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Gordian III Sestertius « Fides Militvm » -- Certificate Of Authenticity



200 EUR

Period : Before 16th century

Condition : Bon état

Description

Large bronze from the opening phase of the reign, sought after for its explicit political statement FIDES MILITVM ("the loyalty of the troops"), perfectly aligned with the context of AD 238-239 and clearly framed by the standard reference corpora.

Analysis & expertise
Careful observation under ×10 magnification and raking light (based on the photographs): the specimen is struck on a broad sestertius flan, with a naturally irregular perimeter (slight undulations and small peripheral weaknesses), consistent with ancient hammer-striking on a large module. The surface shows a reddish-brown to olive-brown patina, enriched by localized verdigris patches and lighter areas on the reliefs (portrait, letters,

Dealer

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and attributes), together compatible with an old patina and prolonged circulation.
The fields display micro-marks and fine striations consistent with use and handling; the relief reads "organically" (continuity of volumes, letter edges still active in places), with no obvious visual indicator of casting or modern manufacture within the strict limits of non-destructive examination from images.

Obverse
The obverse shows Gordian III's bust right, laurelled, draped, and cuirassed, with a distinctly youthful portrait: high forehead, straight nose, fine chin, and a laurel wreath readable in segments (leaves still perceptible despite wear). Drapery and cuirass planes remain distinguishable at the shoulder, supporting a secure iconographic reading.
The peripheral legend can be recognized as IMP CAES M ANT GORDIANVS AVG, visible in fragments depending on centering and areas where the patina is thicker--an often-encountered configuration on large bronzes of this reign.

Reverse
The reverse carries the type FIDES MILITVM, with S - C in the field, the traditional senatorial mark on sestertii. Fides appears standing, body facing with head turned left, holding a standard (signum) and a scepter: despite wear, the central silhouette and the standard's shaft remain identifiable, and the presence of the C (with the corresponding S depending on the area) supports the typological attribution.
The set "FIDES MILITVM + S C + standing Fides" forms a coherent group of indicators consistent with RIC 254a / Cohen 88.

Specifications
Authority: Gordian III (238-244)
Denomination: Sestertius (Æ)
Mint: Rome
Date: AD 238-239

Obverse: IMP CAES M ANT GORDIANVS AVG -- laurelled, draped and cuirassed bust right
Reverse: FIDES MILITVM -- S C -- Fides standing, holding standard and scepter
References: Cohen 88 ; RIC 254a
Weight: 21.96 g

Historical context
The FIDES MILITVM type belongs to the stabilizing language of the very beginning of the reign: after the crises and ruptures of AD 238, proclaiming the army's loyalty becomes a central monetary theme, intended to strengthen the authority of a very young emperor. On a large bronze of wide visibility, the message is direct, immediately legible, and designed to be understood both at Rome and in the provinces.

Cultural value
For a collector, this sestertius offers lasting strengths:
a highly representative youthful portrait of Gordian III, in a large, impactful module;
a reverse with a clear political message (FIDES MILITVM), at the heart of the propaganda of AD 238-239;
a type made readily comparable by corpus references (RIC / Cohen) and many documented parallels.

Traceability & guarantees
In accordance with our practices, each specimen is examined, described, and accompanied by a certificate of authenticity consistent with the standards of the art and heritage market. The study is conducted with careful observation under ×10 magnification and raking light, and relies on non-destructive technical criteria (typological coherence, legend reading, engraving style, strike structure, and surface/metal within the limits of observation).
The provenance is professional European; the acquisition results from a specialized international transaction carried out within a

recognized numismatic network and validated by expertise, according to standards expected for heritage objects.

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