

PAINTING

Apparition of the Virgin to Saint Benedict

This interesting painting can be dated back to around the mid-17th century and has been attributed to Pedro de Obrel, a Flemish painter who moved to work in the Basque Country and whose work is documented in the main altarpiece of the church of Saint John in Salvatierra (Alava). He was renowned for his skills with colour, employing an intense, iridescent palette that accompanied compositions based on Flemish engravings by Rubens, Jordaens and Van Dyck. He became an artistic role model for local painters in these lands by incorporating several novelties into the pictorial panorama of the area.

The painting depicts the Apparition of the Virgin and Child to Saint Benedict. The scene takes place inside a monastery church, most likely the Abbey of Montecassino, founded by Saint Benedict in 528. The saint stands on the church floor dressed in the black habit of the order he founded. His right hand is on his chest while his left hand holds a beautiful abbey staff from which a delicate, almost transparent silk scarf can be seen hanging.



Author: Attributed to Pedro de Obrel

Date: 17th century

Technique: Oil on canvas

Measurements: 252,5 x 170 cm

Place: Diocesan Museum of Sacred Art (Vitoria-Gasteiz)



Basic bibliography:

TABAR ANITUA, Fernando. *Barroco importado en Álava y Diócesis de Vitoria-Gasteiz: Escultura y Pintura* [cat.]. Vitoria-Gasteiz: Diputación Foral de Álava, 1995. p. 131.

VÉLEZ CHAURRI, José Javier. "Barroco". En: GONZÁLEZ DE SAN ROMÁN, Miguel (Dir.). *Vitoria-Gasteiz en el Arte*, vol. II, Vitoria-Gasteiz: Gobierno Vasco, Diputación Foral de Álava, Ayuntamiento de Vitoria-Gasteiz, 1997, p. 422.

TABAR ANITUA, Fernando. *Salvatierra-Agurain en la Historia del Arte* [cat.]. Vitoria-Gasteiz: Diputación Foral de Álava, 2007. pp. 147, 149, 151.



A Living Treasure

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