



PROANTIC

LE PLUS BEAU CATALOGUE D'ANTIQUITES

Venice, 1747-1780, Solid Silver, Rococo Reliquary, Zuan Pietro Grappiglia



3 650 EUR

Signature : Anonyme

Period : 18th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Sterling silver

Width : 17 cm

Height : 36 cm

Description

Rococo reliquary in solid silver -- Venice, circa 1747-1780A standing reliquary in repoussé and chased solid silver, featuring a rich decoration of volutes, shells, foliage, and winged cherub heads. Its dynamic silhouette and ornamental vocabulary place it firmly within the Rococo tradition of Venetian religious silverwork. The widely flared base rests on a scalloped border. Its surface is punctuated by raised ribs delineating compartments that are alternately polished and adorned with plant motifs on an amati background. Winged cherub heads appear among scrolls of foliage, while shells and arabesques decorate the outer rim. The contrast between the smooth surfaces and the finely worked backgrounds emphasizes the volumes and brings the silver's reflections to life. A series of moldings

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Affligem 1790

provides the transition to the stem, whose central knot takes on a dynamic form, accentuated by opposing volutes, shells, and foliage motifs. This decoration continues into the upper section, designed as a wide cartouche surrounding the glass-enclosed niche intended to hold the relics. The frame of this niche features powerful scrollwork, plant-inspired clasps, and shells around an opening with a scalloped edge. Two winged cherub heads occupy the lateral ends. At the top, three other heads, grouped above a shell, crown the composition. The curly hair, facial expressions, and wing feathers are rendered in intricate chisel work. Intended to be placed on an altar or in a private oratory, this reliquary is designed for frontal display. The full richness of the decoration is concentrated on the side facing the faithful; the reverse side, more understated, reveals the back of the repoussé work and the compartment for the relics. The entire piece can be disassembled by unscrewing it into three parts: the base, the shaft, and the upper section bearing the niche. Each part bears clearly legible hallmarks, including the repeated Venice hallmark featuring the Lion of St. Mark and the hallmark of the assayer Zuan Piero Grappiglia, consisting of the monogram "ZP" and the letter "G" separated by a heraldic fleur-de-lis, set within a cartouche pointed at the top and bottom. Since Grappiglia is documented as an assayer at the Venice Zecca as early as 1747, combining this information with the distinctly Rococo character of the decoration allows us to propose a date range of approximately 1747-1780. This range is based on the convergence of hallmarks and stylistic analysis. Grappiglia's hallmark attests to his role as a silver assayer; the silversmith who executed the work remains unidentified. Height: 36 cm -- Width: 17 cm -- Weight: 335 g.