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Jan Van Kessel I And Jan Van Balen, Still Life, First Half Of The 17th Century



28 500 EUR

Signature : Jan van Kessel I et Jan van Balen

Period : 17th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Oil painting on wood

Width : 82

Height : 68

Description

Jan van Kessel I and Jan van Balen, Still Life with Flowers and Butterflies, trompe l'oeil frame and sacred scene, first half of the 17th century Signed I. V. Balen Oil on panel.

Dimensions: 68 x 82 cm This highly refined painting presents a rich floral composition adorning an architectural trompe l'oeil frame, at the centre of which a small scene with the Holy Family, Saint John the Baptist and a putto opens up, following a compositional type typical of the collaborations between Jan van Kessel I (1626-1679) and Jan van Balen (1611-1654) within the context of seventeenth-century Flemish garland painting. Against a

Dealer

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very dark background emerges a large illusionistic frame in imitation carved stone, with animated scrolls and ample shaped surfaces, simulating a monumental frame for a small altarpiece or a baroque cornice cartegloria. Its sculptural effect is heightened by warm chiaroscuro and sharp shadows that emphasise its projections and recesses. The inner outline, opening in a mistilinear oval, contains the central devotional scene. The trompe l'oeil frame is signed I. V. Balen on one of the mouldings.

Around this architectural structure runs a series of garlands and groups of flowers falling with great naturalness: one can recognise striped tulips, roses, carnations, dahlias and small wild flowers, rendered with extreme descriptive precision, in keeping with Jan van Kessel I's well-known naturalistic expertise in the depiction of botanical species. Delicate butterflies rest on several blossoms.

The colours, playing on a carefully balanced alternation of deep reds, pinks, whites, yellows and bright oranges, stand out vividly against the dark ground and interact with the intense greens of the leaves and ivy tendrils, creating a refined chromatic contrast and a strong sense of depth. The use of oil on panel further enhances the saturation and intensity of the chromatic range.

In the central medallion is depicted the Holy Family with Saint John the Baptist and a putto: the Virgin, seated in the foreground, holds the Child in her arms, turned towards John, who offers Him a small lamb, a clear reference to Christ's future sacrifice; in the background we glimpse the figure of Saint Joseph,

slightly set back, watching over the scene with a contemplative attitude. The palette of the figural area, with subdued brown and red tones, differs from that of the garland, underlining the different hand of the figure painter, Jan van Balen, compared to that of the flower specialist Jan van Kessel I, in accordance with a collaborative practice well documented in Flemish painting of the period.

Because of its dimensions, the precious execution on panel and the refined balance between devotional content and decorative virtuosity, the work is perfectly suited as a private devotional picture or as a collector's wall piece, ideal for a classical interior or to enter into dialogue, in a contemporary setting, with design furnishings.

The painting is offered with a carved and gilded wooden frame.

Art historical research on the work is currently ongoing. Further images will be made available shortly.