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Frans Francken II (antwerp, 1581-1642). The Last Judgment



18 800 EUR

Signature : Frans Francken II (Anvers, 1581-1642)

Period : 17th century

Condition : Parfait état

Material : Oil painting on wood

Width : 72

Height : 88

Description

Flemish School, Antwerp, first third of the 17th century.The Last Judgment surrounded by the Seven Works of Mercy.Oil on oak panel, primed on the reversePresented in an antique frame with an inverted profile, guilloché, and blackened woodOverall dimensions with frame: 88 x 72 cm. Panel alone: 65 × 50 cmA leading figure of the Antwerp school of the first third of the 17th century, Frans Francken II distinguished himself through his religious compositions of extreme narrative finesse, in which a wealth of imagination is combined with meticulous execution inherited from the Flemish tradition. This panel, created with the assistance of the workshop, is a remarkable example of these sophisticated devotional works intended for a private and cultured clientele.The composition is

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organized around a central scene depicting the Last Judgment. The glorious Christ, surrounded by the Virgin Mary and the elect, dominates the earthly realm while the dead rise from their tombs at the moment of the Resurrection. In the lower section, the contrast between the elect destined for salvation and the damned being dragged toward the flames of hell is rendered with great dramatic intensity. The variety of poses, the anatomical precision, and the liveliness of the brushwork attest to Francken's mastery in depicting scenes populated by numerous figures.The originality of the work lies in its painted frame, composed of small scenes in grisaille and brunaille, simulating sculpted reliefs. These compartments illustrate the "Seven Works of Mercy." In the four corners of the painting, the Fathers of the Latin Church--Gregory the Great, Jerome, Ambrose, and Augustine--are depicted reading and writing. They bear witness to the connection between earthly works and heavenly reward, a theme emphasized in their writings.It should be noted that the figures in the central composition were modeled after Peter Paul Rubens's *The Last Judgment*, housed at the Alte Pinakothek in Munich.This interplay between the central polychrome composition and the monochrome peripheral scenes reinforces the moral and spiritual significance of the work as a whole, inviting the viewer to reflect on redemption and the example of the saints.The quality of the drawing, the delicacy of the colors, and the elegance of the architectural arrangement place this work among the most refined productions of Frans Francken II, whose Antwerp workshop was particularly sought after for this type of scholarly and devotional composition.Preserved in excellent condition, this panel captivates as much with its fresh color palette as with the iconographic richness of its religious program, characteristic of the 17th-century Flemish taste for works of meditation and scholarly contemplation.Provenance: private collection in

Paris in the 1970s.Galerie Jacques Ollier, the Louvre des Antiquaires in Paris, circa 1990.**Certificate of Authenticity No. 2168 G.H / A.L., issued by the firm Herdhebaut & Latreille Experts in Paris on November 27, 1991, confirming that this is a work by Frans Francken the Younger.Related work:A similar painting by Frans Francken is currently in the collections of the Staatsgalerie in Stuttgart (Germany) under no. 437.