

# Ekinium Art Gallery



# Romanesque Impressions

# 2025 Impressions

## *Romanesque Impressions*

Emotion and spirituality through an intimate selection. Discovering the hidden meaning.

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# Romanesque Impressions

The Ekinium Gallery presents an exquisite collection of Romanesque sculptures, featuring enthroned Virgins , Christ, or stone capitals from the 12th and 13th centuries.

These masterpieces exemplify the spiritual depth and artistic excellence of medieval European craftsmanship.

These sculptures are not merely devotional objects but also artworks revealing the spiritual richness and the questions of society. Every detail, from the solemn expressions to the decorative motifs on the thrones, embodies the aesthetics and symbolism of this pivotal period.

Some of the most captivating pieces from the collection are presented here, chosen for their ability to stir deep emotion and for their carefully sculpted message, which seems to transcend time, revealing the artist's hidden intent.

# Limestone Sedes Sapientiae.

Rare enthroned Virgin and Child in limestone carved in very high relief. The Virgin holds the Child between her two knees in perfect frontality, a characteristic of the first Romanesque virgins known as Sedes Sapientiae. Mary is wearing a crown decorated with rectangular and diamond-shaped cabochons, her face in an elongated oval with protruding cheekbones and eyeballs.

The throne, of fine quality of execution, has solid armrests with two arches resting on ringed cylindrical Romanesque columns with a molded base.



Christ is represented with aged features recalling the anteriority of Christ over the Virgin. He adopts the same attitude as Mary, a shoulder strap diagonally across his chest.

If parallels exist with the Auvergne Romanesque virgins, the more refined style of the characters and the throne, the geological analysis of the limestone lead us to place this sculpture in Burgundy, Champagne or Lorraine, in the second half of the 12th century.

References consulted:

- Collectible medieval statuary - J. Liévaux-Boccador & E. Bresset - 1972,
- French sculpture - F. Baron T.I Middle Ages Louvre Museum Department of Middle Age sculptures -1996,
- Romanesque virgins - H. Leroy & F. Debaisieux - 2009.

Origin: North-East of France

Medium: Limestone

Size: H. 59cm – L. 22.2cm – D. 19cm

Period: 12th century

Ref.232



# Saint-Peter Apostle.

Important statue of Saint-Peter in very strong relief. This exceptional oolitic limestone sculpture shows traces of polychromy. The saint rests barefoot on a large base with an inscription "S SIM..." for Saint Simon Peter. Flat back. The apostle, with curly beard and hair stylized in large locks, is represented standing draped in a mantle with vertical folds holding his classical attributes, the Book and the key.

The stylized beard, the wide eyes, the folds and the patterns of the clothing direct us towards a production from the end of the 12th century with still clear Romanesque influences. This work undoubtedly comes from an apostolic college.



Examples known in the South-West of France, including the twelve apostles from the elevation of the facade of the Notre-Dame la Grande church in Poitiers (around 1115-1130) or the apostles presented in the bell tower-porch of the old priory church of Sainte-Marie in Mimizan, end of the 12th century (Landes). We can also cite the 12 apostles of the tympanum of the west portal of Saint-Trophime in Arles (around 1190). The style of the sculpture and the material used direct us towards Poitou. A scientific report produced by the Re.S.Artes laboratory in 2022 confirms the dating.

#### References consulted:

- Saint-Pierre de Poitiers Cathedral, Claude Andrault-Schmitt (dir.), 2013
- Notre-Dame-La-Grande de Poitiers: the Romanesque work, Marie-Thérèse Camus (Author), Claude Andrault (dir.), 2002
- The apostolic college in Gothic sculpture, Files of Archeology n° 325, Françoise Baron, 2008.

Origin: Poitou, France

Medium: Limestone

Size: H. 97cm – L. 32cm – D. 23cm

Period: End of the 12th century

Ref.230



# Romanesque Christ.

Important and rare Romanesque Christ in polychrome walnut wood. This large crucified Christ from a village in Burgundy is unpublished and is a significant piece in the corpus of Romanesque sculpture in Burgundy because its geographical origin is known. The head with the beautiful hieratic face, surrounded by a crown with traces of gilding is in a frontal position. The chest is weakly marked, above a perizonium revealing the knees. The legs are parallel and rest on the suppedaneum.





