



17th-century Aubusson Tapestry: The Family Of Darius Before Alexander



17 500 EUR

Signature : AUBUSSON

Period : 17th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Wool

Description

A monumental and exceptional French Aubusson tapestry dating from the late 17th century (circa 1680-1700). It depicts the famous historical episode titled "The Family of Darius Before Alexander," also known as "The Tent of Darius" or "The Queens of Persia at the Feet of Alexander." The composition is inspired by the famous cycle dedicated to Alexander the Great, designed by Charles Le Brun (1619-1690), Chief Painter to King Louis XIV and one of the most influential artists of the French Grand Siècle. The scene depicts the dramatic encounter that took place after the Battle of Issus, in which Alexander the Great defeated the Persian king Darius III. Following the battle, members of Darius's family--including his mother, his wife, and his daughters--were taken prisoner and brought

Dealer

Florin Antiques

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before Alexander and his companion Hephaestion. According to the classical account, Darius's mother initially mistook Hephaestion for Alexander and bowed before him. Far from taking offense, Alexander reassured her by declaring that Hephaestion was "another Alexander." This episode has become one of the most famous examples of the conqueror's magnanimity and clemency. The tapestry transforms this historical episode into a decorative composition of extraordinary richness, filled with figures in elegant costumes, sumptuous textiles, architectural elements, and an elaborate landscape. Woven from wool and silk, this piece attests to the technical virtuosity for which the Aubusson workshops were renowned throughout Europe. The subtle color variations, the refined costumes, and the meticulous rendering of the figures lend the work exceptional depth and theatricality. The tapestry bears the woven inscription "AVBVSSON," attesting to its manufacture in Aubusson, the historic center of French tapestry. Its monumental dimensions--approximately five meters wide--lend the work an extraordinary architectural presence. Originally, tapestries of this scale were intended for the interiors of aristocratic residences, palaces, and grand state rooms, where they served both as sumptuous decoration and as thermal insulation. Despite its great age, the tapestry retains a remarkable decorative presence. It shows signs of wear, discoloration, past restorations, and areas of material loss--all characteristic of more than three centuries of existence. A protective backing has been added to preserve and support the textile. A rare and imposing example of a 17th-century Aubusson tapestry, combining monumental dimensions, a historical subject, and the artistic influence of Charles Le Brun.

Subject The Family of Darius Before Alexander the Great
Also known as *The Tent of Darius* or *The Queens of Persia at the Feet of Alexander*
Origin Aubusson, France
Period Late 17th century, circa

1680-1700DesignBased on compositions by
Charles Le Brun (1619-1690)MaterialsWool and
silkMarkWoven inscription
"AVBVSSON"DimensionsApproximate:Width:
370 cm (145.7 in.)Height: 280 cm (110.2
in.)ConditionGood condition for its age. The
tapestry shows signs of wear, color fading, areas
of loss, and historical restorations, all
characteristic of a 17th-century textile. It has been
fitted with a protective lining for conservation
and display.Keywords: Florin Antiques.