



Embriachi Workshop Marquetry Casket - 15th Century



12 000 EUR

Period : Before 16th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Bone

Width : 18

Height : 28

Depth : 14

Description

Embriachi workshop marquetry casket

Northern Italy, 15th century

Alla certosina inlays (bone, stained bone, pewter and wood)

H 28.2 x W 18 x D 14 cm

This beautiful casket of rectangular form is richly decorated with the characteristic geometric patterns of the Embriachi style.

The intricate geometric patterns are fashioned by juxtaposing lighter and darker pieces of wood, (colored) bone, horn and pewter. The lid and base are framed by a broad band of horn. When ivory became scarce in Europe due to disrupted trade routes, bone was substituted.

The attention to Symmetry and balance created an

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harmonious visual effect

Enhancing the overall aesthetic appeal of the casket.

The application of geometrical motifs is in Italy known as marquetry 'alla Certosina', named after the Certosina Church in Pavia with its famous altarpiece decorated in this way. This is 'intarsia technique', a term derived from the Arabic 'tarsi', which means 'incrustation' recalling ancient mosaics made from various materials.

These geometric elements not only enhance the aesthetic appeal of the caskets but also demonstrate the versatility and skill of the artisans in creating multifaceted works of art.

'Alla Certosina' became famous through the Northern Italian Embriachi family who achieved a particularly high standard in working in this technique. Venice in particular was known for the production of these luxurious boxes. The caskets, hexagonal or rectangular, surmounted by a lid decorated in several registers constitute the secular, albeit equally renowned component of the workshop's production, in addition to mirror frames and various everyday objects.

The method of fabrication of those objects was based on two concepts that underlay pre-industrial production: standardization and modularity, thanks to a distribution of skills according to the different phases of fabrication. even the realization of the marquetry motifs (in the form of ingots from which portions of the desired size were cut) were therefore entrusted to various specialized craftsmen, as were the assembly phase.

Today better known thanks to the extensive research work recently carried out by Michele Tomasi, this workshop owes its name to its founder and owner, the Florentine Baldassare Ubriachi (or degli Embriachi), a merchant and banker established in the Tuscan capital before he

settled in Venice in 1395. Together with sculptor Giovanni di Jacopo, who directed the workshop, from the last years of the fourteenth century, Baldassare oversaw a production that was truly original, and still easily recognizable today, comprising monumental altarpieces and various objects, primarily triptychs and caskets.

The precise location of the workshop is unknown, except that it originated in Florence and in ca.

1431 there was apparently a workshop in Venice, in the area of S Luca. They employed local workers specializing in 'certosina' (inlay of stained woods, bone and horn), and the workshop produced items carved in bone (usually horse or ox) with wood and bone marquetry.

The geometric decoration of Embriachi caskets reflects the artistic complexity and attention to detail that characterized their work.

this inlaid casket is a testament to the skill and artistry of the Embriachi family and serves as a stunning example of the decorative arts of the late Middle Age.