



Ressort: Kunst, Kultur und Musik

Raphael's Eszterházy Madonna in Rome

Rome, 30.01.2018 [ENA]

In 1508 the painter Raphael was invited to Rome by pope Julius II della Rovere. The commissions offered by the pope changed the life of the artist, but also the concept of Italian art. The art historian and architect Giorgio Vasari wrote that it was Bramante, the superintendent-general of the pope, who suggested him to recruit Raphael.

Probably Francesco Maria della Rovere, son of Giovanna Feltria, also prompted

the pope to recruit the artist.

At the age of twenty five, Raphael arrived in Rome leaving a few works, probably including the Eszterházy Madonna unfinished.

The scene of the Eszterházy painting is very interesting and important from the point of view of art history. The set represents a broad natural landscape, where there's the Madonna with the Child in her arms.

Both are turned toward the infant Saint John the Baptist, who is kneeling and absorbed in reading the scroll.

The painting expresses a delicate scene of affection in which the emotional harmony of the figures is entrusted to their gestures and their eyes.

The Roman ruins in the background, which were not in the preparatory drawing, suggest that the work was conceived in Florence but completed immediately after Raphael's arrival in Rome in 1508.

The painting was donated by pope Clement XI to Isabella of Portugal (1503-1539), Empress of the Holy Roman Empire, then it was passed to Prince Kaunitz and then, at his death, to the Eszterházy, a noble Hungarian family.

In 1871 Raphael's masterpiece entered the collection of the Szépművészeti Múzeum in Budapest.

At the moment the painting is in Rome by National Gallery Barberini Corsini, loaned by Budapest Museum till the month of April 2018. The painting has been insured for five million euros for its travel to Rome.

Raphael's Eszterházy Madonna was stolen on November 1983 and the work was found by the Italian Carabinieri special artistic pool in an abandoned convent near Aigio, Greece.

Raffaello Sanzio da Urbino known as Raphael was painter and architect of the High Renaissance. His work is admired for its clarity of form, ease of composition, and visual achievement of the Neoplatonic ideal of human grandeur. He was extremely influential in his lifetime, though outside Rome his work was mostly

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known from his collaborative printmaking.

After his death, the influence of his great rival Michelangelo was more widespread until the 18th and 19th centuries, when Raphael's more serene and harmonious qualities were again regarded as the highest models.

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