



PROANTIC
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Still Life With Fruit And Delft Plate - Attrib. Gillis Van Hulsdonck



30 000 EUR

Signature : Attribué à Gillis van Hulsdonck

Period : 17th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Oil painting

Width : 49cm

Height : 40cm

Description

This complex and convincing composition is painted from a frontal perspective. In the lower half is a wooden shelf or table on which several elements are skilfully arranged. On the right is a Delft plate, the handling of the gilt edge is pure genius, the light hits the edge and we see the undulations on the rim of the plate on which two masterfully painted peaches and two pears rest. A tone of elegant refinement is set by these motifs, which appealed to the taste of the artists socially distinguished and cultivated clients. The light helps to emphasise the varied hues of their skin, while the opacity of their surface and the tendency to emphasise volume contrasts almost theatrically with the transparent effect of the grapes beside them. The texture of their skin is achieved with the extraordinary skilful use of

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highlighting to suggest a glasslike translucency. Directly above the cluster of grapes hangs a very fine, elegantly drawn tendril. Leading to the stalk and leaves, again the artist has captured the turning and patterns of the leaves brilliantly. The inclusion of beams of light entering from the left is a tenebrist device and powerfully strikes the carefully drawn objects, illuminating some areas of the fruits and leaves from behind in order to create different planes. Part of the compelling beauty of this picture depends on its spare composition of relatively few still-life elements. The skin on the fig is depicted with such extraordinary naturalism, you could almost take it from the painting to eat. At this period fresh fruit was a luxury found mostly on the tables of the affluent.

Gillis van Hulsdonck was a Flemish still life painter. After training in Antwerp, he spent most of his active career in Amsterdam. He is known for his still lifes of fruit and banquet pieces. Hulsdonck was born in Antwerp as the son of Jacob van Hulsdonck and his first wife Maria la Hoes. His father was a prominent painter who played a role in the early development of the genre of still lifes of fruit, banquets and flowers and operated a successful workshop in Antwerp. Gillis trained with his father in his workshop. It is recorded that after his father died in early 1647, on 12 February of that year two guardians were appointed over the then already 21-year old Gillis. There is no record of Gillis joining the Antwerp Guild of Saint Luke. He is believed to have moved to Amsterdam some time after his father's death. In Amsterdam he married Magdalena Davidt on 2 January 1655. The couple had six children. He likely returned to Antwerp with his family around 1670. On 27 March 1676 he and his wife (43 years old) attest that they know a certain Jan Pedro de Herde and that they had lived 'in Holland'. This is the last record about the artist. It is not known where and when he died. It was likely in Antwerp and no later than 1696. Van Hulsdonck is known for his fruit still

lives, banquet still lifes and pronkstillevenen. Only a limited number of wholly or partially signed works by his hand are known. There exist some disagreements in the art historian community about attributions of works to him. Some of his works may have been wrongly included among the works of his father whose style he initially continued. His later works are more reflective of the Dutch school of still life painting of his time, in particular Willem Kalf. However, in comparison to Kalf's paintings van Hulsdonck's brush stroke is soft and this gives all depicted objects an almost velvety surface. This softness of the objects is also enhanced by the painter's use of light and shadow, which is characterized by creamy reflections and softly flowing drop shadows. This gives his paintings an intimist quality.