



# Secret painting of Jesus Christ FOUND beneath £450,000 artwork in RARE discovery

A SECRET painting of Jesus worth more than £450,000 that dates all the way back to the Renaissance has been discovered hiding under another painting by an eagle-eyed art expert.

By **CARLY READ**

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The 16th-Century work by leading Flemish Renaissance painter Jan Sanders van Hemessen was discovered by art trader Dorothea Apovnik from the Austrian capital of Vienna. Meticulously-trained Ms Apovnik bought the original painting at an auction in Munich, Germany, where the so-called "heavily-soiled" artwork was advertised as a "17th-Century work from the Italian school". But a closer look by Ms Apovnik found another hidden painting underneath the original piece after she noticed the thorn crown places atop Jesus's head had a much higher quality she questioned the piece's origin. Ms Apovnik's suspicion was confirmed when the painting was carefully examined and she discovered that the soiled, gloomy painting was actually painted over an earlier image, that was then exposed through restoration.

Underneath she discovered the bright, colourful picture of Christ the Redeemer in which the character could not have been more different than the dark and clothed painting which had been put on top.

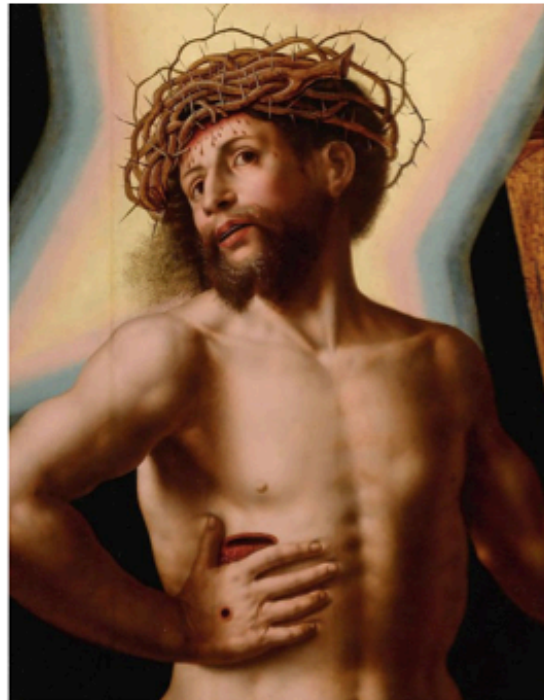
Art expert David Pollack said: "It is rare that we discover a previously completely unknown painting."

Peter van den Brink, the director of the Suermondt-Ludwig Museum in Aachen, then confirmed that the newly discovered painting was created by Flemish master Jan Sanders van Hemessen, and probably painted somewhere in the middle of the 16th Century.

According to van den Brink, who specialises in van Hemessen, the Flemish master played an important role in the development of the genre of Italian-inspired Flemish Renaissance art.

The **jesus** master painted major religious and secular scenes and was also known for his outstanding portraits and large-scale expressive depictions of people.

The painting will now be auctioned at auction house Sotheby's, which highlighted the "monumentality and idiosyncratic colour scheme" and the "technical prowess of Christ's portrayal".



What was found underneath (Image: CEN)

The newly discovered painting, which has now been named "Christ as Triumphant Redeemer", has been estimated by Sotheby's to be worth between £303,747 - £455,620 (\$400,000 - \$600,000).

According to local media, Ms Apovnik paid a tenth of that for the painting in Munich.

The auction will take place today at Sotheby's Master Paintings Evening Sale at 6pm local time in New York.



The 16th-Century work is by leading Flemish Renaissance painter Jan Sanders van Hemessen (Image: CEN)



How the painting looked before (Image: CEN)