The Temptation of St Francis



Brief description: Stained glass panel in a frame depicting the temptation of Saint Francis. Designed and made by Moira Forsyth in about 1930.

St. Francis of Assisi (1181-1226) was an Italian friar, famous for his gentle and peaceful attitude and for founding the Franciscan religious order. At the beginning of his ministry, St. Francis was often tempted to break his vow of purity. Here, St. Francis is portrayed as a tall and emaciated figure, his back bowed and head bent at an uncomfortable angle. He wears a cream habit and brown hood, the uniform of the Franciscan order, and has a bible tucked under his arm. Small impish figures tempt him from the ground, including a woman in a yellow dress gazing coyly upwards, two naked figures peering round his habit, and a golden winged creature in his broad sleeve. From above, a nimbed dove, representing the Holy Spirit, swoops into his outstretched hand, and an angel whispers to him from the right-hand corner. The sun, in position to act as a halo but not in line with his head, blazes behind him. An empty tomb sits on his left. Moira Forsyth (1905-1991) is often described as one of England's most notable stained glass artists. She completed commissions for cathedrals, schools, and parish churches, and spent much of her working life at The Glass House studio in Fulham, alongside other influential artists like Wilhelmina Geddes and Mary Lowndes. Forsyth made this panel whilst studying at the Royal Academy of Art, and it carries an appropriate sense of fun.

Object type: panel

Number of objects: 1

Production date: circa 1930

Production period: 20th century, early

Designer: Moira Forsyth

Manufacturer: Forsyth, Moira 1905=1991

Dimensions: Height: 1620 mm, Width: 700 mm

Acquisition: loan 21.3.1993

Acquisition source: C. & T. Benyon

This item is not currently on display and can only be viewed by prior arrangement

Accession number: ELYGM:L1993.3

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