



18th-19th Century, By Paolo Veronese, Altarpiece Of San Zaccaria



6 000 EUR

Period : 18th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Oil painting

Width : 74

Height : 127

Description

18th-19th century, attributed to Paolo Veronese. Altarpiece of San Zaccaria, oil on canvas, 127 x 74 cm. Most of Veronese's vast body of work consists of religious paintings commissioned for churches in Venice and other parts of Italy. This work echoes the composition of the altarpiece depicting the Madonna and Child with Saint John the Baptist among Saints Justina, Francis, Jerome, and Joseph, created for the Bonaldo family chapel in the sacristy of the church of San Zaccaria (but now housed in the Gallerie dell'Accademia). The patron was Francesco Bonaldo, a wealthy silk merchant, who in 1562 decided to donate 200 scudi for the redecoration of the family chapel in San Zaccaria. Veronese created the altarpiece around 1562-1564, a timeframe ranging from the date of the donation to an autograph sketch dated

Dealer

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1564. The composition draws on the popular theme of the Sacred Conversations of the Mannerist tradition, in which the Madonna and Child, always placed in a position of evident superiority, converse with the adoring saints; depicted here are Saint Justina bearing the palm of martyrdom, Saint Joseph with the appearance of a white-haired old man, Saint Jerome with the classic attributes of a cardinal's robe, Saint John the Younger in typical garments foreshadowing his future as an exegete, and Saint Francis in the Franciscan habit. The inclusion of these two saints is linked to the patron's desire to honor the two brothers, Francis and John, buried in the new chapel. In terms of spatial composition, Veronese--like Titian in the Pesaro Altarpiece and Giovanni Bellini in the San Zaccaria Altarpiece--sets the scene within a calculated asymmetry where the figures are framed by Renaissance architecture delimited by a fluted column. The oblique cut of the base and columns, along with the round-arched mosaic apse, help to expand the space, which is no longer rationally defined. The lighting effects are closely related to the original location where the painting was housed, where natural light originally came from the top of the chapel and through two small oval side openings: the portion of sky (now partially lost due to a cut in the canvas) was enhanced by the light descending from above, immersing the group in a golden atmosphere; while the side light accentuated the brilliance of the column and the iridescence of the saints' precious robes. The luminous, diffuse, and sunny coloration, reinforced by the monumental structure, are typical characteristics of Caliari's work between 1560 and 1570. The composition was an immediate success; in fact, several reproductions are known: one commissioned "by the English resident in Venice," another from the 16th century by an anonymous painter, a third 17th-century version preserved in the Capitoline Museums by Giuseppe Bonati, and yet another is the 18th-century reinterpretation by Giovanni

Antonio Guardi, and finally, there is the version that went through a Christie's auction in London. Paolo Caliari, known as Veronese (1528-1588), trained in Verona but soon distanced himself from local masters to embrace a Mannerist style akin to that of Parmigianino. After moving to Venice in 1551, he maintained a "foreign" style distinct from Titian's tradition: while his contemporaries focused on tonal fusion, Veronese prioritized the centrality of the drawing and a crisp chromatic application, with distinct areas of color and precise outlines. Preferring cool, precious color palettes arranged by contrast, he created monumental cycles in the Doge's Palace, the Marciana Library, and the famous frescoes at Villa Maser for the Barbaro brothers. His art, which profoundly influenced Venetian Baroque, was carried on after his death by the workshop run by his sons Carlo and Gabriele together with his brother Benedetto.