



Cristo Vivo - Tuscany - Early 17th Century



45 000 EUR

Period : 17th century

Condition : Splendide état avec une très belle patine

Height : 37,5 cm

Description

This splendid Christ was made in Tuscany, Italy, at the beginning of the 17th century. The bronze work gives Christ an idealized physical appearance, notably permitted by the great precision and profusion of details. Particular attention is paid to the chiseling of the hair, beard and facial features, which is a matter of great plastic sensitivity. Despite the protruding ribs of Christ, the twisting of the exhausted body and the tension of his dying muscles, a real serenity emerges from this work. Stripped of all divine character, to be no more than a man, Christ is dressed only in the traditional perizionum, with a strongly pleated drapery, leaving one hip uncovered. This piece is to be compared to the corpus of the visual artist Giambologna (1529-1608). Born Jehan de Boulogne (in

Dealer

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Flemish) or Jean de Bologne or Boulogne (in French) in Douai in 1529, he completed his apprenticeship with the sculptor Jacques du Broeucq (1505v.-84) in Flanders. Around 1555, he left for Italy, where he was then called Giovanni Bologna (later contracted to Giambologna). A complete artist, both creator of sculptural and iconographic models, he produced a large corpus of "Corpora Christi". The great success of his works is due in particular to his school. Indeed, the most probable would be that Giambologna was at the origin of the initial models, drawn then sometimes created in large format, and then executed by his pupils, or successors, in small formats intended to be offered, as diplomatic gifts by example (notably by the Medici). This delegation of production to his workshop made it possible to distribute his models, produced in greater numbers, in particular at the end of the 16th and the first decade of the 17th century. Some members of this workshop stood out, and enjoyed a certain notoriety. This is particularly the case of Antonio Susini who worked there from 1570 and to whom a large number of castings are attributed. As said before, Giambologna not only creates emblematic plastic figures, he also designs subjects. He begins his production with the model of a "Cristo Morto", presenting the dead Christ, his head bowed in sign of affliction, in reference to the biblical passage "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:45, Mark 15:34). This is the representation favored at the end of the Middle Ages, whereas the previous centuries, and this from the first representations of Jesus on the cross in the 6th century, had favored a Christ still conscious, without pain, with his eyes open, but looking towards the viewer and rarely facing the sky. The break with this tradition took place when a drawing by Michelangelo was made, around 1540, for Vittoria Colonna, kept at the British Museum, London. Jesus Christ is then presented there concerned, imploring heaven but very much alive and with his face turned towards heaven. It

is in the continuity of this new model that Giambologna created his "Cristo vivo" around 1590. He abandoned the pathetic aspect in order to confer on it a new grandeur, that of acceptance, as it is transcribed in the Gospel according to Saint Luke (23:46): "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit! ". The son of God is then represented freed from all suffering, offering himself to the will of his divine Father, towards whom his gaze is turned, and appeased by the knowledge of his resurrection. Moreover, this evolution of the subject is closely linked to its context of creation. Indeed, the Council of Trent had a great detonation in the world of the arts, forcing artists to revise their creations, in order to adapt them to the new religious precepts favored by the council. Among them, the renewed importance of the mystery of the incarnation and of the assurance of eternal heavenly happiness permitted by the resurrection is paramount, requiring new images to celebrate it. The work of Giambologna and his workshop is particularly demonstrative of these theological questions, where the spectator must be invited to share the Christic beatitude and this divine meditation, according to the model of "Imitatio Christi". Only two versions of the "Cristo Vivo" have been attributed with certainty to the master, or his nearby workshop. One is kept in the Descatras Reales monastery in Madrid and the second was sold by Sotheby's auction house on July 9, 2004 (lot 7). The quality of our piece leaves no doubt about its proximity to Giambologna's workshop. Our Cristo Vivo would certainly be due to a production carried out by one of his successors, on the model of the artist, a concrete example of the influence as well as the success that this figure enjoyed. Moreover, this reference model transcends the sculptural world to impose itself in that of painting, as evidenced by Guido Reni's crucifixion corpus.