

Christ and the Adulteress Woman

Artist: Domenico Fetti or Mattia Preti. (Neapolitan School)
Date: XVII century
Dimensions: 122 x 99 cm
Material: oil on canvas
Inventory no: 40712

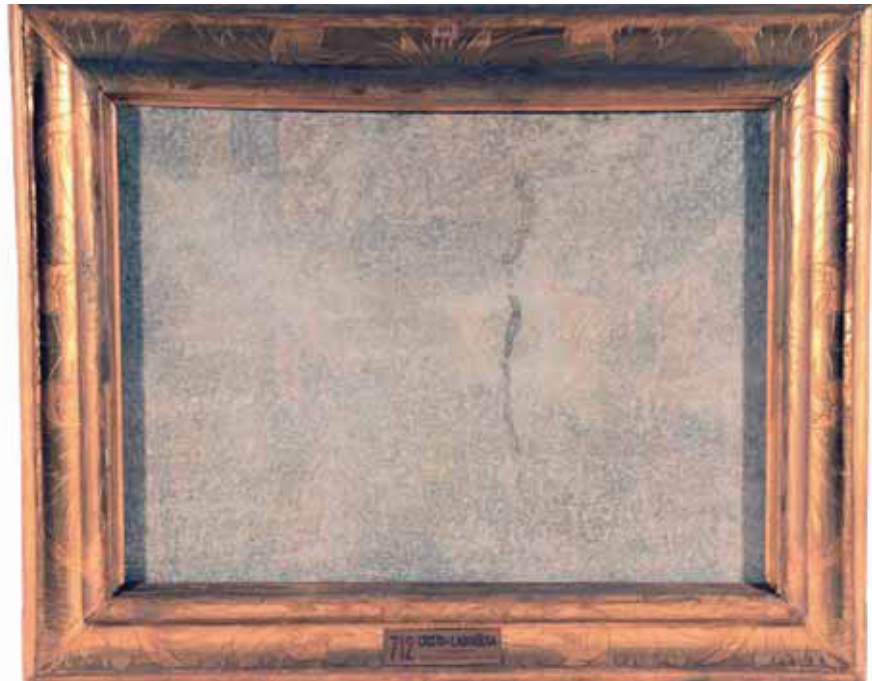
STATE OF PRESERVATION

This painting is completely covered with Japanese paper and it is difficult to ascertain the extent of damage to the surface. It was common to cover a painting in this fashion in the past because they were not able to deal with the restoration needs as we can today. It is expected to be significantly damaged. Tears are not noticeable through the Japanese paper, so we are principally dealing with decay and peeling.

RESTORATION PROCESS INCLUDES

- Consolidation of the canvas
- Cleaning and consolidation of the pictorial surface
- Touching-up of the pictorial surface
- Photographic documentation
- Application of varnishes

Total Cost € 16.500,00



► This painting belonged to the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, otherwise known as *Propaganda Fide*, and entered the Vatican in 1912, along with the entire collection. The scene represents the story from the Gospel of St. John: Christ and the Adulteress Woman.

This painting captures the moment of accusation with Jesus and the woman in the center, surrounded by Scribes, Pharisees, and architecture showing the sky up above. One man is holding a book, while others are murmuring behind his back. Unfortunately, the extremely poor condition of the painting does not allow for a clearer and more complete reading of the work.

Some scholars attribute this painting to Domenico Fetti (Rome 1588-89 -Venice 1623). While painting in Rome, he was influenced by the style of Barocci, Rubens, Caravaggio, Cigoli, and Elsheimer. Fetti worked for Cardinal Federico Gonzaga in Mantua in 1608, where

he specialized in Venetian painting. This is apparent when one observes his brushstrokes: rich and sensuous with luminous intuitions. Fetti generally chose religious subjects for his work, and among these, feminine subjects such as Mary from Egypt, Mary Magdalene, or a sinner like Cleopatra. This subject matter is another reason why several scholars identified Fetti as the author of this painting.

Other scholars believe that the author could be Mattia Preti, who worked and lived in Naples (Taverna 1613 – La Valletta 1699). Preti painted the adulteress in another painting (today in the National Museum of Abruzzo – Aquila) where the Baroque style is also characterized by the influences of Ribera and Rubens. The answers to the mystery of the true author should be solved by studying the painting during restoration. Presently, the overall surface of the painting is covered with a light layer of Japanese paper, in order to prevent the color from flaking and protect the entire surface.