Virgin And Child, Tempera And Gold On Panel, Venetian School, Quattrocento



5 900 EUR

Signature : École italienne du XVe siècle

Period : Before 16th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Other

Width : 24 cm

Height : 28 cm

Description

Virgin and Child Venetian School of the Quattrocento, circa 1460-1480 Tempera and Gold Leaf on the Original Arched Wooden Panel Dimensions: 28 x 24 cm This moving representation of the Virgin and Child belongs to the pictorial tradition that defined fifteenth-century Venice, an extraordinary crossroads between the Byzantine East and the emerging Renaissance West.Executed in tempera on a wooden panel and enriched with gold leaf, the painting retains its original arched format, characteristic of small devotional panels intended for private oratories, monastic cells, or patrician residences.It bears witness to a particularly important moment in the history of art: the period when the hieratic rigidity inherited from Byzantium gradually became infused with greater

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humanity under the influence of the first naturalistic explorations of the Renaissance. An Iconography of Sacred Tenderness The composition follows the celebrated model of the Eleousa Virgin ("Virgin of Tenderness").Mary gently inclines her head toward her Son in a gesture of remarkable grace and affection.Their faces draw close together, creating a silent intimacy that softens the more austere and monumental character traditionally associated with medieval icons.The Christ Child, seated upon His Mother's arm, raises His hand in blessing according to the traditional Eastern gesture.His surprisingly solemn gaze, despite His youthful appearance, affirms His divine nature and foreshadows His future redemptive sacrifice.The Virgin herself appears contemplative, almost melancholic, symbolically anticipating the suffering to come. Stylistic Analysis The painting elegantly demonstrates the coexistence of two artistic worlds.Byzantine Heritage Entirely gilded backgroundEngraved and punched halosFrontal compositionHieratic presentation of the figuresGeometric and angular drapery foldsSpiritual significance of the golden lightEmerging Renaissance Sensibility More individualized facial featuresSubtly modeled flesh tonesEmotionally expressive gazesMore natural volumesA tender and affectionate relationship between the figuresIt is precisely this synthesis that makes Venetian paintings of the Quattrocento so highly prized today. Pictorial Quality Several elements attest to a particularly refined execution:Delicately drawn almond-shaped eyesLong, straight nose characteristic of the Italo-Byzantine traditionFine gilded highlights within the garmentsFlowing draperies animated by broad rhythmic movementsRemarkable chromatic harmonyWell-preserved original gildingThe deep reds of the Virgin's mantle and the Child's robe contrast beautifully with the dark blues and softly aged gold background.This opposition creates a luminous visual effect and contributes greatly to

the painting's strong devotional presence. Palette and Pigments Visual examination suggests the probable use of traditional pigments commonly employed in Venetian workshops of the fifteenth century:Vermilion or cinnabar redOrganic red lakesAzurite blueLead whiteNatural earth pigmentsGold leaf applied over a prepared groundThe gilded highlights accentuating the folds of Christ's garment are characteristic of the technique known as chrysography, directly inherited from Byzantine artistic practice. Attribution and Comparisons Stylistically, the painting may be compared with works produced by:Venetian workshops influenced by the Greek tradition;The circle of Jacobello del Fiore;The later works of Michele Giambono;Workshops active in Venice and Murano during the second half of the fifteenth century;Certain Cretan-Venetian devotional productions created for private worship.While no attribution to a specific master can be proposed without further scientific study, the painting can be consistently placed within the tradition of Late Italo-Byzantine Venetian painting of the Quattrocento. Condition The painting displays:Wear consistent with its age;An extensive network of age craquelure;Minor localized paint lifting and abrasions;Peripheral wear to the wooden support;Significant historic woodworm activity visible on the reverse;A panel that appears structurally stable today.These characteristics contribute fully to the historical authenticity of the work. Importance in Art History Venice occupied a unique position in fifteenth-century Europe.While Florence was developing the principles of the Renaissance, the Serenissima maintained constant cultural and commercial exchanges with Constantinople, Crete, and the wider Greek world.This painting perfectly illustrates that exceptional historical context.It preserves the timeless spirituality of the Byzantine icon while revealing the earliest signs of the Renaissance humanization of sacred imagery.As such, it belongs to one of the most

fascinating chapters in the history of Italian painting. Professional Visual Assessment Based on the available photographs:Venetian or Cretan-Venetian SchoolSecond half of the 15th century (circa 1460-1480)Technique consistent with period practice:Egg tempera painting;Original gilded background;Traditional panel preparation;Orthodox iconography adapted to Venetian taste.The age of the support, the natural wear of the gilding, the character of the craquelure, and the historic woodworm traces all support the conclusion that this is an authentically old work.