



Saint Jerome Hears The Trumpet Of Judgment, Neapolitan School, 17th Century



12 500 EUR

Period : 17th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Oil painting

Width : 80

Height : 103

Depth : 5

Description

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This exquisite oil-on-canvas painting depicts Saint Jerome hearing the trumpet of the angel of the Last Judgment. The traditional iconography of Saint Jerome is confirmed here through the usual symbols of his meditation: he holds a skull in his right hand, while in the foreground, a book bound in leather is visible. The saint is also typically depicted as a hermit, semi-nude, draped in a red cloak, with gray hair and a long white beard. Several iconographic representations of Saint Jerome exist, often linked to episodes from his life. One of the most

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Brozzetti Antichità

Tel : 0039 348 493 5001

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widespread is the depiction of the saint in the desert, either meditating or studying. The book, one of his iconographic attributes, alludes to his numerous exegetical writings and to the Vulgate. The skull symbolizes Vanitas, the transience of human life, and contemplation of death. The red cardinal's cloak is a recognizable element, originating from a medieval misinterpretation, perpetuated in the *Legenda Aurea*, which mistakenly considered him a cardinal. Since Jerome served as secretary to Pope Damasus, it was assumed he must have been a cardinal, leading to his depiction in cardinal attire or with elements referring to it, such as the red hat.

The painting under study captures a specific moment in the saint's life--when Jerome, having retreated into meditation in the desert, recounts hearing the announcement of the Last Judgment, perceiving an angel blowing a trumpet. In the upper right corner, the bell of the angelic musical instrument can be seen, while Jerome is depicted in a twisting motion, raising his left hand upwards. The trumpet with which the angel of the Apocalypse announces the Judgment prompts the saint to reflect on death and his eventual reunion with God.

Saint Jerome, born Sophronius Eusebius Jerome (Stridon, c. 347 - Bethlehem, 420), was declared a Doctor of the Church by Pope Pius V in 1576. He was born in Dalmatia, in present-day Croatia, and was a man of great literary culture. He studied grammar and rhetoric in Rome, where he was baptized. Later, he traveled to Antioch and embraced an ascetic life as a hermit in the desert of Chalcis, south of Aleppo (cf. Ep. 14,10),

dedicating himself to biblical exegesis and the study of Greek and Hebrew. Ordained a priest on the condition that he could maintain his independence as a monk, he began an intense literary career. In 382, he moved to Rome, where he became secretary and advisor to Pope Damasus, who, recognizing his vast erudition and literary expertise, encouraged him to undertake a new Latin translation of the Bible. Drawing from original Greek and Hebrew texts, Jerome translated the four Gospels into Latin, followed by the Psalter and much of the protocanonical texts of the Old Testament. His work became known as the Vulgate, the canonical text of the Latin Church, recognized by the Council of Trent. After the death of Pope Damasus, Jerome left Rome in 385 and undertook a pilgrimage, first to the Holy Land, then to Egypt, finally settling in Bethlehem in 386, where he remained until his death. He continued his intense work, building monasteries and hospices while promoting classical and Christian education. He is the patron saint of scholars, archaeologists, librarians, students, and translators. The Roman Martyrology commemorates him on September 30. Stylistically, this painting can be attributed to the Neapolitan school and is the work of a painter active in the 17th century. Historical and artistic studies are currently ongoing