Cristo Vivo - Gilded Bronze - Tuscany - Circa 1600



45 000 EUR

Period : 16th century

Condition : Parfait état

Material : Bronze

Height : 37, 5 cm

Description

This magnificent statue of Christ was created in Tuscany, Italy, at the dawn of the 17th century. The bronze work lends Christ an idealized physical appearance, achieved in particular through the great precision and abundance of detail.Particular attention has been paid to the chiseling of the hair, beard, and facial features, which demonstrates great artistic sensitivity. Despite Christ's protruding ribs, the twisting of his exhausted body, and the tension in his muscles as he faces death, a genuine serenity emanates from this work. Stripped of all divine attributes, reduced to nothing more than a man, Christ is clothed only in the traditional perizonum, with its heavily pleated drapery, leaving one hip exposed.This piece is associated with the body of work by the sculptor

Dealer

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Giambologna (1529-1608). Born Jehan de Boulongne (in Flemish) or Jean de Bologne or Boulogne (in French) in Douai in 1529, he served his apprenticeship under the sculptor Jacques du Brouecq (c. 1505-84) in Flanders. Around 1555, he left for Italy, where he was then known as Giovanni Bologna (later shortened to Giambologna). A versatile artist, creating both sculptural and iconographic models, he produced a large body of "Corpus Christi" works. The great success of his works is largely due to his school. Indeed, it is most likely that Giambologna created the initial models--first drawn and sometimes produced in large format--which were then executed by his students or successors in smaller formats intended as diplomatic gifts (notably by the Medici). This delegation of production to his workshop allowed his models to be disseminated in greater numbers, particularly at the end of the 16th century and during the first decade of the 17th century. Some members of this workshop distinguished themselves and achieved a certain degree of fame. This was notably the case for Antonio Susini, who worked there from 1570 and to whom a large number of castings are attributed.As mentioned earlier, Giambologna did not limit himself to creating iconic sculptural figures; he also conceived of subjects. He began his career with a model of a "Cristo Morto," depicting the dead Christ with his head bowed in sorrow, in reference to the biblical passage "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? " (Matthew 27:45, Mark 15:34). This was the preferred depiction by the end of the Middle Ages, whereas in previous centuries--beginning with the earliest depictions of Jesus on the cross in the 6th century--artists had favored a Christ who was still conscious, free from pain, with his eyes open, but looking toward the viewer and rarely turned toward the sky. The break with this tradition occurred with the creation of a drawing by Michelangelo, around 1540, for Vittoria Colonna, now in the British Museum, London. In it, Jesus Christ is depicted as anxious, imploring

heaven but very much alive, with his face turned toward the sky.It was in the spirit of this new model that Giambologna created his "Cristo vivo" around 1590. He abandoned the pathetic aspect in order to confer upon him a new grandeur, that of acceptance, as transcribed in the Gospel according to Saint Luke (23:46): "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit!" The Son of God is thus depicted, freed from all suffering, offering himself to the will of his divine Father, toward whom his gaze is turned, and comforted by the knowledge of his resurrection.Furthermore, this evolution of the subject is closely linked to the context in which it was created. Indeed, the Council of Trent had a profound impact on the art world, forcing artists to revise their works to adapt them to the new religious precepts promoted by the council. Among these, the renewed emphasis on the mystery of the Incarnation and the assurance of eternal heavenly bliss made possible by the Resurrection was paramount, requiring new images to celebrate it. The work of Giambologna and his workshop is particularly illustrative of these theological questions, where the viewer is invited to share in Christ's bliss and this divine meditation, following the model of the "Imitatio Christi."Only two versions of the "Cristo Vivo" have been definitively attributed to the master or his immediate workshop. One is housed at the Monastery of Descatras Reales in Madrid, and the second was sold by Sotheby's on July 9, 2004 (lot 7). The quality of our piece leaves no doubt as to its connection to Giambologna's workshop. Our "Cristo Vivo" was certainly produced by one of his successors, based on the artist's model, a concrete example of the influence and success this figure enjoyed. Furthermore, this reference model transcends the world of sculpture to make its mark in the realm of painting, as evidenced by Guido Reni's corpus of crucifixion works.