



Christ and the Adulteress

Date

ca. 1525

Primary Maker

Rocco Marconi

Medium

oil on canvas

Description

Christ and the Adulteress illustrates the biblical episode (John 7:53-8:11) in which Jesus is confronted by scribes and Pharisees who ask him to decide the fate of an adulteress. Although the penalty for adultery according to Mosaic law was death by stoning, Jesus admonishes the crowd: "He who is without sin ..., let him first cast a stone at her." Left alone with the woman once the shame-faced crowd disperses, Jesus tells her: "Neither do I condemn you, and from now on sin no more." Conflating the beginning and end of the story, Marconi depicts a dense group of scribes and Pharisees in front of a temple, with Christ at the center blessing the adulteress. Christ and the adulteress was an extremely popular subject in sixteenth-century Venetian art as an inspirational exemplum of Christ's limitless capacity for mercy. More than any other Venetian artist, Rocco Marconi was known for his many paintings of this story.

Dimensions

Sight: 45 3/4 x 61 1/4 in. (116.2 x 155.6 cm) Framed: 45 3/4 x 61 1/4 in. (116.2 x 155.6 cm)