

Assumption of the Virgin Mary with Saints

Artist: unknown
Date: XVI century
Dimensions: 232 x 218 cm
Material: oil tempera on canvas
Inventory no: D 7066

STATE OF PRESERVATION

Currently, this painting is extremely fragile. The back of the panel is composed of several horizontal boards and crossbars. Unfortunately, the crossbars prevent natural movement of the wood and have caused several cracks and fissures on the painted surface. The entire pictorial surface is damaged and the colors are scaling, thus it is extremely difficult to get a clear view of the painted subjects. The extension of these lacunae required the application of a temporary Japanese paper cover.

RESTORATION PROCESS INCLUDES

- Consolidation of the wooden structure: removal of old crossbars and horizontal boards
- Creation of a new support with crossbars allowing movements and natural elasticity of the panel
- Consolidation of the panel
- Cleaning and consolidation of the pictorial surface
- Touching-up of the pictorial surface
- Photographic documentation
- Application of varnishes

Total Cost € 18.000,00



► The fragile painting of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary depicts a beautiful and valuable representation of the Virgin Mary offering her sacred belt to the Apostle, Thomas. The iconography in this painting was very well known in Tuscany at the end of the XIII century and refers to a story found in the apocryphal gospel of St. Thomas. The incredulous apostle Thomas arrives from India at the sepulchre of the Virgin Mary and finds it inexplicably empty. After, Thomas has a vision of the Virgin Mary. In his vision, Mary appears to him offering her cincture as a symbol of the miracle of her perpetual virginity and thus, assumption into heaven. The relic of the cincture of Mary was found in Jerusalem before the Second Crusade and has been kept in the Chapel of the Dome since 1141 in Prato, Tuscany.

In this Assumption of the Virgin, the

landscape in the background illustrates hills and mountains leading into the horizon. At the bottom of the composition, centred in the foreground, lies the sarcophagus from where the Virgin is prodigiously taken to heaven by the angels who surround and adore her. St. Rocco, patron of pilgrims and plague-stricken persons, and an unidentified female martyr are at her sides. Both of these saints are painted in a frontal position to illustrate a sacred conversation among them. St. Bartholomew, patron of tanners and butchers, is also present. What little we can read of the style indicates a strong influence of the XV century, but the face formations and decoration on the façade of the sarcophagus, is evidence that this most likely dates from the early XVI century. Unfortunately, the seriously damaged state of the painting does not allow a more detailed reading of the style and subjects.