



PROANTIC
LE PLUS BEAU CATALOGUE D'ANTIQUITES

Relief Depicting The Imposition Of The Stigmata Of Christ On Saint Francis, 17th-century Andalusian



12 000 EUR

Period : 17th century

Condition : En l'etat

Material : Painted wood

Width : 161

Height : 200

Depth : 19

Description

Dimensions: 200 cm high x 161 cm wide x 19 cm deep
The bestowal of the stigmata upon Saint Francis of Assisi is one of the most significant episodes in the Franciscan tradition. It took place on September 17, 1224, in Italy, on Mount Alverna, a remote and rocky mountain in the Apennines that Saint Francis had chosen for its solitude and natural beauty. According to tradition, Saint Francis had withdrawn to Mount Alverna to observe a forty-day fast in preparation for the feast of Saint Michael the Archangel. He sought to unite himself fully with the suffering of Christ's Passion and to feel an extreme love for God. During one of his intense prayers, Saint Francis had a vision in which a seraph--the highest heavenly spirit known to surround the throne of God--was holding up a crucified man. During

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this apparition, the rays of light emanating from the seraph marked the body of Saint Francis. Brother Leo was on Mount La Verna at that time and witnessed not only the prayer but also the marks of Saint Francis; he then took care of the saint. Brother Leo is the most famous of St. Francis's brothers. He was a priest, and because of the purity of his soul and his simplicity, St. Francis chose him as his companion and confidant. He also gave him the name "Lamb of God." This event made Francis the first recognized stigmatized saint in the history of the Church, having received the five wounds of Christ (hands, feet, and side). In the work before us, the figures mentioned--St. Francis and Brother Leo--are depicted in a rocky landscape that alludes to Mount Alverne. This place, characterized by its solitude and steep cliffs, is the perfect illustration of the site where this mystical event took place. We also see the rays of light that marked the saint. They burst forth from the cloud in which the six-winged seraph appears, lending movement and radiance to the composition. As one of the highest figures in the celestial hierarchy, the seraph is depicted with characteristic polychromy on its wings, in shades of yellow, red, and blue. Beside the seraph, a majestic high relief of Saint Francis, rendered with meticulous realism, in which even his hands, marked by the stigmata of the Franciscan tradition, seem to want to step out of the image. The saint's face, representative of the 17th-century Andalusian school, is sculpted with meticulous attention to detail and great expressiveness. The tension of the scene is fully evident in the protruding veins of the saint's neck, the tension in the muscles of his wrist, and his posture, which focuses all his attention on the angel. Saint Francis wears a delicately decorated tunic, polychrome and gilded, characterized by wide sleeves which, according to the account of Brother Leon, he would later use to cover the wounds that caused him intense pain. The saint's garment is also a clear example of 17th-century

Andalusian polychromy, as it features "roleos"--a decorative element in the shape of a spiral or volute--as well as polychrome and gilded foliage motifs, characteristic of 17th-century Andalusian sculpture. This entire vision, as tradition holds, is attested to by Brother Leon, at the feet of Saint Francis, who would later tend to his wounds and recount this mystical apparition. Seventeenth-century Spanish sculpture brought together, in most of its iconography, religious imagery, always striving for the greatest possible realism, drama, and emotion in order to foster the devotion that prevailed during that era. This work exceptionally illustrates the realism and expressiveness characteristic of that era. The saint's face conveys, with fervor and devotion, the devotion and expressiveness that are unique to him. Furthermore, the size of the relief makes the creation of this piece all the more labor-intensive.