



Sumene Bible Cabinet: History Of Solomon, 17th



125 000 EUR

Period : 17th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Wallnut

Length : 183 cm

Width : 58.5 cm

Height : 285 cm

Description

Rare cabinet figured in the region of Bas-Languedoc. This type of wardrobe is part of a small group of richly carved regional furniture representing the social and financial success of the nobility and the upper middle class of the 17th century. We present here a descriptive summary of this piece. We strongly encourage the reader to consult the complete file with many photos and details by clicking on the following link: https://antiquites-var.fr/PDF/Armoire_Salon.pdf

Bas-Languedoc is in the seventeenth century a crossroads of artistic trends, between northern Europe and Italy. In a context of economic development in this region, the nobility of the most fortunate dress appeals to master carpenters

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and master sculptors of talent to achieve some copies, all unique, these impressive cabinets also called cabinets in the 17th century. Some of these pieces are notably preserved in the Musée du Vieux Nîmes. We will quote Martine Nougarède, Chief Curator of the said Museum: these cabinets languedociennes are "... rare, produced over a fixed period, frequent in a limited area, mostly made of walnut with historiated decorations very rich in bas-reliefs [... they have all the criteria that make the value of a regional furniture. "

Presenting mythological or biblical themes such as Genesis, the story of Jacob, the life of the Virgin ... The one we are presenting is based on the story of Solomon. Note that each theme was chosen by the sponsor of the Cevennes cabinet according to his personality and could reflect the values ??that wanted to highlight the family clan. This figured wardrobe belongs to the category of historiated cabinets, which are distinguished from their peers who simply present a vegetal decoration. In walnut richly molded, carved and openwork, it presents a large number of sculptures in relief. The structure is divided into a central part composed of 6 panels tracing the biblical history of King Solomon on two doors. These two doors are framed by dormant and a false dormant richly carved on all their height. The cabinet has at its summit a cornice and a copiously openwork pediment. The decorative repertoire is rich, expressive, abundant. Its main purpose is to impress, to recall the owner's success and prestige. The dormant ones are carved with falls of flowers and fruits, putti and surmounted by busts of Atlantis and Hamadryades which recall the productions of Hugues Sambin. The cornice is decorated in bas-relief with putti in foliage of acanthus and two cherubs musicians. The pediment has in its center a laurelled medallion representing the coronation of Christ by Saint John the Baptist and God the Father, surmounted by the dove Saint-Esprit. This medallion is framed by female

busts suckling cherubim in a decoration of cornucopia and foliage of fruit. At the ends two angels sound the trumpets. Finally, the whole is summed up by two cherubs musicians and a bouquet. The sides are simple panels, a feature of sumène cabinets detailed in the complete file.

The scenes of Solomon's life are partly drawn from the engravings of Nicolas Chapron, themselves made from the paintings of the Vatican Lodges by Raphael. This is an important source of inspiration for 17th century Master Sculptors. It should be noted that the chronology of Sumène's stage scenes is rarely respected. From left to right and from top to bottom:

1. The Judgment of King Solomon.
2. Solomon welcomes the Queen of Sheba to Jerusalem, who brings her a large number of gifts including gold.
3. The prophet Elijah, whose ministry takes place immediately after Solomon's death, is supplied by the crows.
4. Hiram, King of Tire, sends his messenger to Solomon to show him his participation in the construction of the Temple with his wooden resources.
5. The construction of Solomon's Temple.
6. The anointing of Solomon by the priest Zadok.

The theme of Solomon's Judgment is particularly popular with the judiciary. This can give us a clue about the nature of the sponsor of this cabinet cevenol.

This biblical wardrobe has all the characteristics of an extremely rare piece on the market. An historical cabinet, it is one of the first productions with refined sculptures and intended for an elite clientele, it is not simply decorated with plant decorations. The piece has not been composed of different elements as we have seen on some quality furniture in the tradition of cabinets languedociennes but have undergone

modifications or are from montages. Unlike other Cevennes cabinets, the one we present has its pediment surmounted by all the elements originally present as cherubs or bouquet. We can assume that the fragility of the pediment and the height of these cabinets are the cause of a customary absence of these elements in height. It is worth mentioning a reinforcement of the pediment as well as some restorations of use to the lateral parts of the leaves at the level of the hinges higher, another restoration of use at the right angle of the lower crossbar as well as the end of the trumpets of the angels winged.

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Width: 183 cm

Depth: 58.5 cm

Bibliography : - Le mobilier du Moyen-âge et de la Renaissance en France par Jacques Thirion.
- Les armoires figurées du Bas-Languedoc par Martine Nougarède, Pascal Trarieux, Laurent Puech, Daniel Travier, Alexandre Cheval et Jacques Thirion.
- Mobilier provençal par Edith Mannoni.