The village of origin of our sculpture is within a radius of less than 20km from the virgins of Nolay, Anzy-le-Duc and Lantenay with strong plastic similarities with these 3 works, leading us to date this Christ from the end of the 12th century.

This unpublished Romanesque sculpture is a recent discovery, coming from a private collection with acquisition at the beginning of the 20th century from an antique dealer in Anzy-le-Duc.

References consulted:

Romanesque Wood Sculpture in Burgundy, Styles, Techniques, Restoration, Nadia Bertoni-Cren  
Stephane Cren, 2020.

Origin: Côte d'Or, Burgundy, France

Medium: walnut wood

Size: Height 101cm

Period: 12th century

Ref.241



# Christ in Majesty.

Important and rare romanesque sculpture in very high relief belonging to a representation of the Last Judgment and coming from a Romanesque portal or tympanum. Christ is represented seated on a throne, holding the book in his left hand and raising his right arm which has disappeared. The raising of the shoulder attests to the gesture. He wears a coat with straight folds in the antique style and richly decorated on the torso. The throne is decorated with rosettes and friezes of dots. The Book is also finely sculpted, with rosettes and characters. It probably represents the Book of Life with four engraved episodes relating to the judged soul. This Christ in glory is part of the corpus of sculptures of Provençal Romanesque art and can be dated to the middle of the 12th century.



The Book of Life is linked to the Last Judgment and is described in Apocalypse chapter 20 verse 12. The scenes engraved here represent in a dial a character in various attitudes, lying down, standing, falling head down, and likely evoke major events in the life of the person judged (see photograph with increased contrasts). Despite the gaps, this sculpture retains its strength and presence. Representations of Christ in Majesty from a portal are extremely rare in public and private collections. Our sculpture also presents an unpublished illustration of the Apocalypse of the New Testament.

References consulted:

- Tympan and Roman portals, Michel Pastoureau Vincent Cunillere, 2014
- The ancient influence in Provençal Roman art, Victor Lassalle · 1970
- Roman sculptures of Haute-Provence, Jacques Thirion, In Bulletin Monumental, volume 130 n°1, 1972.

Origin: Provence, France

Medium: Limestone

Size: Height 61cm without base

Period: 12th century

Ref.247



# Romanesque Enthroned Virgin.

Large enthroned Virgin from the Romanesque period in polychrome wood. This unpublished Virgin and Child is part of the corpus of Romanesque Virgins from Burgundy. Mary is seated on a throne and carries the crowned Child on her knees, in an off-center position. The Virgin is dressed in a long coat with straight folds, her head veiled under a low crown. This beautiful sculpture has retained its original polychromy and presents characteristics found on the examples known in Burgundy, and more particularly in Côte d'Or. The execution of the faces, the hands with very elongated fingers, evoke the Virgin of Viévy preserved at the museum of sacred art in Dijon and dated from the end of the 11th century. However, our sculpture presents differentiating elements placing it later in the 12th century, by the clothing details and the off-center position of Christ.



If it retains features from the very beginning of the 12th century, the general design, the hairstyles and the position of Christ bring it closer to the Virgin in Majesty preserved at the Hôtel-Dieu museum in Beaune (second part of the 12th century, Inv. 87 GHD 309) and coming from the surroundings of Pommard. Our sculpture can thus be dated to the end of the 12th century. The back is flat and not hollowed. No restorations.

References consulted:

Romanesque Wood Sculpture in Burgundy, Styles, Techniques, Restoration, Nadia Bertoni-Cren  
Stephane Cren, 2020.

Origin: Burgundy, France

Medium: Polychrome wood

Size: Height 74 cm w/o modern base

Period: 12th century

Ref.252



# Romanesque Virgin of Cerdanya.

Rare and beautiful Romanesque enthroned Virgin from the 12th century. Our Virgin can easily be identified as a Romanesque virgin from the Pyrenees, from Cerdanya, a region of Catalonia shared between France and Spain. The Virgin carries the child on her left knee, Christ holding the globe in his left hand. The missing right arm was to give the blessing. Remains of polychromy show that the Virgin wore a golden pectoral. The back is full, slightly hollowed out of the bench-throne.



