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Oil On Copper 'the Lamentation Of Christ' Workshop/circle Of Frans Francken I-antwerp-16th Century

7 500 EUR



Signature : Atelier Frans Francken I ou cercle direct

Period : 16th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Oil painting on copper

Length : 22 cm

Width : 17 cm

Description

Title: The Lamentation of Christ Technique: Oil on copper Dimensions: 17 × 22 cm Provenance: Antwerp, Southern Netherlands Date: c. 1585-1605 Attribution: Workshop or direct circle of Frans Francken I (1542-1616), with stylistic affinities to the early work of Frans Francken II (1581-1642). Technical description: The painting is executed on a hand-hammered copper plate, approximately 1 mm thick, with characteristic tool marks on the reverse. The presence of a reddish-brown preparatory layer of red lead, located between the metal support and the paint layer, confirms a pre-1605 production typical of Antwerp workshops. The application of pigments is extremely fine, consisting of translucent glazes on a smooth metal support, creating a precious, almost enamel-like surface. The overall state of

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preservation is very good, with a uniformly aged varnish and no visible overpainting. Iconography and composition: The work depicts the Lamentation of Christ, a devotional subject emblematic of the late Renaissance and early Baroque periods. The dead Christ is supported by Nicodemus and Saint John, while the Virgin, flanked by Mary Magdalene and Joseph of Arimathea, expresses a sorrow contained in prayer. The composition retains the symmetrical calm of Renaissance prototypes, while the emotional sensitivity and chromatic richness foreshadow the Baroque. Particular attention is paid to the refined rendering of textiles, metalwork, and jewelry--distinctive hallmarks of Antwerp Mannerist craftsmanship. Stylistic analysis: The technique of execution and the physiognomy of the figures closely resemble known works from the circle of Frans Francken I, particularly his small copper panels preserved in private and public collections (e.g., Lamentation of Christ, c. 1590, private collection; Adoration of the Magi, Antwerp). The delicate modeling of the flesh tones, the soft glazes, and the emotional restraint distinguish this work from the more dynamic and colorful approach of Frans Francken II after 1605. The smooth surface of the copper and the attention to detail indicate a master familiar with the early practices of the Francken workshop, perhaps assisted by younger collaborators, including the artist's son. Historical and artistic context: In the late 16th century, Antwerp painters increasingly adopted copper as a support for small devotional panels intended for export. These works combined the technical brilliance of surfaces close to enamel with the preciousness of miniature painting. This example is typical of this tradition, uniting the compositional clarity inherited from the Renaissance with the tender piety of Counter-Reformation imagery. Condition: The painting is remarkably well preserved for its age. Fine surface craquelure and a uniform patina, consistent with natural aging, are visible. The

copper plate is flat, without any noticeable warping or corrosion. The reverse side shows stable oxidation typical of early copper panels.

Conclusion: This work is a high-quality example of Antwerp copper painting from around 1590-1600, produced within the direct sphere of Frans Francken I. It illustrates the transition between the Renaissance refinement of Maarten de Vos and the nascent Baroque sensibility embodied by the Francken family. Its technical quality, iconography, and state of preservation make it a significant representative of early Flemish fine copper paintings.