



JAIME EGUIGUREN

ARTS & ANTIQUES

Alonso Berruguete (attrib)

(Paredes de Nava, ca. 1488 - Valladolid, 1561)

PAIR OF PENDENTIVES

Second quarter of the XVI century

JAIME EGUIGUREN

ARTS & ANTIQUES



Alonso Berruguete (attrib)

(Paredes de Nava, ca. 1488 - Valladolid, 1561)

Pair of Pendentives

Second quarter of the XVI century

Polychrome wood

60 x 60 cm

JAIME EGUIGUREN

ARTS & ANTIQUES

This *Pair of Pendentives* was undoubtedly created as decoration of an architectonic structure to enrich an altarpiece ornamentation. In the first pendentive, within a scenery formed by volutes, there are musical instruments, two violins and two trumpets, over a banyan and a book. In its upper part, there is an unidentified object, and in its lower angle, a male face with a moustache and plentiful dark hair blown by the wind. The second pendentive, framed by the same plant decor, shows several weapons. A breastplate, covered by a helmet, practically covers the whole surface, and underneath, there are the tip of a cannon and two bullets on the left, and two tips of spears, two arrow tips, and an axe on the right. A cloak under the breastplate covers most of the scene. Both representations are sculpted in polychrome relief over a golden background, with a predominance of vermillion red.

A pendentive is defined as a spherical triangle that covers the space between the ring formed by a dome's edge and the arcs on which it rests. It is similar to a squinch, but, in this case, it is decoration with no architectural functionality.

The iconography represented in both reliefs is connected with victory scenes. As a symbol of power, weapons are gentlemen attributes. In contrast, musical instruments are shown in *Venus and Mars* scenes, in a very popular allegory which refers to a young warrior who exchanges his sword for a musical instrument.

It is attributed to Alonso Berruguete, according to a comparative study of his recorded works of art.

Shortly after returning to Spain, around 1517, and after spending a long time training in Italy, Berruguete became the most innovative sculptor of the Spanish Renaissance. With his deep knowledge of painting techniques – since he had first followed in his father's footsteps, the painter Pedro Berruguete, – and his fast, skillful way of handling the gouge, sculpting in polychrome wood became his most perfect means of expression.

The design of objects inspired in the classical era was a constant feature during Alonso Berruguete's artistic career, since it can be found in all his creations. This *Pair of Pendentives* shows one of the favorite repertoires ever in his work, in which the choice of iconography and the perfect technique applied in its development are outstanding. Besides, the creation of faces with vacant expressions, oblique looks and frowning is very characteristic of his work, as it can be appreciated, for example, at the *Conversión del Godo Zalla* (The Conversion of Zalla, the Goth) relief, at San Benito de Valladolid altarpiece (The National Museum of Sculpture, Valladolid). The way of sculpting hair, with abundant curly locks, is similar.

From an iconographic perspective, both scenes suggest it might have belonged to an altarpiece, maybe to a funeral chapel of some nobleman of the time. The way it was made, with a flat relief where the rich polychrome is key to distinguishing its parts, evokes *Mejorada del Campo* reliefs (1525-1526), one of Alonso Berruguete's first works after his return to Spain, and which is kept at The National Museum of Sculpture at Valladolid.

ROSARIO COPPEL

JAIME EGUIGUREN

ARTS & ANTIQUES



Alonso Berruguete. Ecce Homo, Church of San Juan de Olmedo, XVI century. Valladolid. National Museum of Sculpture.



Alonso Berruguete. San Benito el Real, Main Altarpiece. *Warrior*. XVI century. Valladolid. National Museum of Sculpture.



Alonso Berruguete. San Benito el Real, Main Altarpiece. Predella. XVI century. Valladolid. National Museum of Sculpture.

JAIME EGUIGUREN

ARTS & ANTIQUES



Alonso Berruguete. San Benito el Real, Main Altarpiece. First body. XVI century. Valladolid. National Museum of Sculpture.

JAIME EGUIGUREN

ARTS & ANTIQUES

BIBLIOGRAPHY

ARIAS MARTÍNEZ, MANUEL. *Alonso Berruguete, Prometeo de la escultura*, Palencia, 2011.

ARIAS MARTÍNEZ, MANUEL. “Un llanto sobre Cristo muerto de Alonso Berruguete”, *Ars Magazine*, number 27, July-September, 2015, pp. 62-73.

AZCÁRATE, JOSÉ MARÍA DE. *Alonso Berruguete. Cuatro ensayos*, Salamanca, 1988.

CAMÓN AZNAR, JOSÉ. *Alonso Berruguete*. Madrid, 1980.

Cat. ex. *Norma e Capriccio, Spagnoli in Italia agli esordi della maniera moderna*, Florencia, Galleria degli Uffizi, 2013.

Cat. ex. *Hijo del Laocoonte. Alonso Berruguete y la Antigüedad pagana*, Manuel Arias Martínez (comp.), The National Museum of Sculpture, Valladolid, 2017.

COPPEL, ROSARIO, y JENNINGS, NICOLA, *Alonso Berruguete, Renaissance Sculptor*, Coll & Cortés, Fine Arts, Madrid, 2017.

GÓMEZ MORENO, MANUEL. *Las Águilas del Renacimiento español: Bartolomé Ordoñez, Diego Siloe, Pedro Machuca y Alonso Berruguete (1517-1558)*, Madrid, 1941. Ed. 1983.

REDONDO CANTERA, MARÍA JOSÉ. “Alonso Berruguete, “Pintor del Rey”, in *Alonso Berruguete, su obra y su influencia*, Minutes from the Course at Universidad Casado del Alisal, presented in Paredes de Nava, from November 10th to November 12th, 2011, ed. Diputación de Palencia, 2013, pp. 49-89.

Valladolid, *Museo Nacional Colegio de San Gregorio. Colección*, María Bolaños Atienza (ed.), Madrid, 2009.

JAIME EGUIGUREN

ARTS & ANTIQUES

