Finch & Co



RENAISSANCE SOUTH NETHERLANDS CARVED WALNUT CRUCIFIXION SCENE THE CENTRAL PANEL FROM AN ALTARPIECE

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CHRIST IS SHOWN ON THE CROSS BETWEEN THE TWO THIEVES WHILST MEN ON HORSEBACK LOOK ON ONE WITH A LONG LANCE TO SPEAR CHRIST'S SIDE WEARING A TURBAN-LIKE HEADDRESS HIS HORSE LOOKING UP AT THE SAVIOUR THE MOURNING VIRGIN WITH ST JOHN BELOW THE SUN AND THE MOON ARE SHOWN IN THE SKY

ALL CONTAINED WITHIN CLASSICAL ARCHITECTURAL SURROUND

LOWER SECTION AND SIDES WITH OLD DAMAGE

PROBABLY BRUSSELS

CIRCA 1525 - 1550

SIZE: 80CM HIGH, 38.5CM WIDE - 31½ INS HIGH, 15¼ INS WIDE

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LITERATURE

THE ALTARPIECE IS THE MOST PROMINENT ELEMENT IN A CHURCH INTERIOR AND THEY AFFORDED THE OPPORTUNITY FOR SCULPTURAL EMBELLISHMENT. THEY WERE DESIGNED TO ENHANCE THE MEANING OF CHRIST'S TEACHINGS, AND THE MULTI FIGURED ALTARPIECE AS WELL AS TELLING THE STORY OF CHRIST'S PASSION ALSO OFFERED SOLACE AND PROTECTION TO THOSE PRAYING BEFORE THEM.

FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE 16TH CENTURY THE SCULPTURAL NARRATIVE OF THE ALTARPIECE BECAME INCREASINGLY AMBITIOUS REACHING ITS ZENITH IN THE ALTARPIECES PRODUCED IN ANTWERP IN THE YEARS BETWEEN 1520 AND ABOUT 1540. BY THIS TIME THE SHAPE HAD DEVELOPED FROM THE SQUARED APPEARANCE OF THE EARLIER CASE TO AN UNDULATING ARCHED FORM FILLED WITH DENSELY POPULATED SCENES SET WITHIN ORNATE ARCHITECTURAL FRAMEWORKS.

ONCE THE CENTRAL PART OF AN ALTARPIECE THAT ALSO HAD CARVED SCENES OF THE PASSION AND INFANCY OF CHRIST ABOVE AND THE LAMENTATION AND CHRIST CARRYING THE CROSS TO THE SIDES, THIS PANEL WAS RESCUED FOR PRIVATE DEVOTIONAL USE.