



Sculpture - Black Madonna Of Le Puy-en-velay, Madonna In Majesty - High Middle Ages - Folk Art



3 200 EUR

Period : 17th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Solid wood

Description

Second half of the 17th century French School of Vellave Private collection: Clermont-Ferrand - Puy-de-Dôme (63) Exhibited at the Saint-Jean Baptistery in 1983. This sculptural group depicting the Black Madonna in Majesty is a remarkable example of 17th-century religious art. Carved from walnut wood, this sculpture is both painted and gilded, attesting to the skill and craftsmanship of the Vellave artisans of the time. The statue displays perfect frontality and symmetry, characteristics typical of medieval depictions of the Virgin in Majesty. This type of depiction, in which the Virgin is seated on a throne holding the Infant Jesus, is intended to highlight not only Mary's motherhood but also her royal status and divinity. The gilding on this piece is particularly remarkable, covering most of

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the sculpture and highlighting the richness and significance of the sacred subject. The areas depicting flesh, as well as the back of the throne, are painted black, contrasting elegantly with the gilding and adding visual depth to the overall composition. However, it is important to note that the sculpture has borne the marks of time.

Damage is visible on the crowns, the hands, the tips of the shoes, and the drapery of the sleeves.

These signs of wear are silent witnesses to the work's turbulent history and its journey through the centuries. Historically, the Black Madonnas have been shrouded in mystery and veneration. They are often associated with miracles and attract numerous pilgrims. Their black color is subject to various interpretations, ranging from symbols of the earth and fertility to hypotheses related to the patina and oxidation of the materials over time. This majestic Black Madonna is particularly interesting because it is a smaller version of the famous Black Madonna of Le Puy-en-Velay, one of the most venerated images in France. The Black Madonna of Le

Puy-en-Velay is a wooden statue, likely dating from the 11th century, although tradition traces it back to even earlier times. It has been an important pilgrimage site and is associated with numerous legends and miracles. The Black Madonna of Le Puy is generally depicted in majesty, seated on a throne, holding the Infant Jesus on her lap, and is entirely draped in richly decorated robes. However, this miniature depicts the Black Madonna of Le Puy without her cloak, thus offering a more unadorned and intimate view of the icon from Le Puy-en-Velay. Finally, it is worth noting the presence of a small hole beneath the statue, which may have been used for mounting. This detail recalls the existence of other authentic Black Madonnas with similar characteristics, perhaps suggesting a common practice in their installation or veneration. This majestic Black Madonna is therefore not only a work of art of great beauty, but also a precious testament to the faith and religious practices of

past centuries, directly linked to one of the most iconic figures of Marian devotion in France, and offering a faithful representation of the Black Madonna of Le Puy-en-Velay in her original state without her cloak. Iconography

consulted: Iconography of the Black Madonna of Le Puy, exhibition catalog for Le Puy, Saint-Jean Baptistery. 1983 - p. 127 Dimensions: o Height:

15.5 cm o Width: 5.7 cm o Depth: 7 cm ALL

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