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Lombard School, 19th Century, The Sermon Of John The Baptist



2 400 EUR

Period : 19th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Oil painting

Width : 29

Height : 41

Description

Lombard School, 19th centuryThe Preaching of John the BaptistOil on canvas, 41 x 29 cm --with frame, 54 x 42 cmThe scene depicts St. John the Baptist preaching in the desert, recognizable by the customary iconography: the solemn figure wrapped in a red cloak, his half-naked body marked by an almost Michelangelesque vigor, the crossed reed with the scroll bearing the words "Ecce Agnus Dei," and the diverse crowd of listeners arranged at his feet in a natural amphitheater of figures--among whom women, children, and men in oriental-style garments stand out--beneath the dark silhouette of a palm tree that stands out against the sky.The compositional structure--with John the Baptist silhouetted at the center on a slight rise in the ground and his right arm outstretched upward to mark the rhythm of

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the proclamation--reveals a figurative tradition deeply rooted in early-nineteenth-century Lombard sacred painting, and in particular in the Bergamo art scene, which found one of the century's most prolific centers of artistic development in the Accademia Carrara. The swift, concise brushstrokes, which build volume through masses of warm color and dense shadows without dwelling on detail, together with the small size of the support, suggest that the work should be interpreted not as a finished painting intended for public viewing, but rather as a preparatory sketch--an initial pictorial concept conceived with a view toward a larger-scale composition, perhaps an altarpiece or a fresco cycle for a place of worship.This practice of treating the sketch as an autonomous stage of the creative process--often preserved and appreciated independently of the completed work--is clearly evident in the work of Enrico Scuri, a leading figure in Bergamo's academic art circles. Notable examples include the sketch and the corresponding cartoon for the *Entombment of the Virgin Mary*, intended for the parish church of the Nativity of Mary in Rudiano, in the Brescia area--now in a private collection and at the Civic Museum of Cremona, respectively--as well as the cartoon depicting the "Condemnation to Flogging of Saints Nazarius and Celsus," held in a private collection in Bergamo, while the final version is housed in the parish church of Saints Nazarius and Celsus in Urgnano.Although the artist of the painting examined here remains anonymous, it fits stylistically into this tradition, showing affinities with the pictorial language of Scuri and Giacomo Trecourt, both leading figures of a period in which the neoclassical tradition was reinterpreted through a more immediate naturalism and a warm chromatic sensibility, drawing on the great Lombard tradition of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The painter, who likely trained or was otherwise active within the circle of the Accademia Carrara, demonstrates mastery in the anatomical rendering of the figure

of John the Baptist and in the depiction of the crowd, organized into groups that interact with one another through gestures and glances, in accordance with a narrative principle typical of nineteenth-century religious painting intended for popular devotion.