



Seacoast View with a Shipwreck

Date

after 1735

Primary Maker

Alessandro Magnasco

Medium

oil on canvas

Description

Like his contemporary, Giuseppe Maria Crespi, the Genoese-born painter Alessandro Magnasco was uninterested in the classical concepts of ideal beauty and the formal perfection of contemporary academic art. Attracted instead to the realism of genre painting introduced to Italy by Flemish and Dutch artists, he chose to paint primarily seascapes and landscapes. This

seacoast view was painted late in Magnasco's career, when the artist was in his seventies or eighties. It is the surviving pendant of a pair of large seascape paintings that were originally incorporated into the interior decoration of a palazzo in Genoa. Ostensibly inspired by the scenery of the local seacoast, the scene is essentially a fantasy depicting the aftermath of a nighttime storm at sea and a shipwreck. The next morning, while the seas are choppy and the winds blow fiercely, scavengers have descended on the shoreline to salvage the scattered remains of the ship and its cargo. A precursor of the Romantic landscape painters of the nineteenth century, Magnasco was famous during his lifetime for the originality of his representations of the confrontation between man and nature.

Dimensions

Sight: 56 7/8 x 44 7/8 in. (144.5 x 114 cm) Framed: 62 x 49 3/4 x 2 7/8 in. (157.5 x 126.4 x 7.3 cm)