



Tin Frame with Mexican Retablo, San Juan Nepomuceno

Date

1820-1910

Primary Maker

Higinio V. Gonzales

Medium

tin, solder, oil, canvas

Description

Tin frame of Santa Fe Federal Workshop style surrounding a painted retablo (ca 1820-1835, Mexico) of St. John of Nepomuk, San Juan Nepomuceno, mounted under glass plate. The half-length figure of St. John wears ermine cape with scarlet lining over a white gown with lace trim. Figure has brown hair and bearded, depicted in 3/4 profile looking down. Holds brown cross in his left hand and his severed tongue in his right hand. 5 white multi-pointed stars form

his halo, against a blue background. Ermine cloak is clasped with a white ribbon tie, holding a brown scapular? or medallion? Condition of painting is good, with paint flaked off at lower viewer left. The centers of the halo stars have been punched through. St. John of Nepomuk is for secrecy. In New Mexico, he has Penitente affiliations. The frame is crowned with a crest of a combined triangular pediment and fan lunette (19 cm. in radius) rimmed with 20 deep scallops. The scallop points are the terminal ends of scored and raised rays, which surround the 11.5 cm. dia. scored central circle of the lunette. Inside this circle, a 6-pointed scored and raised star forms the central design of the lunette. In addition, 6 small scored and raised triangles flank the star on the interior circumference of the 11.5 cm. circle. The score lines forming this circle and the 6 triangles are stamped and embossed with tiny dimples and bosses. A scored, raised, and repoussed triangular pediment forms the supporting base of the lunette, and contains a raindrop-shaped design in each of the two bottom corners of the triangle. All scored lines of these features are stamped and embossed with continuous series of tiny dimples and bosses. The bottom center of the triangular pediment features a horizontally lined series of 6 tiny, stamped rosettes; this line of rosettes flanked at each end by an amorously shaped small area of repousse, abutting the broad end of each raindrop. The pediment and lunette crest is soldered to the top member of the rectangular frame. The rectangular frame itself is very evenly made of 4 frame members 5 cm. in width, joined together at 4 square corner bosses 5 cm. in width. The four frame members (top, sides, and bottom) are rolled and evenly scored from behind in the form of engaged columns. The 4 corner bosses each contain a 5 cm. dia.

12-lobed embossed rosette, surrounding a small raised center. Each lobe terminal contains a single, small boss point, and each scored outline of the lobes is punched with a continuous line of small dimples. Frame member and corner bosses are soldered together. 2 upright and 2 pendant oak leaf shapes decorate the sides of the frame, soldered to the sides of the 4 corner bosses, Each leaf features 8 lobes, is 17 cm. long and 8 cm. wide at its base. The leaf shape is of raised and scored construction. The scored lines outline each lobe margin, leaf stem, and lobe axis, suggesting the veins of a leaf. Each scored line is continuously lined with many small dimples or bosses. Missing, broken-off finials crowned the 2 corner bosses at the top of the frame. The painting is oil-on-linen canvas, Mexcan, ca. 1835, depicting St. John of Nepomuk, 41 cm. high by 29 cm. wide. It is mounted (under glass) on a tin backing sheet whose 4 edges clasp around and over the 4 edges of the glass pane. These tin edges are spot-soldered to the top, bottom, and viewer right interior edges of the tin frame. The spot-soldered mounting points to the left interior edge of the frame are broken and loose. (correction: the viewer right spot soldered points are also broken but still holding). The glass pane appears to be relatively recent 1/8" or 3/32" factory plate.

Dimensions

Frame: 28 1/8 × 21 7/8 × 2 in. (71.4 × 55.6 × 5.1 cm) Image: 16 1/8 × 11 3/8 in. (40.9 × 29 cm)

Object number

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