

## Lot 1017



**Auction** Fine Art

**Date** 18.11.2021, ca. 10:13

**Preview** 12.11.2021 - 10:00:00 bis  
15.11.2021 - 18:00:00

YÁÑEZ DE LA ALMEDINA, FERNANDO  
active in Castile from 1506 to 1531

Title: Martyrdom of Saint Sebastian.

Technique: Oil on wood.

Measurement: 86 x 71 cm.

Frame/Pedestal: Framed.

Provenance:

Private ownership, Germany.

The space in which the martyrdom of the young saint takes place is conceived as a spacious and picturesque environment. The perspective outlines of the portico lead into a landscape enlivened by magnificent architecture and a small crowd gathered to witness the event, whose atmosphere is reminiscent of sacred village depictions. The painter has designed a composition that draws the viewer's gaze into the painting in central perspective and directs it to behind the figures on the podium where Saint Sebastian experiences his heroic martyrdom.

This spatial relationship between figures and architecture is reminiscent of Peruvian floor plans designed by Iberian painters in the first half of the 16th century. The most direct reference is to the "Master of Bolea", author of the great mural in Aragon, of which there are two panels in Italy, in Atri, with a similar format to this painting.

However, the stylistic and cultural proximity to the works of the "Master of Bolea" represents only a common starting point, which both painters probably adopted during some travels to Italy in the late 15th and early 16th centuries.

The affinity with Perugino, evident in the Martyrdom of Saint Sebastian compared to that of Atri, is enriched by more modern formal and typological elements, as well as by other particularly fascinating cultural features. The composition shows the degree of interest in Italian figuration between Florence and Rome, with precise quotations from Perugino in the armour-bearer on the right, who puts his hand to his side, and in the small group of men in the background. Yet each face is conceived with accentuated Leonardesque overtones, while the figures have muscular anatomy, fluidly mixed with light and designed with a colour palette of warm reds.

The artist who executed the painting fits the stylistic profile of two Iberian masters who painted the altarpiece of Valencia Cathedral in 1506: Ferrando Llanos and Ferrando Yáñez. In various studies, they have been identified with the "Spanish Ferrando" who worked with Leonardo on the "Battle of Anghiari" in 1505 in the Sala del Consiglio in the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence. The problem of identification remains open. What is perceptible in the Iberian works of both is the desire to express themselves in a pictorial language entirely influenced by Leonardo and to be seen as heirs

to his artistic output. But Yáñez, to whom the present work is attributed, reveals a broader Italian cultural horizon in the documented corpus of paintings, encompassing Leonardo's art as well as the works of Filippino Lippi, Perugino and early Raphael.

The Martyrdom of Saint Sebastian can be compared with numerous panels by Yáñez, both works from his early and late career, but especially with the Crucifixion Retable in Cuenca. In the present panel, the landscape with the towering Umbrian tree is embellished by richly decorated buildings with "Plateresque" fantasy and echoes of late 15th century Lombardy. The lively figures in the background with their luxuriant draperies are reminiscent of both Llanos and Yáñez, with the delicate figure of the young woman recalling Saint Catherine of Yáñez in the Prado.

The muscular contortions of the naked archer on the right are evidence of Michelangelo's knowledge of sculpture, while the kneeling archer loading his crossbow appears to be an exercise in the difficulties of foreshortening. The soldiers on the ground further recall the copies of the cartoons depicting the Battle of Anghiari that the Spaniard may have had in mind. The arms bearer on the left, who has just shot his arrow, is a quotation from Marcantonio Raimondi's print of the "Bethlehemite Infanticide", which goes back to Raphael. Whether it is a personal dedication by the painter based on Raphael's drawings or an updating of the engravings, the work is set in a figurative context that can be described as a true story of development.

We thank Letizia Gaeta, Lecce, who confirmed the attribution of the present work on the basis of a digital photograph, for her help in cataloguing the present lot.

Estimate: 50.000 € - 80.000 €

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