



## Neapolitan School, 17th-18th Century, Adoration Of The Magi



4 800 EUR

Period : 17th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Oil painting

Width : 65

Height : 81

### Description

17th-century Neapolitan School - 18th Century  
Adoration of the Magi  
Oil on canvas, 81 x 65 cm  
The work depicts the Adoration of the Magi according to a compositional scheme of great scenographic skill, typical of Neapolitan figurative art at the turn of the 17th and 18th centuries. The scene is organized around a well-defined central core: the Virgin, wrapped in a blue mantle over a red robe, sits slightly elevated and holds the Child, who extends his hands toward the king kneeling at her feet. The latter, an elderly man with his head uncovered as a sign of devotion, presents his gifts while draped in rich golden vestments with decorated borders, whose warm hues dominate the lower right portion of the canvas. To the left of the Virgin, Saint Joseph emerges from the shadows, his

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figure in the twilight underscoring his role as a discreet witness. Behind the royal procession, other figures can be glimpsed, partly hidden by the darkness, while against the architectural backdrop--a structure of crumbling columns, evoking the pagan ruin yielding to the new Christian order--a glimmer of bright sky opens up. In the upper right, a figure in green and ochre, perhaps a third Magus or a page, points toward the scene with an eloquent gesture. The light, oblique and warm, creates a chiaroscuro drama of Caravaggesque influence, filtered, however, through the softer, more coloristic sensibility of the mature Neapolitan school. The painting fits fully within the context of Neapolitan painting of the late 17th and early 18th centuries, a period in which the legacy of Luca Giordano--with his ability to synthesize naturalism with Venetian and Baroque coloristic elegance--had paved the way for a generation of painters capable of combining compositional invention with technical mastery. In this climate, artists such as Francesco Solimena emerged, whose highly dramatic and refined work would profoundly influence European taste in the decades to come, as well as Paolo De Matteis, a follower of Luca Giordano and a sensitive interpreter of sacred subjects with a more relaxed and luminous style.

Compositional solutions similar to those adopted here--with the group of the Virgin and Child positioned in the center, the king kneeling in the foreground, and the procession of the Magi winding toward the background in an interplay of light and shadow-- are found in some Adorations by Corrado Giaquinto, an Apulian painter trained in Naples who was active in the first half of the 18th century, whose versions of the subject preserved at the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna, the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, and the Museo Civico in Bevagna display a similar penchant for crowded and luminous scenes, governed by a vibrant sense of color and a skillful handling of space. The comparison with Giaquinto, while taking into account the

chronological and stylistic distance, helps to situate the painting under examination within a coherent Neapolitan tradition, in which sacred narrative becomes an occasion for a visual feast of velvets, brocades, and illuminated flesh tones, always supported by a solid compositional architecture of seventeenth-century origin.