DAVID AARON



Fresco Of An Ornamental Column

Roman

1st Century B.C. - 1st Century A.D.

Plaster, polychrome

H: 169 cm x W: 47 cm

This beautiful fresco would have once adorned the walls of a residence or communal building. Ornamental in style, the intricate details are created in vibrant yellow ochre and red polychrome on a stucco ground. The central plain gives the impression of an intricate scrolling column post, possibly wrought in copper as suggested by the verdigris tones used to paint it. Created by the application of water-based pigments on a damp plaster surface, which stabilised when dry. Considered the 'fourth style' of fresco painting, or the 'intricate style', which was popular around 60- 79 B.C. The decoration found from this time often consists of warm red and ochre pigments, minimalistic architectural elements and larger-scale narrative scenes. A prime example of the Fourth Style is the Ixion Room in the House of the Vettii and the Tablinum of Praedia of Julia Felix in Pompeii. One of the largest contributions seen in the Fourth Style is the advancement of still life with intense space and light. Shading was very important in the Roman still life. This style was never truly seen again until 17th and 18th centuries with the Dutch and English decoration.

Exhibitions

The Art Institute of Chicago, 'Private Taste in Ancient Rome: Selections from Chicago Collections', 3rd March – 16th September 1990

Literature:

Accompanying checklist to 'Private Taste in Ancient Rome', The Art Institute of Chicago, 1990. Item 25.

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