

	<p>Object: Susanna and the Elders</p> <p>Museum: Kunsthalle Bremen Am Wall 207 28195 Bremen (04 21) 3 29 08-0 info@kunsthalle-bremen.de</p> <p>Collection: Alte Meister, Gemälde und Skulpturen</p> <p>Inventory number: 941-1966/23</p>
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Description

Here, Giovanni Battista Piazzetta tells the story of Susanna. The beautiful wife of the wealthy man Joakim is the protagonist of an apocryphal legend that was added to the Book of Daniel (Dan. 13:1– 63). According to the Bible, she was observed and harassed by two lecherous old men while she was bathing in her garden. They wanted to seduce her and threatened to swear publicly that she had committed adultery if she refused. Although the death sentence applied to adultery, Susanna cried for help, whereupon the elders carried out their threat. At the last minute, however, the young seer Daniel saved her, able to expose the men's lies by having them testify separately. This subject was especially popular in the Baroque era, because, typologically, it was a precursor of the New Testament parable of Christ and the Adulteress. Susanna was regarded as a symbol of a soul saved from the Devil. But, above all, the subject afforded an opportunity to depict an erotic theme within a biblical context. The scene is imbued with the lively contrast of light and dark that was characteristic of Giambattista's painting, effectively showing Susanna's exposed breast and her hand fending off the men to enhance the drama of the moment.

Basic data

Material/Technique:	Oil on canvas
Measurements:	136.3 x 103.5 cm

Events

Painted	When	1715-1720
	Who	Giovanni Battista Piazzetta (1682-1754)
	Where	

Keywords

- Adultery
- Garden
- Legend
- Painting
- Susanna