Cartoon for a tapestry - Paul Preaching at Athens (Acts 17: 16-34)

Object: Cartoon for a tapestry
Place of origin: Italy (made)
Date: about 1515-1516 (made)
Artist/Maker: Raphael, born 1483 - died 1520 (artist)
Materials and Techniques: Bodycolour on paper mounted onto canvas
Credit Line: Lent by Her Majesty The Queen
Museum number: ROYAL LOANS.7
Gallery location: Raphael, Room 48a, The Raphael Cartoons

Public access description
Paul Preaching at Athens (Acts 17: 16-34)

The Raphael cartoons are designs for tapestries and were commissioned from Raphael by Pope Leo X (1513-21) in 1515. The tapestries were intended to hang in the Sistine Chapel in Rome, built by one of Leo's predecessors Pope Sixtus IV (1471-84). The Chapel was primarily intended for the use of the Pope and the Papal chapel, the body of clergy and Laity immediately surrounding him. The decoration of the chapel under Sixtus dealt largely with the theme of the Pope's authority. The tapestries continued this theme, illustrating scenes from the lives of St. Peter and St. Paul who were seen as the founders of the Christian Church, and the sources of the Pope's authority and power. They had in addition woven borders showing scenes from Leo's life, also designed by Raphael: the cartoons for these have not survived.

In this cartoon Paul preaches before the assembled Areopagus, the judicial council of Athens. His sermon was specifically addressed to the Gentiles, and the subject emphasises his special role of preaching to them. It also deals with the theme of idolatry, as the listeners stand in front of a pagan statue.

For further information on the Raphael Tapestry Cartoons please see the V&A website under : Collections, Paintings & Drawings, Paintings & Drawings Features, Raphael Cartoons.

Descriptive line

Raphael Cartoon  Paul Preaching at Athens (Acts 17: 16-34)

Physical description
Cartoon for a tapestry

Dimensions
Height: 320 cm, Width: 390 cm

Museum number
ROYAL LOANS.7

URL
http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O1069356/paul-preaching-at-athens-acts-cartoon-for-a-raphael/