



## An 18th-century Sculptor From Trapani, Saint Rosalia



2 800 EUR

Period : 18th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Ivory

Width : 7

Height : 10

### Description

18th-century sculptor from Trapani Saint Rosalia Ivory (tortoiseshell frame), 10 x 7 cm - with frame, 24 x 22 cm The work is accompanied by its CITES certificate This refined 18th-century altarpiece stands as an emblematic testament to the excellence achieved by Trapani artisans in the art of micro-sculpture and the assembly of precious materials. The work is set within an octagonal frame covered in fine brown tortoiseshell, whose warm, mottled surface serves as a chromatic threshold to the sacred scene within. The visual contrast is sharp and deliberate: against the dark midnight blue fabric background, the whiteness of the finely carved ivory stands out. At the center of the composition stands the figure of Saint Rosalia, patron saint of Palermo and an icon of Sicilian devotion,

### Dealer

**Ars Antiqua srl**

Antiquaire généraliste

Tel : +39 02 29529057

Via C. Pisacane, 55 - 57

Milano 20129

depicted standing on an elegant, classical-style pedestal. The saint is shown with her head crowned with roses and her gaze turned toward the crucifix she holds firmly in her right hand. The figure is surrounded by a series of ivory accessories which, far from being purely decorative, complete the symbolic and scenographic arrangement of the small domestic altar. Above, on either side of the Saint, two stylized garlands or drapery can be seen, simulating an invisible canopy and ennobling the central figure according to the canons of Baroque staging. The top of the frame is embellished with a gilded crest depicting a winged cherub, which also served as a hook for hanging. In the 18th century, Trapani established itself as one of the most flourishing centers in the Mediterranean for the working of exotic materials thanks to its strategic location and long tradition linked to fishing and coral working. Trapani sculptors developed a specialized technique combining ivory, tortoiseshell, and gilded metals to meet the growing demand for objects of private devotion among the aristocracy and upper middle class. These bedside altars were not mere furnishings, but spiritual microcosms intended for bedrooms, where the preciousness of the materials underscored the importance of domestic worship. The ability to carve ivory with millimeter precision made it possible to translate the grand models of Baroque statuary into pocket-sized versions, turning these artifacts into masterpieces of artistic craftsmanship sought after throughout Europe and now preserved as rarities in museum and antique collections.