

PARMENTIER PANEL

Object Details

LDSAL 1299 (Scharf Add. 80)

Unknown Netherlandish or provincial French artist or workshop

Paint on panel

c. 1500 and 1519



The Parmentier Panel – named after the panel's original 16th century donor – was exhibited and presented to the Society in 1887 by the clergyman William Maskell (c. 1814? – 1890).

The panel may have once been a predella belonging to a larger altarpiece. Recent conservation work has revealed a series of interventions through the history of the painting. It shows Christ as the centre figure, surrounded by a mandorla, a radiant halo of light representing Christ's majesty. The outermost figures have been interpreted as prophets. However they are also similar to figures in the c. 1630 painting 'Christ presented to the People' in the Reading Museum collection, interpreted as Pontius Pilate with Roman soldiers mocking Christ.

The figures immediately to the left and right of Christ are likely to be the donor, John Parmentier, and his wife. Both are kneeling, flanked by St. John the Baptist and St. Peter respectively – the ribbon-scroll running through the background of the figures identifies them:

"Jeha parmentier bourgeois de mōd ... [contingent fourni par] sa fāme ont done ceste table des biens que dieu leurs a donē en l'en de grasse milchinc cens dixnoeuifs priez dieu por eux amen"

"John Parmentier, burgher of Mond ... [with the share provided by] his wife, donated this panel with the gifts that God had given them in the year of grace 1519; pray to God for them. Amen."

The painting originally only depicted Christ and the two prophets, with the scroll running between. A subsequent painting campaign added the figures of Parmentiers and the Saints, and the original inscription was evidently overpainted to reference the Parmentiers. The inclusion of the date 1519

within this helps to pinpoint when this adaptation of the panel occurred. The heraldic device painted on to John Parmentier's prie dieu (prayer desk) was a separate addition made sometime after 1519. There are areas where adjustments and changes to the composition are also evident, much of which is difficult to pinpoint to a specific campaign in the panel's history.