Cartoon for a tapestry - The Sacrifice at Lystra (Act 14: 8-18)

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.6
Gallery location: Raphael, Room 48a, The Raphael Cartoons

Public access description

The Sacrifice at Lystra (Acts 14: 8-18)

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.

This cartoon shows how after witnessing their cure of a cripple, the inhabitants of Lystra mistake Paul and Barnabas for the local gods Jupiter and Mercury. They prepare to offer a sacrifice to them. Paul tears his clothes in dismay, while he and Barnabas try to stop the sacrifice, admonishing the Lystrians for their idolatry.

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  The Sacrifice at Lystra (Acts 14: 8-18)

Physical description
Cartoon for a tapestry

Dimensions
Height: 320 cm, Width: 390 cm

Museum number
ROYAL LOANS.6

Object history note
NB. While the term 'cripple' has been used in this record, it has since fallen from usage and is now considered offensive. The term is repeated in this record in its original historical context.

URL
http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O1069357/the-sacrifice-at-lystra-act-cartoon-for-a-raphael/