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Cornelis Van Poelenburgh (1594-1667) The Cross Of Christ Carried By Putti (redemption)



3 850 EUR

Signature : Cornelis van Poelenburgh (1594 - 1667)

Period : 17th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Oil painting on wood

Width : 26,5cm

Height : 36,5cm

Description

Cornelis van Poelenburgh Utrecht, January 21, 1594/95 - August 12, 1667, Utrecht "The Cross of Christ Carried by Putti" - Allegory of the Redemption Oil on panel, 36.5 x 26.5 cm Dimensions with frame: 48 x 38.5 cm Wax seal on the back Provenance: - Frye & Söhn Gallery, Münster- private collection, Strasbourg (acquired from the previous owner at the Munich Art Fair in 1988) This oil on panel, attributed to Cornelis van Poelenburgh, fits seamlessly into the most intimate and spiritual aspect of the Dutch master's oeuvre, while revealing the profound influence of his training and his extended stay in Italy. The scene unfolds in a celestial space, suspended between heaven and earth. At the heart of a bluish-gray cloud, animated by subtle atmospheric variations, a group of winged putti

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moves with ethereal grace around a large wooden Cross, clearly identifiable by the presence of the inscription INRI. The Cross, rendered in a strong oblique perspective, structures the composition and establishes a dynamic axis, accentuating the upward movement. The putti, with their plump and delicately modeled bodies, cling to it, support it, or accompany it in a celestial ballet of great liveliness. Some faces emerge partially from the clouds, following a technique inherited from sixteenth-century Italian painting, reinforcing the effect of a mystical vision. In the lower section, a distantly sketched landscape--hills and plains bathed in soft light--establishes a subtle separation between the earthly world and the divine realm, accentuating the supernatural dimension of the scene. The work does not depict a specific narrative episode from the Passion, but rather a Christian allegory of the Glorious Cross. Stripped of any depiction of the suffering Christ, the Cross here becomes a triumphant symbol of Redemption, already transfigured and carried into the heavens by angelic figures. The putti, direct heirs of classical antiquity, are fully Christianized: their presence evokes innocence, purity, and spiritual victory. This iconography, particularly prized in the post-Tridentine context, invites the viewer not to painful compassion, but to a theological and contemplative meditation on the mystery of Salvation. The treatment of the figures--pearly skin tones, soft contours, idealized forms--reflects a classicizing aesthetic, drawing inspiration from Raphael and early 17th-century Roman painting. The delicacy of the brushwork, the clarity of the composition, and the balance between movement and harmony all point directly to the pictorial language of Poelenburgh, best known for his Italianate landscapes and mythological scenes, but also the creator of refined religious compositions--often small in scale--intended for private devotion or scholarly cabinets. The panel support, common in his work, reinforces the painting's precious and intimate character, while

suggesting a meticulous and thoughtful execution. This painting can be understood as a celestial vision of the Triumphant Cross, where ancient culture and Christian spirituality converge in a typically Romanesque synthesis. Through its scholarly iconography, formal grace, and expressive gentleness, the work perfectly illustrates the art of Cornelis van Poelenburgh, a master of poetic classicism in the service of a luminous and interiorized spirituality.