PROANTIC
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Maurice Denis (1870-1943) Presto Lithograph Enhanced With Pastel, Dedicated To His Wife Marthe



400 EUR

Period : 20th century

Condition : Parfait état

Length : 54

Width : 41

Description

Maurice Denis (1870-1943) was a French painter, a member of the Nabis group, as well as a decorator, engraver, and art theorist. Deeply influenced by Fra Angelico, Gauguin, and Puvis de Chavannes, he developed a spiritual and symbolist vision of painting at a very early age. He is credited with the famous formula that a painting is first and foremost a flat surface covered with colors arranged in an uncertain order, making him a precursor of abstraction. His work gradually evolved from synthetic symbolism to a renewed classicism, nourished by religious themes, family scenes, and landscapes of Brittany and Italy. He eventually became a renowned decorator of churches and private residences, and later a major innovator of sacred art at the beginning of the 20th century. The

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relationship between his work and music is constant, both in terms of inspiration and decorative commissions. From a very young age, Denis frequented circles where painters and musicians mingled, notably the home of composer Ernest Chausson, who commissioned ceilings for his private residence and later for the music room of the Morozov Palace in Moscow. Many of his large-scale decorative works were designed for concert halls and music rooms, where he sought to visually translate rhythm, harmony, and the notion of colored "tonality." In his theoretical writings, he often drew parallels between pictorial composition and musical structures, emphasizing the correspondences between lines, colored masses, and musical phrases. Until the 1930s, he thus developed a decorative language in which painting functioned almost like a visual score, serving a spirituality where art and music resonated with one another. The work entitled Presto by Maurice Denis is known today only through our lithographed study, enhanced with pastel, dated around 1918 and signed, generally titled Study for Presto. The records do not give an explicit commission (neither church, nor precise decoration), which suggests an autonomous or preparatory study, probably made for a decorative project or a series rather than for a clearly identified individual patron. In Denis's corpus, the musical title Presto fits quite logically into his research on the relationship between painting, rhythm and music, which he would further develop in works such as Sacred Music and Profane Music in 1937. In the current state of the information available (sales catalogues and online notices), no specific recipient (named person or institution) appears for Presto itself, unlike other decorative ensembles by Denis which are well documented as commissions (for example Saint-Louis de Vincennes or the Quimper Cathedral).