



Holy Family With Saint John The Baptist



8 000 EUR

Signature : ÉCOLE ANVERSOISE DU 17^e SIÈCLE,
D'APRES GASPAR DE CRAYER

Period : 17th century

Condition : Très bon état

Width : 81 cm

Height : 96,5 cm

Description

c.1653 Oil on canvas H. 96,5 ; l. 81 cm This charming large-scale painting depicts the Holy Family accompanied by Saint John the Baptist. The Virgin, flanked by Joseph and the young saint, gazes towards two cherubs who have appeared in a heavenly vision, whilst the body of Christ is bathed in divine light. The presence of the young Saint John the Baptist, traditionally associated with the foretelling of Christ's sacrifice, introduces a prefigurative dimension, reinforced by the heavenly vision towards which the Virgin turns. In the background, a cloudy sky stretches above classical architecture against which vegetation stands out, contributing to the scene's sacred and contemplative atmosphere. Two other versions of this composition are known: one is held at the Uffizi

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in Florence, whilst a modello is located in Antwerp, at the Phoebus Foundation. The particularly high standard of execution, the supple and luminous treatment of the drapery, and the delicacy of the hands bring this work close to those attributed to Gaspar de Crayer. The similarity in details and colours leads us to believe that our painting is probably a copy, based on the Florence version or a painted sketch, traces of which can be found on the art market. The Antwerp artist Pieter van Schuppen (1627-1702) produced an engraving (c. 1653, first state) based on the Phoebus Foundation's modello. This painting, dedicated by de Crayer to Archduke Leopold William, demonstrates the special significance the work held for him. The artist's attachment to this piece, combined with its circulation in northern Europe through the methods mentioned above, explains the existence of rare copies, including our own, which is undoubtedly the most remarkable.

ABOUT GASPAR DE CRAYER A leading Flemish painter of the 17th century, Gaspar de Crayer was fully immersed in the Baroque aesthetic of the Southern Netherlands, characterised by dynamic compositions, rich colours and expressive figures. Active mainly in Brussels, he served as court painter to the governors of the Spanish Netherlands and, with his studio, produced a significant body of religious paintings and portraits. His work reflects a close dialogue with his contemporaries, notably Peter Paul Rubens and Anthony van Dyck. From Rubens, he adopted the monumentality of the compositions and a taste for dramatic scenes. Van Dyck's influence is more evident in the softness of the faces and a certain elegance in the treatment of drapery and poses. The painting is in very good condition, having been recently restored by a restorer accredited by Musées de France. Sold in its gilded wooden frame.