



PROANTIC
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Charles Thomas (1857-1892) Still Life With Oysters And Shrimp (67 × 50 Cm)

3 500 EUR



Signature : Charles Thomas

Period : 19th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Oil painting

Length : 70 cm

Width : 49 cm

Description

Still Life with Oysters, Shrimp, and a Glass of Wine Oil on canvas, signed lower right. A student of Victor Leclaire, Charles Armand Étienne Thomas belonged to that generation of late 19th-century French painters whose careers were abruptly cut short by premature death. He died at the age of only 35, leaving behind a relatively small body of work, which was exhibited at the Salon des Artistes Français between 1878 and 1892. His early death explains the rarity of his works on the market today. This remarkable still life represents, in our view, one of the high points of his currently cataloged body of work. In an intimate atmosphere reminiscent of the 17th-century Dutch masters, the artist arranges on a tabletop a few freshly shucked oysters, a pile of pink shrimp, a cut lemon, a glass of green wine,

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Mobile : 0630219643

6, rue de la Grève

Bonneval 28800

bottles, a pitcher, and an overturned cup. The composition is built on a deliberately limited palette of browns, deep greens, and velvety blacks, suddenly enlivened by the luminous flashes of the pearly shells, scarlet shellfish, and the lemon. The composition is striking for its remarkable balance. The dark space envelops the objects and naturally draws the eye to the central area, where the light shapes the forms with great subtlety. The transparency of the glass, the reflections on the bottles, the moisture of the oysters, and the texture of the shrimp all attest to an uncommon technical mastery. Beyond its descriptive virtuosity, the work captivates with its extraordinary sense of materiality. Each element possesses its own tactile identity: the roughness of the shells, the pearly flesh of the oysters, the translucency of the glass, and even the waxy skin of the lemon are rendered with an economy of means reminiscent of the finest French naturalist painters of the late 19th century. Compared to Charles Thomas's other known works, this painting stands out for the richness of its composition, the depth of its color palette, and the exceptional quality of its execution. It stands out as one of the artist's most ambitious and accomplished works, both in terms of its size and its pictorial intensity. Signed lower right, this work is a particularly captivating testament to the revival of French still life in the late 19th century, in which the influence of the Flemish and Dutch masters is reinterpreted with a thoroughly modern sensibility. Only 19 of his works are listed in public auctions, with prices ranging from EUR800 to EUR7,000. Beautiful, thick 20th-century frame in light oak