Emmett & White
ANTIQUES & INTERIORS

17th-Century Spanish Colonial Double-Sided Devotional Painting on Copper

£295

Emmett & White Ltd
Cross House, Waterloo Square, Alfriston, East Sussex BN26 5UD
01323 870 595 • info@emmettandwhite.com • emmettandwhite.com

REF: 7720

Height: 30 cm (11.8")

Width: 24 cm (9.4")

Description

A rare and compelling 17th-century Spanish Colonial oil-on-copper devotional painting, remarkable for carrying two sacred images created at different points in its history. On the principal face is a sensitively painted unidentified saint, depicted with the rich colour, expressive modelling, and intimate devotional character associated with Spanish Colonial religious art of the period.

The use of copper as a support gives the image a distinctive clarity and luminosity. Its naturally smooth surface allowed the artist to achieve fine detail and delicate transitions of colour, while its compact and durable nature made it especially suited to portable works of private devotion. The saint's contemplative presence and carefully observed features give the painting a deeply personal, almost immediate quality.

At a later date, the reverse was painted with a finely executed image of the Virgin Mary, transforming the panel into an unusual double-sided devotional object. This later intervention creates a fascinating dialogue between the two compositions: separate sacred images, made for prayer and reflection, brought together on a single support. It also offers a tangible record of the object's evolving devotional life, suggesting that it was valued and adapted by successive owners rather than simply preserved as a static work of art.

Works on copper from the Spanish Colonial world are admired for their jewel-like finish, resilient material, and potent religious imagery. The present example is especially appealing for the rarity of its dual-sided format, which allows it to be appreciated as both an artwork and an object with a layered history.

Equally suited to a collection of early religious art, Spanish Colonial painting, or unusual devotional objects, it would bring depth and atmosphere to a study, library, or chapel-like interior. Ideally displayed in a mount or stand that allows both faces to be seen, it rewards close examination of its material, craftsmanship, and centuries of devotional significance.

Emmett & White Ltd
Cross House, Waterloo Square, Alfriston, East Sussex BN26 5UD
01323 870 595 • info@emmettandwhite.com • emmettandwhite.com