The dress of the Virgin, with very vertical folds, confirms our dating, as do the faces of the Virgin and of Christ, which bring our majesty closer to the black Virgin of Belloc preserved in the church of Saint-Jean de Dorres and dated from the 12th century.

The wide face of the Virgin and her severe features are characteristic of Cerdanya Virgins in the 12th century, softening in later periods. Resemblances can be noted with the Virgin of Belloc, mentioned above and dated to the 12th century, as well as with the Virgin of Aragnouet, housed in the chapel of the Hospitallers of Saint John of Jerusalem, also dated to the 12th century.

#### References consulted:

- Collectible medieval statuary. Volume I. Liéveaux-Bocador, Jacqueline & Bresset, Edouard 1972.
- Medieval Madonna and Child from Catalonia. Marie-Pasquine Subes and Jean-Bernard Mathon 2019.

Origin: Cerdanya, France or Spain

Medium: Polychrome wood

Size: Height 67.5 cm

Period: 12th century

Ref.214



# Sedes Sapientiae.

Virgin and Child in Majesty known as Sedes Sapientiae from the Romanesque period. The mother and child are both crowned and present a perfectly frontal position. The Virgin, in a dress with straight pleats, wears a large headdress hemmed in wolf teeth whose sides are joined by a rectangular buckle on the chest. Christ raises his right arm in a sign of blessing and holds the open Book in his left hand. The rectangular throne displays a tall and slender shape typical of Nordic and Germanic productions. The elongated face of the Virgin, the shape of her mouth and the narrow shoulders place this sculpture in the corpus of Germanic Muttergottes of the 12th century with a probable origin around Cologne.





Small in size, probably dedicated to private worship, carved in poplar wood, our sculpture still shows tiny traces of polychromy.

Related artworks:

Muttergottes from Hoven (Kloster Marienborn), 12th century. Thronende Muttergottes, 12th century, Schilling Kapellen, Frankfurt am Main - Virgin in Majesty from the Hannover Museum from comes from Nikolausberg, 12th century.

References consulted:

- Rhin-Meuse. Art and civilization 800-1400. An exhibition of the Belgian Ministries of French culture and Dutch culture, of the Schnütgen-Museum of the City of Cologne, Cologne/Brussels, 1972
- Belgian Review of Archaeology and Art History, volume 30, 1961
- Medieval statuary collection. Volume I. Liéveaux-Boccador, Jacqueline. - Bresset, Edouard 1972.

Origin: Rhineland, Germany

Medium: Poplar wood

Size: Height 50cm

Period: 12th century

Ref.249



# Historiated romanesque capital.

King David and Mephibosheth.

Triangular section corner capital with two sculpted and historiated faces. The first scene shows a horseman joining a banquet scene with a lamenting character in the background. The clothes decorated with curved lines are hemmed with trepan work. The second scene, the banquet, shows a king seated at a table, accompanied by two guests, one of whom seems to welcome the horseman. The table is covered with a pleated cloth and supports a plate in front of the king and some bread. This scene seems to correspond to the biblical episode of Mephibosheth at King David's table. The scene with the rider can therefore be the arrival of Tsiba who will betray Mephibosheth, which can explain the attitude of the second guest who turns away, contrite...





According to the Old Testament, Mephibosheth (Merib-baal) is the grandson of King Saul and King David granted him the privilege of eating at his table like his sons. He will be deprived of his goods and privileges during Tsiba's betrayal. A rare representation for the Romanesque period.

The faces, wises, show little relief and a lot of austerity, the moustaches of the characters are strongly marked, which seems to reflect a northern work of the 12th century under Rhine or Meuse influence. North or East of France.

References consulted:

- Musée du Louvre French Sculpture Volume I Middle Ages, Françoise Baron, Paris, 1996
- Musée national du Louvre. Reasoned description of the Sculptures of the Middle Ages, the Renaissance and Modern Times, volume 1 Middle Ages, Marcel Auber Michèle Beaulieu, Paris, 1950

Origin: North of France.

Medium: Limestone

Size: H.32cm – W.35cm – D.37cm

Period: 12th century

Ref.245

# Head of a Saint or Apostle.

Rare head of a saint or apostle from the beginning of the second Romanesque age. Almond-shaped eyes, with very marked cheekbones, eyelids and eyebrows. Stylized hair and beard with scrolls. The original style of this Romanesque sculpture makes it difficult to locate precisely. However, we can attribute it without too much risk to the Ile de France or Champagne. Origin: Ex Sotheby's, ex Kervorkian collection, ex Robert Kime collection.





