

# CAMASSEI'S CAIN AND ABEL

Artist: Andrea Camassei  
Date: 17<sup>th</sup> Century  
Dimensions: 204 x 142 cm  
Material: Oil on canvas  
Inventory Number: 42294

Total Cost: € 23.565,00

## STATE OF PRESERVATION:

The canvas is difficult to read due to alterations of the pictorial surface. Unfortunately, previous restorations have altered the whole surface.

This restoration will allow the recovery of the readability of the work, giving restorers the opportunity to clarify the attribution of the painting.

## RESTORATION PROCESS INCLUDES:

- Lining of the canvas
- Cleaning and touching-up of the pictorial surface
- Reintegration of the pictorial surface
- Reapplication and balancing of the protective coat
- Photographic documentation
- Reassembly

This painting by Andrea Camassei (Bevagna 1602 - Rome 1649) depicts the famous episode described in the book of Genesis of the killing of Abel by his brother Cain, the sons of Adam and Eve. The sacred text tells that Cain, full of wrath against God who preferred his brother to Cain himself, drew Abel in the countryside and killed him.

The artist captures the climax of Cain's fratricidal violence when he kills Abel with his club. The background features a landscape with a fire burning on the sacrificial altar.

Cain and Abel, variously represented in the act of sacrifice or murder are the subjects of numerous works of art.

This painting is similar to the work of masters like Reni and Domenichino in its purified classicism and clearly demonstrates the evolution of Baroque virtuosity. An ancient allocation refers to the painting as completed by Andrea Camassei who was active in Rome from 1626, when he arrived, until his death in 1649.

Pascoli, author of a biography of the artist, recalls Camassei's apprenticeship at the workshop of Domenichino, where he shared the ideals and style of the famous painter.

Later, Camassei worked for the Barberini family in Rome, and his style was oriented to follow masters like Correggio and Raphael, whose styles he merged with the lessons of contemporaries Nicolas Poussin and Pietro da Cortona.

Camassei completed two more paintings on the same subject: Cain kills Abel (Edinburgh, National Gallery of Scotland) and the Curse of Cain (Rome, Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica, Palazzo Barberini). Ironically, it seems Camassei himself was killed by a "treacherous and fratricidal hand."

The version in the Vatican Collection is characterized by a uniformity of colors and an almost unreal composition.

