

Judge's Commentary

Uehara, Mai

Ricostruzione del Trittico di Castel Trosini di Carlo Crivelli

[Eng: Reconstruction of Carlo Crivelli's Trittico di Castel Trosini Altarpiece]

Uehara's article presents a reconstruction of an altarpiece created by Carlo Crivelli in the late 1480s for the church of San Lorenzo in Castel Trosino from four panel paintings today scattered in collections worldwide.

Many of the polyptych altarpieces created in Italy from the Gothic period through the beginning of the Renaissance were dismantled and their individual panels sold during the 19th century, often without the provenance traveling with the individual dispersed panels. The reconstruction of such altarpieces forms one of the fundamental elements of research on paintings from this period. Previous attempts at a reconstruction of this altarpiece have relied solely on efforts by Federico Zeri in 1961. Then Ronald Lightbown proposed a completely different reconstruction theory in the latest Crivelli catalogue raisonné, published in 2004.

Uehara uncovered historical documentation in the Archivio di Stato di Roma (Rome State Archives) regarding the 1855 application to sell the

altarpiece. Largely based on the information contained in these newly discovered documents, she was able to propose a new reconstruction which seems irrefutable.

As a result, in regards to the grouping of the four extant works from the altarpiece, Uehara confirmed the veracity of Zeri's proposal based on stylistic analysis, and thus proves that Lighbown's new 2004 reconstruction was incorrect. Conversely, regarding the issues of the identification of the church where the altarpiece was first installed, and the matter of the now lost top and central panels, Uehara provided appropriate corrections and supplements to the mistakes in Zeri's theory and the aspects of the issue that he had left unresolved.

Further, Uehara conducted detailed on-site surveys of the various extant panels. These studies solidified her conclusions based on documentary evidence. She carried out detailed iconographic study comparisons to clarify the identification of the two previously unidentified saints. These surveys of the actual panels combined with the information she presented in the newly uncovered documents led to convincing conclusions regarding the altarpiece.

Thus, Uehara's search for documentation in archives, a process requiring great perseverance, led to the discovery of new materials previously overlooked by scholars. Her article provided essentially definitive answers to previously unresolved issues. Uehara's process and its results both reconfirm the importance of primary materials in the study of art history, and make a

meaningful contribution to international scholarship by providing a defensible and viable theory regarding the clarification of Crivelli's activities during his late period. Moreover, the article stands as a model case regarding the issues related to the movement of art works into the marketplace and overseas in 19th century Italy.

For these reasons, we have awarded the Bijutsushi Article Prize to Ms. Mai Uehara.