



Solid Silver Christ -- Lille, 1714



5 000 EUR

Signature : maître orfèvre lillois Robert De Noyelles.

Period : 18th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Sterling silver

Description

Robert De Noyelles (1645-1724) France, Lille --
Early 18th century (Louis XIV - Regency)

Description: Extremely rare solid silver Christ, executed in cast silver and finely finished with a chisel, bearing the complete hallmarks of the city of Lille for the year 1714, guaranteeing a precise date and an irrefutable attribution to the Lille master silversmith Robert De Noyelles. A survivor of the silver melting edicts under Louis XIV: This Christ is of major historical importance, as it escaped the large-scale requisitioning and melting down of silver ordered during the reign of Louis XIV. Historical context: Faced with the colossal financial needs generated by the wars at the end of the reign -- in particular the War of the League of Augsburg (1688-1697) and then the War of the Spanish Succession

Dealer

Collection

Collection

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(1701-1714) -- the monarchy put in place several Precious metal recovery campaigns. Two dates are crucial: o Edict of September 1689: Louis XIV ordered the melting down of civil and religious silverware, inviting--then compelling--ecclesiastical institutions, religious communities, and individuals to surrender their silver objects to replenish the royal treasury. This measure led to the massive disappearance of 16th- and 17th-century silverware. o Reinforced requisitions of 1709 (the so-called Great Winter): In a context of extreme economic crisis, famine, and monetary collapse, requisitions were reactivated and expanded, once again affecting the silverware of churches, abbeys, and cathedral chapters. Many liturgical objects were then melted down without artistic distinction. Heritage value: The direct consequence of these edicts was the almost systematic destruction of solid silver religious statuary, particularly Corpus Christi, whose metallic value took precedence over artistic value. The survival of this solid silver Christ is likely explained by: o its preservation in a protected ecclesiastical context, o deliberate concealment, a practice attested in parish archives, o or temporary removal until the end of the major melting campaigns. The fact that it is dated 1714, at the very end of Louis XIV's reign, gives it additional symbolic value: it constitutes a rare tangible testimony of French religious goldsmithing as it survived after the great destructions of the Ancien Régime. Hallmarks: o Hallmarks of the city of Lille for the year 1714 o Maker's mark: Robert De Noyelles Characteristics: o Height: 23 cm o Weight: 225 g o Material: Solid silver o Condition: Excellent condition o Period: Early 18th century (Louis XIV - Regency) ?Importance and rarity: Solid silver Corpus Christi figures from before or during the last years of Louis XIV's reign are extremely rare, precisely because of the melting edicts of 1689 and 1709. Hallmarked, attributed, and large examples are exceptional survivors of French goldsmithing heritage. ?Expert opinion:

This work should be considered not only as a very high-level goldsmithing sculpture, but as a historical object that survived a major episode of heritage destruction, which considerably increases its cultural, museum, and market value.

See: Lille - Louis XIV period - Goldsmithing with the Lille hallmark, F - Lot 37