



A Follower Of Bartolomé Esteban Murillo (seville, 1617-1682), Saint John The Baptist With The Lamb



4 800 EUR

Period : 17th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Oil painting

Width : 80,5

Height : 113

Description

A follower of Bartolomé Esteban Murillo (Seville, 1617-1682) Saint John the Baptist with the Lamb Oil on canvas, 113 x 80.5 cm This charming painting, the work of a talented follower of Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, depicts one of the Sevillian master's most beloved and successful iconographies: Saint John the Baptist with the Lamb. The scene depicts the young John the Baptist with an almost angelic countenance, far removed from the austere image of the preacher in the desert described in the Gospel of Matthew. The child, with soft features and a dreamy gaze, affectionately embraces a lamb--a symbol of Christ's future sacrifice--in an interaction that exudes a profound and moving humanity. The little saint's forearm is intertwined with one of the animal's legs, while his hand

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points to the sky, recalling the Gospel account in which John proclaims the divine nature of Jesus. At his feet, a reed cross wrapped in a scroll bears the Latin inscription "Ecce Agnus Dei," an explicit reference to the words found in the Gospel of John. This specific composition faithfully reproduces Murillo's famous autograph prototype, now preserved at the National Gallery in London--a work that originally formed a diptych with the Child Jesus as the Good Shepherd, currently in a private collection. The history of the London painting is closely linked to the figure of Don Justino de Neve, canon of Seville Cathedral and one of the artist's most enlightened patrons, who in 1665 displayed the pair of canvases during the spectacular celebrations for the inauguration of the church of Santa María la Blanca. On that occasion, the Young Saint John and the Good Shepherd flanked Murillo's famous Immaculate Conception of the Venerables, now in the Prado, creating a devotional ensemble of extraordinary visual power. The overwhelming success of this invention--capable of transforming complex theological dogmas into images of disarming innocence and childlike purity--prompted numerous members of the workshop and followers of the master to create replicas and variations to meet the growing demand of the art market. Murillo, moreover, returned several times to the theme of the infant John the Baptist, exploring various compositional and psychological possibilities; illustrious examples of this are the versions preserved at the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna and the National Gallery in Dublin, where the subject is rendered with subtle variations while always maintaining that stylistic signature of soft lighting and expressive tenderness that made the Sevillian painter an indispensable model even for 18th-century British masters such as Gainsborough and Reynolds. In this version, the follower succeeds in capturing the essence of Murillo's poetics, favoring an intimate and

domestic atmosphere that invites the faithful to emulate the simplicity of children, paying homage to a work that, thanks also to the numerous engravings that spread its image over the centuries, remains even today among the most iconic and recognizable works of the Spanish school, capable of blending religious mysticism with a purely earthly grace.