmark of Baroque

Dealer

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aesthetics, offers an erudite variation on the ancient theme of the Four Seasons. Uniquely supported on profiled half-shells in an ogee, each statuette, standing on an enveloping acanthus leaf forming a mound, displays the iconographic attributes notably advocated by Cesare Ripa (1555-1622) in his famous and resounding *Iconologia* published in 1593. Thus, associated with the centuries-old representations of the divinities from Greco-Roman mythology: Flora, Ceres/Pomona, Bacchus and Saturn, the playful figurine of Spring, lightly dressed in an airy fabric baring her chest, displays a flowered vase; in a triumphant attitude, that of Summer, embraces a sheaf of ears of wheat near her dense breasts; The fiery one of Autumn--the season of grape harvests and Bacchic revelry--is embodied by a young man whose head is encircled by a small herd of vine branches, holding in his hands heavy bunches of grapes escaping from a cornucopia riveted to his shoulder. Finally, the very serious one of Winter: beside a flaming brazier, his still robust body surrounded by a heavy draped cloak, a bearded old man with a receding hairline seems to meditate on the passing of Time. A mixture of harshness, classical inspiration, and baroque flair characterizes these statuettes with allegorical subjects. Featuring a posture with a marked contrapposto, energetic profiles with sometimes crude planes on the limbs, round faces with wide-open eyes and incised features, and swirling draperies enveloping their bodies in a robust and powerful structure, these statuettes are stylistically similar to the sculptural creations executed during the 17th century by northern Italian workshops likely influenced by the "maestria" of the Venetian sculptor Tiziano Aspetti (1559-1606) or Josse de Corte (1627-1679). Favoring a broad style and frontal composition, this astonishing series of statuettes, whose original purpose remains unknown to this day, may have been a decorative element for furniture or as a piece of furniture, particularly given its evocation of the Cycle of

the Seasons of Cabinets or even astronomical clocks. Decontextualized, it constitutes a beautiful and rare decorative ensemble. _____Materials:

Carved and gilded woodDimensions: Total height with base: 28 cm.Northern Italy, anonymous work likely from 17th-century Venetian sculpture workshops.Good overall condition considering the age of the pieces. Wear from time. Minor flaking of the gilding.