

	Object:	Joseph Receives His Brothers
	Museum:	Kunsthalle Bremen Am Wall 207 28195 Bremen (04 21) 3 29 08-0 info@kunsthalle-bremen.de
	Collection:	Alte Meister, Gemälde und Skulpturen
	Inventory number:	802-1960/3

Description

Sebastiano Ricci, who is considered to have been the most significant Venetian Baroque painter of his day, depicted a scene from the story of Joseph and his brothers with stage-like compositions on each of these companion pieces. The first painting tells the story of Joseph's sister Dinah, who was abducted from Canaan and raped by Shechem, son of wealthy Prince Hamor (Gen. 34). Out of love for her, Shechem bade his father to let him marry Dinah. Hamor, in turn, spoke with Dinah's father, Jacob, who agreed to the marriage under the condition that all men of Shechem's lineage be circumcised according to the Old Covenant. However, three days later, when all the Shechemites had been weakened by the rite, Dinah's brothers Simeon and Levi took revenge for the outrage done to their sister by attacking the city, killing the male inhabitants, and returning with Dinah against her will. Ricci's painting describes the dramatic event of the abduction in a pyramidal composition, in which the still weak Prince Shechem, shown with a cane, is included at the left. The companion piece portrays Joseph's reconciliation with his brothers (Gen. 45). The 11 brothers had sold him off to Egypt, where Joseph came to great honors at the court of Pharaoh, and where they had encountered him once again, after a famine had caused them to travel to Egypt a second time. Although the brothers were not initially aware of Joseph's identity, Joseph recognized them immediately. But he first left them in uncertainty, accusing them of spying. Only when their youngest brother appeared did Joseph reveal himself. Ricci shows how Joseph, surrounded by high dignitaries, forgives his brothers kneeling in submission and, moved, takes his youngest brother, Benjamin, in his arms.

Basic data

Material/Technique:	Oil on canvas with earthen red/brownish ground, lined
Measurements:	73.0 x 107.5 cm

Events

Painted

When

Who

Sebastiano Ricci (1659-1734)

Where

Keywords

- Old Testament
- Painting
- Pharaoh