The Principalities (Principans Turma)



Brief description: This medieval panel depicts three angels dressed in white robes with two golden wings, golden hair and white haloes. They are identified by the inscription 'Principans Turma' (ruling troop).The Principalities wear crowns, and long-ermine trimmed robes, representing their role in looking after kings, princes and bishops. The Principalities, identified by the inscription Â‘principans turmaÂ’ (ruling troop), are shown bearing branches of lilies, according to Greek tradition, instead of the more typical sword or sceptre. The panel was produced in the fifteenth century by an English artist.

A stained glass panel of three angels dressed in white robes with two golden wings, golden hair and white haloes. The Orders of the Angels was a popular subject in medieval art and literature. The panel would have been one of a series of 9, showing the different hierarchies of Christian angelic beings, according to the beliefs put forward by Pseudo-Dionysius in his 6th century book Â‘De Coelesti HierarchiaÂ’ (On the Celestial Hierarchy). As identified by the inscription 'Principans Turma' (ruling troops), this panel represents the Principalities, a group of angels who were thought to govern the lands of Kings, Princes and Bishops. They are shown here with crowns and ermine robes traditionally associated with royalty. The scale of the panel suggests it may have been for a domestic setting. The entire panel is made from one piece of clear white glass painted with glass paint and silver stain. The style of the panel suggests it is likely 15th century in date, and possibly English. The design may have been copied from a woodcut as the painting style is very linear, and the figures are represented within a border.

Object type: panel

Number of objects: 1

Production date: 1

Production period: 15th century

Designer: English Artist

Dimensions: Height: 178 mm, Width: 154 mm

Acquisition: purchase 18.11.2015

Acquisition source: Bonhams London

Accession number: ELYGM:2015.7.1

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