



Virgin With Child, A Gothic Limestone Sculpture From The Spanish School, Late 13th Century



38 000 EUR

Signature : Anonyme

Period : Before 16th century

Condition : Etat d'usage

Length : 46 cm

Width : 22 cm

Height : 140 cm

Description

The sculpture depicts a "Virgin and Child," carved from stone, with traces of polychromy still visible. The work is distinguished by its monumental scale and a certain frontal orientation. The uncarved rear suggests that it was originally designed to be viewed from the front, likely as an ornamental element in a sculptural cycle comprising several figures. The sculpture reflects a shift away from the characteristic motifs of the Romanesque style toward the new Gothic language, which seeks to humanize the gestures and postures of the figures, now endowed with greater individuality. Aesthetic conventions are gradually being set aside in favor of a more naturalistic representation of faces, anatomies, clothing, and so on. Thus, in this "Virgin and Child," an exchange and a dialogue

Dealer

Ares Anticuarios

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are established between the smiling mother and her gaze directed toward her child. The figures' emotions are expressed through eloquent facial expressions and hand gestures. The work also features other elements characteristic of this new trend: a certain slenderness in the rendering of the monumental human figure, as well as an abundance of broad, vertical folds in the depiction of the clothing, to which a slight movement lends greater dynamism. Particular note should be made of the detailing on the tunic, which features numerous raised details corresponding to the fabric's ornamentation, as well as small circular recesses in the garments of the Child and the Virgin, designed to hold glass elements or semiprecious stones. These characteristics find some of their precursors in models from French Occitania. Among the innovative elements, the glass eyes are also worth noting, reflecting a consistent effort to emulate models based on reality. As for its polychromy, the garments are distinguished by dark blue tones verging on green, which contrast with the Virgin's reddish-brown cloak. Traces of gold paint are also visible in the form of a border on the Child's garment, thereby emphasizing his royal status. The hair also retains traces of gilding. It is worth noting that the great works of the Gothic period experienced a true golden age of polychromy, both to imitate the gilded brocades of the garments and to render the skin tones of the faces. In this case, the Virgin's face stands out for its luminosity, accentuated by the rosy tones of her cheekbones and the reddish pigment of her lips. Today, very few stone sculptures have retained their original polychromy, which gives this Gothic sculpture of the "Virgin and Child" particular value and interest, making it all the more remarkable, noteworthy, and worthy of study.