



SILVER AND IVORY VIRGIN MARY AND CHILD, 19TH CENTURY

Era: late 19th century

Materials: silver, ivory

Dim: H 21.7 in / D 6.3 in / W 6.3 in

Dim: H 55 cm / D 16 cm / W 16 cm

Silver mark: Swan (imported silver)

Frontal sculpture of the Virgin and Child Jesus in the round with ivory inlay on the hands and face of the Virgin. The child is entirely in ivory. The Virgin stands on an architectural hexagonal base and presents the infant Jesus. The Virgin wears a finely worked crown set with cabochon-cut gemstones. Her hair cascades down. She is clad in a long mantle that falls back over the front of her dress, in moving folds that catch the light. At her feet stands an anthropomorphic crescent moon. The child holds a pomegranate, a Christian symbol of the blood of Christ and the Christian faith. Finally, the base features Gothic arcatures with saintly figures in finely chiseled bas-relief. The whole rests on six lion figures. Probably Northern Europe craftsmanship from the 19th century.

On the one hand, the iconography of the Virgin of the Immaculate Conception with her hair untied and her crescent moon, a reference to the Apocalypse, is close to Goa iconography. On the other hand, the iconography of the crowned Virgin on an architectural base is very close to the style of the southern Netherlands, and in particular to the Virgin of Notre-Dame de Foy. This sculpture can be compared with a 19th-century Dutch sculpture in the collections of the Victoria & Albert museum. It is most likely a foreign work from Northern Europe intended for private devotion.