



Large Polychrome Wooden Sculpture Of The Patron Saint Of The Compagnons Du Devoir, 20th Century



1 350 EUR

Period : 20th century

Condition : Parfait état

Material : Painted wood

Width : 33 cm

Height : 98 cm

Depth : 28 cm

Description

Very beautiful work from the 20th century for this large polychrome wooden statue, carved in the round, representing Father Soubise, patron saint of the Compagnons passants Charpentiers du Devoir, Roofers and Plasterers. The face is fine and very expressive, with a beautiful beard and wavy hair. The clothing is ornate, with many folds, and enhanced by gilding on the inside of the coat, the whole giving a real presence to the character. Father Soubise is one of the three more or less mythical founding members of the guild, with Master Jacques and Salomon. The Compagnon legends are contradictory regarding the historical personality of Soubise: sometimes he appears as a colleague of Master Jacques, a stonemason, who worked in Antiquity on the construction site of Solomon's temple, or on the

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medieval construction site of the towers of Orléans Cathedral (with a gap of more than two millennia, however!), sometimes he appears in the form of a Benedictine monk who, during the 12th century, is said to have transmitted to the Compagnons the fundamental bases of the "Trait": descriptive geometry. This statue of Father Soubise displays the square and compass, famous Masonic symbols, which, in addition to their function as measuring tools necessary for the construction trades, also originally symbolized the fraternity of the companions who had founded clandestine professional associations in France as early as the 12th century to make life easier for apprentices who had difficulty climbing the career ladder in craft workshops and guilds. The journeymen thus swore to help each other and improve themselves spiritually by meeting in secret sanctuaries for rituals and even having their own secret language. In these professional associations, there were three main degrees: apprentice, journeyman, and master (this same structure was later borrowed by Freemasonry). Typically, a young man between the ages of 14 and 19 could become an apprentice, who during the apprenticeship lived with his master and ate at his expense. Often, the master's sons, who inherited their father's business, became students. The training periods, which in different professions ranged from 2 to 12 years, were sometimes deliberately delayed by the masters in order to use cheap labor... A society of Journeymen was therefore a society of workers from the same corporation, that is, from the same trade. Each of the 31 societies of Duty attached to Jacques and Soubise, and the 6 societies of the Rite of Solomon, had a network of headquarters in cities, thus constituting what was called the Tour de France. In these cities, each society was composed of two groups of Companions: on the one hand, the "active" body or "activity," and on the other, the body of elders called the "thanked" Companions. Giving thanks was once an important act in the life of the Companion. After

he had completed his Tour de France in his youth, he married or set up on his own, and at that moment he thanked his society. He left in good standing, leaving the society that had welcomed him during his years of wandering. It no longer owed him anything, and he no longer had to contribute to its expenses. And above all, he no longer had the capacity to receive other Companions.