Bruges, 1763-1791, Carel Benninck, Solid Silver Coffee Pot



2 750 EUR

Signature : Carel Benninck

Period : 18th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Sterling silver

Height : 25 cm

Description

Solid Silver Coffee Pot - Bruges, 18th Century - Carel Frans Mathys Benninck (1733-1791)
Bruges, between 1764 and 1791
Height: 25 cm - Weight: 515 grams
An elegant solid silver coffee pot made in Bruges during the second half of the 18th century by the silversmith Carel Frans Mathys Benninck, also known as Carolus Benninck (1733-1791), a master silversmith who twice served as Dean of the Bruges Silversmiths' Guild.
The coffee pot has a graceful pear-shaped body resting on three slightly curved legs terminating in hoof-shaped feet. The elongated, gently curved spout blends harmoniously with the overall silhouette. The domed lid is hinged and surmounted by a finial. A lateral handle of blackened wood provides insulation from the

Dealer

Ian Panné
Antique silverware and general antiques
Tel : +32 475443619

Essene-kerkplein 5b
Affligem 1790

heat.
The absence of engraved or chased decoration emphasises the balanced proportions, purity of line and quality of the silverwork. This restrained elegance, combined with fine craftsmanship, is characteristic of Flemish domestic silver from the second half of the 18th century.
Despite its relatively modest dimensions, this coffee pot has a remarkable presence and represents a fine example of the silverware produced in Bruges during the Ancien Régime.
Maker's Mark and Attribution
The underside of the coffee pot bears the maker's mark of Carel Frans Mathys Benninck, consisting of the initials CB surmounted by a crown. This mark corresponds to one of the variants illustrated by Walter van Dievoet in his reference work Brugse edelsmeden van het Ancien Régime, Brussels, 2014, biographical entry no. 433.
The coffee pot is distinguished by the presence of the maker's mark alone, without the customary guild assay and date marks. This unusual feature is most plausibly explained by a commission for an institution or private individual enjoying exemption from the duties and taxes normally levied on silverware, a privilege granted to certain categories of patrons under the Ancien Régime.
The coffee pot was made between 1764, the year Benninck was admitted as a master silversmith, and 1791, the year of his death.
Carel Frans Mathys Benninck (1733-1791)
Carel Frans Mathys Benninck was born in Bruges on 22 July 1733, the son of Adriaen Benninck and Elisabeth Van de Velde.
He began his apprenticeship on 14 July 1749 under the silversmith Joannes Van Mortel and continued his training from 10 September 1753 under Andries Peyt.
On 26 June 1764, he was admitted as a master silversmith in Bruges. A few days later, on 2 July, he married Theresia Basslé.
His career is particularly well documented in the archives of the Bruges Silversmiths' Guild. He

served as an assayer or guild inspector in 1778 and 1779 and held several appointments as vinder, an official responsible for supervision and regulation within the guild.

Most notably, he was elected Dean of the Bruges Silversmiths' Guild on two occasions, in 1780 and 1788, reflecting the high regard in which he was held by his fellow craftsmen.

His workshop was evidently active and well established, as demonstrated by the five apprentices he trained between 1765 and 1779.

In 1776, Benninck was living in the Noordzandstraat in Bruges, near the Prinsenhof, the former residence of the Dukes of Burgundy.

He died in Bruges on 21 November 1791, aged 58.

His known work includes both domestic silverware and important ecclesiastical commissions, illustrating the vitality of Bruges silversmithing during the final decades of the Ancien Régime.

Works in Public and Ecclesiastical Collections

Several works by Carel Benninck are recorded in the museum collections of Bruges and in churches throughout West Flanders.

Among the documented examples are:

Musea Brugge, Bruges: a silver coffee pot with a twisted body, raised on a foot and fitted with a hinged lid.

Gruuthusemuseum, Bruges: a processional shield belonging to the Bakers' Guild, dated 1772, made of partially gilded silver with a shaped Rococo outline. Inventory no. X.O.0135.

Musea Brugge collections: silver candlesticks bearing the alliance coats of arms of the de Haveskercke and van der Varent families.

Former Saint John's Hospital, Bruges: a silver mustard pot in the form of a ribbed fruit, dated 1788.

Church of Saint Vincent, Eeklo: a silver chalice dated 1769.

Church of Saint Peter-on-the-Dyke, Bruges: a silver chalice dated 1779.

Church of Saint Walburga, Bruges: a silver

chalice dated 1779.
Church of Our Lady of the Pottery, Bruges: an imposing silver altar cross, dated 1770, measuring 345 cm in height.
Church of Saint Eligius, Ettelgem: a gilded ciborium and a vessel for the holy oils, documented around 1787-1789.
These works, some of which are recorded in historical inventories and publications, demonstrate the remarkable range of Benninck's production, from refined domestic silverware to monumental ecclesiastical commissions.
The presence of another coffee pot by this silversmith in the collections of the Bruges Museums provides a particularly interesting comparison with the present example.
Bibliography
Walter van Dievoet, Brugse edelsmeden van het Ancien Régime, Brussels, 2014, entry no. 433, Carel Frans Mathys Benninck, including illustrations of two variants of his maker's mark.