



Solid Silver Art Deco Chalice With African Influences, Devroye Brothers, Brussels, 1930-40



2 650 EUR

Signature : Devroye frères

Period : 20th century

Condition : Parfait état

Material : Sterling silver

Diameter : patène 15 cm , coupe calice 12 cm

Height : 18 cm

Description

This magnificent chalice is exceptional in many respects. It was created in the late 1930s by the talented Devroye brothers for the priestly ordination of a young White Father from Africa in 1941, Father Albert Jamme of Mariembourg. Brothers Joseph and Charles Devroye began their liturgical silversmithing workshop entirely during the First World War at 368 Avenue de la Couronne in Brussels. Joseph studied goldsmithing and architecture and handled the creative side, while Charles managed the business and handled sales. Their workshop was a great success, quickly employing no fewer than 15 workers. Their creations were decidedly modern and embraced the new Art Deco style. During the 1930s, they created a range of chalices in an African-inspired Art Deco style that became

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famous. They incorporate geometric motifs from traditional Congolese art into the design and decoration of these pieces of silverware. The aim is to bring Catholic liturgical objects closer to the traditional objects of the people in the missions. This chalice is a prime example. Its entire surface is adorned with magnificent inlays of red enamel (the color of the Holy Spirit) and blue enamel (the color of the Virgin Mary), reminiscent of traditional African motifs. This chalice is made entirely of sterling silver (925%) and retains its original paten and small spoon, embellished, like the chalice itself, with beautiful blue and red enamel designs. It weighs 885 grams. An engraved inscription dedicating the chalice to the family of Father Jamme is found at its base. Albert Jamme was born in Seinzeilles, Belgium, in 1916 and entered the seminary of the White Fathers of Africa at a very young age. He took his missionary vows, but his path was primarily academic. For he fell deeply in love with anthropological and archaeological studies of the early Christians. For over forty years, he would be the world's foremost expert on the history of Christian cultures in the Arabian Peninsula. The King of Saudi Arabia personally invited him to undertake excavations in the Saudi mountains, where the Christian civilizations that preceded Islam had left numerous traces. He taught for over four decades at the Catholic University of Washington. Professor Jamme lived for most of his life in great disagreement with his superiors, who saw this academic path as a betrayal of his missionary vow, and relations with them were rather turbulent throughout his life. Father Albert returned to Belgium at the end of his life in 1999 and was buried next to his brother in the Mariembourg cemetery in his native land, after his long and rich journey across the world.