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Denys Calvaert (1540, Antwerp - 1619, Bologna), From The Workshop Of, Holy Family



4 800 EUR

Period : 17th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Oil painting on copper

Width : 30

Height : 38

Description

Denys Calvaert (known as the Flemish Dionysus, 1540, Antwerp - 1619, Bologna), workshop of Holy Family Oil on copper, 38 x 30 cm, Frame 51 x 45.5 cm This work transports us to the heart of that fertile artistic "middle ground" that was Bologna in the late 16th century, a crossroads where Northern rigor met Mediterranean grace. The painting, attributed to the workshop of Denys Calvaert (also known as Dionisio Fiammingo), depicts a moment of intimate sacredness: the Rest on the Flight into Egypt. Denys Calvaert (Antwerp, c. 1540 - Bologna, 1619) is a pivotal figure in the history of Italian art. Initially trained as a landscape painter in his native Antwerp, he moved to Bologna in his early twenties, joining the workshops of Prospero Fontana and Lorenzo Sabatini. Calvaert had the extraordinary

Dealer

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distinction of founding one of the first and most prestigious painting academies in Bologna, where giants of the caliber of Guido Reni, Domenichino, and Francesco Albani were trained before they entered the orbit of the Carracci. His biography is that of a tireless mediator: he brought the Flemish love for analytical detail and atmospheric landscape to Italy, blending them with the style of Raphael and, above all, with the chromatic softness of Correggio. In this composition, the hand of the workshop reinterprets the stylistic elements dear to the master with an almost theatrical sensibility. The Virgin, whose face reveals a sweetness clearly inspired by Correggio's style, holds a lively, well-proportioned Child, who reaches out his hand toward an apple. This detail is not merely anecdotal: the fruit, a symbol of original sin, is here accepted by Christ as a sign of his future redemptive mission. Behind them, a shadowy Saint Joseph observes the scene with an anxious expression, as if to underscore his role as guardian of the divine mystery. What makes the painting a quintessential product of Calvaert's world is the extraordinary landscape in the background. While the human figures speak the language of Italian Mannerism--with their elegant poses and shimmering drapery--the natural setting is a tribute to the artist's homeland. The rocky peaks, the perched castle, and the aerial view fading into shades of blue directly evoke the tradition of Joachim Patinir and the Antwerp landscape painters. It is a "constructed," fantastical landscape that serves to give a universal scope to the biblical episode. For a direct comparison, one can look at the Holy Family with Saint John the Baptist and Saint Elizabeth in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Bologna or at the numerous versions of the Madonna and Child preserved in private collections, where Calvaert repeats this compositional scheme: monumental yet graceful figures in the foreground, immersed in a vibrant natural setting. Compared to the almost sculptural composure

that Guido Reni would have imposed on his subjects, here we still sense a late-Mannerist "frenzy," an almost miniaturistic attention to objects--such as the basket and the traveler's staff in the lower right--which lends the sacred a domestic and tangible quality. The work is thus a perfect example of how Calvaert's workshop was able to produce images capable of speaking both to the hearts of the faithful and to the refined taste of the Bolognese collectors of the time.