

# koopman rare art



**Christian Hillan**

## **A Rococo Masterpiece - George II Soup Tureen**

Silver

London, 1736

Maker's mark of Christian Hillan

Height: 26.5cm, 10.5 in

Length: 40cm, 15.75 in

Weight : 4433 gr, 156.37 oz

The body, in the Rococo style and lavishly ornate, with finely chased bas-relief. The sides flanked with putti bearing wheat sheafs and holding a cartouche bearing the coat-of-arms. The cartouche applied on a background of clouds from which springs a bird with open wings and a phoenix on a pedestal rising from the ashes. All elements emerging from the water, with marine elements and vegetation on the background. The finial formed as a leafed artichoke. The cover with cast and applied foliate decoration, putti and floral elements. The four volute feet resting on acanthus leaves, the feet terminating with female busts on the main body.

The arms are those of Robert Hampden-Trevor, 1st Viscount Hampden (17 February 1706 – 22 August 1783) who was a British diplomat in The Hague and then joint Postmaster General.

He was the eldest son of the second marriage of Thomas Trevor and studied at Queens College, Oxford, graduating in 1725 and then becoming a fellow of All Souls College, Oxford. In 1729, he was appointed as a clerk in the Secretary of State's office. In 1734 he went to the United Provinces as secretary to the embassy under Horatio Walpole. He succeeded as head of the embassy in 1739, initially as Envoy-Extraordinary, and from 1741 as Minister-Plenipotentiary. During this time, he maintained a regular correspondence with Horace Walpole. In 1750 he was appointed a commissioner

of the Revenue in Ireland. He took the additional name of Hampden in 1754, on succeeding to the estates of that family, from John Hampden. In 1776, twelve years after he had succeeded his brother as Baron Trevor, he was created Viscount Hampden. From 1759 to 1765 he was joint Postmaster General. He wrote Latin poems which were published at Parma, 1792 as *Poemata Hampdeniana*. His second son, John Hampden-Trevor (1749–1824), died only three weeks after he had succeeded his brother Thomas as 3rd Viscount Hampden, the titles becoming extinct.

#### **Artist description:**

Very little is known of the silversmith Christian Hillan, who flourished in London for a few years from the time of entering his first mark as a plate worker on 20 April 1736. His name, it is thought, suggests that he may have been a Scandinavian immigrant. His most productive period seems to have been immediately following his move about 1740 to the sign of the Crown and Golden Ball, Compton Street, Soho. His vacated premises there were subsequently taken by William Cripps who at that time (1743) was a next door neighbour of Nicholas Sprimont. All three silversmiths worked in the fashionable rococo style but whereas Hillan disappears from the records in late 1742 or early 1743, and Sprimont went on in the mid 1740s to open the Chelsea porcelain factory, Cripps moved in 1746 to St. James's Street where he successfully continued the business established by David Willaume.