



Jesus In The House Of Martha And Mary - Frans II Francken (1581-1642) And Workshop

19 000 EUR



Period : 17th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Oil painting on wood

Width : 87

Height : 67

Description

Oil on panel, Antwerp school, Frans II Francken (1581-1642) and workshop, first third of the 17th century. Our composition depicts one of the most popular subjects of domestic devotion in Antwerp painting of the first third of the 17th century: Christ in the home of Martha and Mary (Gospel of Luke 10:38-42). Frans Francken and a collaborator from his workshop offer here an interpretation characteristic of the Francken family's visual culture: clear storytelling, sumptuous decor, an abundance of objects and animals, and a pronounced taste for theatrical staging. In the center, Christ, seated before an altar covered with a carpet and surmounted by a painting of the Sacrifice of Isaac, welcomes the two sisters from Bethany. Martha, standing on the left, interrupts her cooking to complain about the

Dealer

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lack of help. Her lively, almost impatient gesture contrasts with the contemplative posture of Mary, seated at Christ's feet, absorbed in his teaching. Thus, the bustle of domestic service is juxtaposed with silent contemplation, a moral and spiritual theme particularly favored by Antwerp artists. The architectural setting, with its columns, its framed image, and the opening onto a park teeming with birds, reflects the Francken workshop's taste for "enriched" interiors. The domestic animals--dogs and a cat--reinforce the familiar atmosphere, while the table laden with food, a veritable still life, recalls the tradition of Flemish "kitchen pieces," often incorporated by the Franckens into their religious compositions to anchor the sacred in everyday life. The precise yet fluid execution, the attention to fabrics, still lifes, and anecdotal details, as well as the spatial construction, all directly reflect the practices of Frans II Francken's workshop. Certain passages, particularly those depicting animals and garden elements, suggest the involvement of a collaborator or painter from his immediate circle, a hypothesis consistent with the workshop's collective output in the 1620s and 1640s.

Moreover, the composition almost identical to ours, illustrated on page 252 of Ursula Härtig's catalogue raisonné, was also executed collaboratively by Frans II Francken and Abraham Govaerts. We have chosen to present the composition in a simple molded frame of blackened wood. Dimensions: 54 x 74.5 cm - 67 x 87 cm with frame. Biography: Frans II Francken or Frans Francken the Younger (Antwerp 1581 - Antwerp 1642). Son of Frans I and brother of Hieronymus II and Ambrosius II, he is the most renowned of the Francken dynasty.

Excelling in a wide variety of genres, he specialized in small and medium-sized paintings (also known as cabinet paintings), which Rubens called "cose piccole" (small things). He painted numerous biblical, mythological, and historical scenes in which he depicted dense crowds according to the principle of isocephaly. Pushing

the glazing technique to perfection, he achieved a delicacy of nuance and fluid effects that brought out the full interest of the background figures.

The greatest Flemish artists called upon his talent; Francken's virtuoso groups can be found in the landscapes of Abraham Govaerts, Joos de Momper, and Jan Brueghel I and II, and in the architectural works of Bartholomeus van Bassen, Pieter Neefs I, and Hendrick van Steenwijck, to name but a few. Bibliography: - HARTING, Ursula, Frans Francken der Jüngere (1581-1642): die Gemälde mit kritischem Oeuvrekatalog, Freren, Luca, 1989. - La Dynastie Francken, dir. Sandrine Vézilier Dussart, (exp. cat., Cassel, Museum of Flanders, Sept. 4, 2021 - Jan. 2, 2022), In Fine, 2020.