HOWGEGO
HISTORIC + MODERN

Mirror, Verre Eglomise, Reverse Painting, Gilded, Ebonised, Renaissance, Inlaid

Sold

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REF: 11362

Height: 42.2 cm (16.6")

Width: 29 cm (11.4")

Depth: 1 cm (0.4")

Description

Exceptional, late-Renaissance, ebonised pine and reverse painted wall mirror with its original plate & inlaid mirror pieces in the frame, probably Dutch

This is an exceptionally rare, early example of a luxury item combining reverse painting and gilding which subsequently became known as verre églomisé and inlaid mirror plate. This mirror was conceived as a jewel most likely for the bedchamber or cabinet, the highest status interiors in the home, the deep green simulating the much prized emerald, the gilding and the expensive mirror plate reflecting the light and the latter the image of its owner and the interior also. The tiered form enhances its gravitas. The two central motifs and the composition of the gilding suggesting falling blossom as well as the allusion to the emerald give it a naturalistic quality.

The original mirror plate surrounded by an ebonised moulding and an outer frame of green reverse painting imitating the emerald with gilded brushstrokes giving the appearance of falling blossom with inlaid sections of mirror plate in stylised diamond patterns. The tiered cresting with similar decorating including two larger naturalised inlaid motifs in mirror plate. In original condition.

Provenance : Private Collection

The technique of reverse-painting glass dates back to the pre-Roman era. One of the key historical periods of the genre was in Italy during the 13th to 16th centuries where it disseminated throughout Europe since the 15th century, appearing in paintings, furniture, drinking glasses and similar vessels, and jewellery. Verre églomisé is a French term referring to the process of applying both a design and gilding onto the rear face of glass to produce a mirror finish. The name is derived from the 18th century French decorator and art-dealer who was responsible for its revival.

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