Related artworks: Abbey of Saint-Faron, Romanesque head from the 12th century (Seine et Marne).

References consulted:

- Decorative stone sculpture from 1137 to 1314 deposited at the Cluny museum, Anne Pinget, 1974
- Sculptures from the 11th-12th centuries Romanesque and early Gothic art, Xavier Dectot, 2005
- Romanesque sculpture, Jean-René Gaborit, 2010.

Origin: Ile de France or Champagne, France

Medium: Limestone

Size: Height 18.5cm

Period: First quarter of the 12th century

Ref.222

# Romanesque capital.

Paris, probably Saint-Martin-des-Champs.

This Romanesque corner capital in limestone, of great elegance, is distinguished by a vegetal sculpted decor characteristic of the Parisian Romanesque style of the first half of the 12th century. It features a basket adorned with scrolls, palmettes, and interlaced toruses, classic elements of Romanesque ornamentation from this period. This capital shows striking similarities with those in the apse of the church of the Saint-Martin-des-Champs Priory in Paris, dated to around 1130-1135. The ambulatory of this church, an important witness to Romanesque sculpture in Île-de-France, also features corner capitals with comparable vegetal motifs, both in the density of the decor and the use of high relief and interlaced forms.

The scrolls, flexible and coiled, symmetrically develop across the entire basket.



The palmettes, stylized but imposing in shape, emerge forcefully from the decor and contribute to the overall sense of volume. The interlaced toruses, large rounded moldings, reinforce the decorative structure and emphasize the architectural strength characteristic of this period.

Related works:

- Capitals from the lapidary collection of Saint-Martin-des-Champs.
- Corner capital with palmette decoration, Cluny Museum, RF 1131 (Cl. 19510).

Consulted references:

- Sculptures des XIe - XIIe siècles Roman et premier art gothique, catalogue of the National Museum of the Middle Ages, Thermes de Cluny, Xavier Dectot, Paris 2005.
- Musée du Louvre, département des sculptures du Moyen Âge, de la Renaissance et des Temps modernes. Sculpture française, t. I, Moyen Âge, Paris, RMN, Françoise Baron, 1996.



Origin: Paris, France

Medium: Limestone

Size: Height 28cm – Width 31cm

Period: First half of the 12th century

Ref.227

# Saint-Michel de Cuxa Abbey.

Element from the 12th-century choir screen.

Rare and significant Romanesque marble sculpture with pink and yellow veins, representing a female head in almost full-round. The oval-shaped face exhibits fine chisel work in the eyes and the corners of the lips. The eyes, with lead inlays in their cavities, give the sculpture a unique intensity, emphasizing the sober and hieratic expression of the face. The hair, combed into stiff strands, falls asymmetrically over the forehead. These formal characteristics, combined with the material used, a marble from the Pyrenees probably extracted from the Bouleternère quarries, confirm the prestigious origin of this piece, undoubtedly from the choir screen of the Abbey of Saint-Michel de Cuxa or that of the Priory of Serrabona in Occitania.

These formal characteristics, combined with the material used, a marble from the Pyrenees probably extracted from the Bouleternère quarries, confirm the prestigious origin of this piece, undoubtedly from the choir screen of the Abbey of Saint-Michel de Cuxa or that of the Priory of Serrabona in Occitania.





The choir screen of Saint-Michel de Cuxa was dismantled in the 16th century, and its fragments were dispersed, several of them now being part of private and public collections, notably at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, which holds multiple elements from this choir screen. This female head comes from the private American collection of Karl Stirner.

Consulted references:

- Les tribunes de Cuxa et de Serrabona, deux clôtures de chœur exceptionnelles de l'époque romane, DRAC Languedoc Roussillon, 2014.
- Les ateliers de Cuxa-Serrabone : 1130-1155, Deux ateliers de sculpture en Roussillon, Gérard Vidal, 2015.



Origin: Occitania, France  
Medium: Marble  
Size: Height 20 cm  
Period: 12th century  
Ref.254

# See also

## *Gothic Impressions*

When beauty is expressed through the purity and elegance of lines, without forgetting the legacy of the past.

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