



PROANTIC
LE PLUS BEAU CATALOGUE D'ANTIQUITES

Vicente Carducho (1578-1638), Workshop Of -- The Nativity As Seen By María De Agreda



6 500 EUR

Period : 17th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Oil painting on copper

Description

Oil on copper plate. To ensure better preservation and greater protection of the work, the panel has been mounted on a wooden board. Sister María de Jesús de Ágreda transcends the conventional image of the cloistered mystic to become one of the most fascinating, influential, and complex figures of the Spanish Baroque. Endowed with exceptional intelligence and boundless theological zeal, the abbess of the convent of the Discalced Conceptionists was able to combine her experiences of ecstasy and celestial visions with an extraordinary practical sense for managing her community. Her keen analytical mind and visionary conviction led her to write texts of dazzling theoretical complexity, defying the suspicions of the Inquisition with prose of astonishing conceptual depth and an eloquence

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that captivated the society of her time. Her magnetic personality and singular intellectual stature reached their peak in her role as a political advisor, a role in which she maintained a crucial correspondence with King Philip IV for more than twenty years. Far from being a passive advisor, the visionary nun addressed the monarch with impressive confidence, offering him advice ranging from morally rigorous warnings to insightful analyses of the governance and geopolitics of the Spanish monarchy. In Sister María de Ágreda coexisted the visionary capable of bringing the sumptuous geography of heaven to life on paper and the stateswoman acting behind the scenes--an exceptional woman who transformed her cell into a center of spiritual, theological, and political power unmatched in the 17th century. Her unique account of the birth of Christ, immortalized in **The Mystical City of God** and illustrated in this composition attributed to the elegant brush of Vicente Carducho, strips the event of all earthly brutality, sublimating it into a theophany of heavenly splendor. The scene masterfully articulates the key elements of Madrid's Reformed Classicism: a subtle chiaroscuro that modulates the volumes without resorting to violent drama; a Florentine-style drawing of great anatomical precision, evident in the muscular foreshortening of the shepherd in the foreground; and a sumptuous palette of pigments that enhances the sculptural density of the drapery. In her vision, the birth occurs miraculously and painlessly, thanks to the intervention of the Archangel Saint Michael; the Infant Jesus emerges like a ray of uncreated light that bathes the figures in shadow and plunges the Virgin into a state of ecstatic adoration. The presence of cherubs in the sky and the reverent attitude of the shepherds convey on the canvas Sister María's fundamental principle: the Nativity was not merely a historical event, but the revelation of a divine mystery in which the formal rigor of courtly art is placed at the service of the highest mystical contemplation.-

Dimensions of the unframed painting: 46 x 51 cm
/ 68 x 72.5 with an exuberant historicist frame.