



Pair Of Polychrome Repoussé Sheet Metal Urns With Bouquets, Probably Altar Pieces, Portugal



650 EUR

Period : 19th century

Condition : Quelques manques

Material : Metal

Width : 25 cm

Height : 55 cm

Description

Pair of urns with handles in the Greek style, from which luxuriant bouquets of flowers unfurl, in polychrome repoussé sheet metal. According to our research, these objects, which we now see as decorative, were originally altar ornaments, their materiality evoking other elements of the liturgical context, such as ex-votos, also in various metals worked in repoussé. While some describe them as Italian in origin, we prefer Iberian, and more specifically Portuguese, as Viana do Castelo in the extreme north-west of the country has a long tradition of making "palmitos", ornamental elements evoking the palm of Christian martyrdom stylized into a cypress shape with large daisy-like flowers. Azulejos, on the other hand, frequently feature strikingly similar ornaments. This type of object enjoyed a certain

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success and was exported to the Indo-Portuguese colonies and to Brazil, the latter having maintained a somewhat cruder and more naive style. Most of the time, they were transformed into lamp bases or wall-mounted reflectors. This pair has remained intact, with the occasional photo-documented weather damage (tiny crack on one of the urns, small misses, deformations). The polychromy has a lovely patina. Similar examples that have passed through auction rooms have been dated to the XVIIIe century, and everything points stylistically to such a dating, but we don't rule out the possibility of a later dating, as liturgical decoration is fairly unaffected by fluctuations in fashion: that's why, out of transparency and caution, we date here to the XIXe century. An extremely decorative set, with a very southern exuberance.