Pair Of Tempera Paintings On Wood Panels - Central Italy - Late 16th Century - Dated 1599



3 600 EUR

Signature : Italie centrale (attribuée) - Fin du XVIe siècle - Datés 1599
Period : 16th century
Condition : Etat d'usage
Material : Other
Width : 52 cm
Height : 83 cm

Description

Tempera on wood panels - Central Italy (attributed) - Late 16th century - Dated 1599
Italian School.
Likely Central Italy (Umbria, Marche, or Lazio).
Tempera on wood panels.
Period frames.
Two vertical planks per panel.
Painted inscription dated "1599".
Traces of Latin inscriptions on the crossbars.

Dimensions
Height: 83 cm
Width: 52 cm
Weight: between 5.9 and 6.8 kg each
ICONOGRAPHIC STUDY
This remarkable pair of panels likely constitutes a fragment of an Italian altarpiece dedicated to the

Dealer

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life of Saint John the Baptist.
The presence of two complementary scenes appears particularly significant.
The first panel shows a haloed saint blessing two kneeling figures at the edge of a stream.
The scene is currently difficult to decipher due to significant paint loss. Several interpretations remain possible.
The first is to identify the scene as the Baptism administered by Saint John the Baptist.
A second hypothesis suggests a scene of healing or blessing.
However, the presence of the second panel profoundly alters the interpretation of the ensemble.
The latter unambiguously depicts a figure dressed in the traditional camel-hair garment, holding the long reed cross that serves as one of Saint John the Baptist's major iconographic attributes.
This iconographic correspondence naturally leads to the conclusion that this is part of a narrative cycle dedicated to the Forerunner.
The set likely belonged to an altarpiece illustrating various episodes of his life.

HISTORICAL NOTE

The year 1599 corresponds to a major period in Italian religious history. On the eve of the Jubilee of the Year 1600, proclaimed by Pope Clement VIII, commissions for altarpieces, votive paintings, and liturgical decorations saw significant growth throughout Italy.
The Counter-Reformation encouraged a clear iconography designed to foster meditation among the faithful.
Numerous regional workshops produced works intended for parish churches, rural chapels, and confraternities.
Our panels appear to fit perfectly into this tradition.
Their style remains faithful to an aesthetic largely inherited from the Renaissance while heralding the early notes of the Italian Baroque.

STYLISTIC ANALYSIS

The composition displays all the characteristics of Italian provincial workshops from the late 16th century.

The figures occupy a deliberately simplified space where the landscape plays a symbolic rather than a naturalistic role.

Trees with stylized silhouettes structure the space and recall certain Umbrian works.

The gilded background--now heavily worn--continues a medieval tradition that remained vibrant in several Italian regions.

The draftsmanship remains firm despite the condition of the work.

Outlines are executed with energetic dark strokes, while flesh tones utilize a limited palette of red ochres.

This economy of means lends the work a remarkable spiritual intensity.

INSCRIPTIONS

The first panel clearly bears the date:

1599

The lower crossbars retain several fragments of Latin inscriptions that are now difficult to decipher.

These inscriptions most likely consisted of biblical quotations accompanying the depicted scenes.

CONDITION

Excellent structural condition.

The panels show:

- normal wear
- old lifting of the paint layer
- significant paint loss
- old wood-boring insect damage (now inactive)
- original frames preserved
- partially visible inscriptions

The work retains remarkable authenticity.

No invasive restoration appears to have altered the overall visual impact. OBSERVATIONS

The presence of the date painted directly onto the

panel is a particularly interesting feature.
The two panels have always been kept together.
Today, they stand as a rare example of Italian provincial religious painting from the late Cinquecento.

Shipping & Insurance

Packaging is handled by MBE Narbonne.
Transport via UPS, FedEx, or GLS.
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