



Oil On Panel. Holy Family With Saint Anne And The Infant Saint John. 16th Century. 76 X 63 Cm.

3 400 EUR



Signature : Scuola di Giulio Romano

Period : 16th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Oil painting on wood

Description

Author: Late Mannerist painter, school of Giulio Romano
Period: 16th century
The painting we present represents a valuable homage, identical in support and pictorial technique, to Giulio Romano's famous "Madonna of the Cat," a work dated between 1521 and 1524 and housed at the National Museum of Capodimonte in Naples. Our work is, in fact, a valuable workshop replica of the aforementioned painting, attributable to a late Mannerist painter, belonging, in fact, to Giulio Romano's studio. The pyramidal scheme of the hagiographic composition is a direct reference to the teachings of Leonardo and Raphael, who had, so to speak, established the guidelines for the creation of similar subjects (Holy Families). Indeed, a direct comparison is made between our painting, Giulio Romano's master,

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and Raphael's "Madonna of the Pearl," currently housed in the Prado Museum in Madrid. Initially (since 1656) it was housed in the monastery-pantheon of El Escorial, and was named by King Philip IV of Spain because it was considered the most valuable work in his collections. The fact that the "Madonna of the Pearl," dated around 1518-1520, appears to have been created by Raphael with the collaboration of his favorite pupil, Giulio Romano, and that it was subsequently the subject of a highly personal reinterpretation by the Urbino native's disciple, allows us to make some observations regarding our panel, concerning similarities and differences in a subject that, it seems, must have enjoyed particular iconographic success. First of all, compared to the "Madonna of the Pearl" and, in full continuity with the "Madonna of the Cat," the workshop replica in question clearly demonstrates a complete abandonment of cold colors in favor of a sharp and dramatic chiaroscuro (see Stefania Pasti, "Giulio Romano and the Madonna of the Cat: an iconographic study," in "Storia dell'Arte" 31, 2012). While the scene follows Raphael's pyramidal scheme, and is equally rich in emotional resonance, the chromatic tones of the garments, from those of the Virgin to those of Saint Anne, are toned down in pursuit of greater, yet still composite, stylistically balanced, drama. As in the "Madonna of the Cat," the artist of this panel eschews both Raphael's softness and Leonardo's "sfumato," favoring an incised, almost graphic style (see Renato Barilli, *Maniera moderna e Manierismo*, 2004). An undeniable element of mirroring and continuity with Raphael's work and Giulio Romano's panel is the hierarchization of the figures: their intense exchange of glances leads the viewer's eye to move among them, slowly analyzing them one by one, from Mary to Saint John the Baptist to the Child, and finally to Saint Anne. Only Saint Joseph plays a secondary role, relegated, in both paintings, to the background, almost an external observer. Like Giulio Romano's example, our

panel can be dated roughly to the years immediately following Raphael's death (1520), when the pupil inherited his master's workshop and the commissions already underway, creating the Hall of Constantine in the Vatican with Gian Francesco Penni, thus establishing himself as the most brilliant heir to the Raphaellesque style. These Roman years saw Giulio Romano engaged in various hagiographic paintings, including the "Függer Altarpiece" in the Roman church of Santa Maria dell'Anima and the "Stoning of Saint Stephen." The iconographic topos of the cat's presence remains to be explored. In an authoritative tradition dating back to Lorenzo Lotto (Recanati Annunciation), which was particularly dear to Barocci, it oscillates between a natural representation of a domestic context and a symbolic meaning, negatively connoted as it is connected to Evil and the Devil's anti-salvation work. Dimensions: H 76 x 63