

Presentation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus to God the Father

Artist: Plautilla Bricci
Date: XVII century
Dimensions: 166 x 364 cm
Material: tempera on canvas
Inventory no: D 7074

STATE OF PRESERVATION

The condition of this painting is precarious. The wooden support and the frame need to be repaired. The colors have changed due to oxidation and the aged varnish. Several portions of the pictorial surface of the painting are flaking off.

RESTORATION PROCESS

- Consolidation of the canvas
- Consolidation of the wooden support
- Cleaning and consolidation of the pictorial surface
- Touching-up of the pictorial surface
- Cleaning and consolidation of the frame
- Completion of the frame at the bottom
- Photographic documentation
- Application of varnishes

Total Cost € 12.900,00



► This precious Presentation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus to God the Father, is a work of value to women's art history. In fact, this painting, which was found some years ago in a storage room of the Basilica of Saint John Lateran, was painted by a woman from the XVII century whose name was Plautilla Bricci, a rare case of a woman painter in a field dominated by men.

The canvas is signed at the bottom right hand corner by Plautilla Bricci. She was both painter and architect, and a member of the Academy of Saint Luca. She was also a good friend of Sister Mary Eufrosia della Croce, sister of the abbot Elpidio Benedetti who was the agent of Mazzarino and later of the King of France in Rome. It was because of this acquaintance that Plautilla was asked (along with Pietro da Cortona) to decorate the "Villa del Vascello" on the Via Aurelia close to Porta San Pancrazio, and the Chapel of Saint Louis in Rome. This historical fact shows that the Church was willing to employ her worthy talent in spite of what was the cultural norm.

In 1664, Plautilla Bricci was asked to take care of the decoration of the Chapel of Saint Louis, the French parish in Rome. For this Chapel the

artist elaborated a rich decorative scheme, typically baroque in style, enriched with marbles of different colors, gilded surfaces and a clear blue drapery with gilded lilies of France which frames the entrance of the Chapel. Unfortunately, there are few documents regarding the life of this artist. Some sources claim she became a nun toward the end of her life and died in a convent after 1700.

The painting of the Presentation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus to God the Father was originally located above a side altar in the Basilica of St. John Lateran. It represents an angel offering the Heart of Jesus encircled with the crown of thorns to God the Father. God is holding a scepter in his left hand, and at his side are some other angels presenting the world and the α (alpha) and ω (omega) on the other. This painting is typically Baroque with its crowded and dynamic composition. The elegant layout of the fabrics is evidence of the influence of one of the most important painters of the Baroque period: Piero da Cortona.

Plautilla Bricci, Presentation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus to God the Father, XVII century, a detail of an angel offering the Sacred Heart in her hand



Plautilla Bricci, Presentation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus to God the Father, XVII century, a detail of angels offering the world to God the Father

