

# THE CHEST GAZETTE

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## ” Painéis de São Vicente ”

“Saint Vincent’s Panels” is a polyptych composed by 6 paintings attributed to Nuno Gonçalves, which feature a grouping of 58 characters around the double figuration of Saint Vincent.

A solemn and monumental assembly representing the Court and various strata of Portuguese society at the time, in an act of veneration to the patron and inspiring the fourteenth-century military expansion in the Maghreb.

These figures, in clearly stated volumes, as characterized by the expressive concentration of faces and attitudes as by the exquisite pictorial definition of costumes and props, seems to combine, in this ceremonial staging, the intention of a narrative evocation with a contemplative vision.

Although the full understanding of the intent and meaning of the work remains problematic, it is believed that it was originally integrated in the altarpiece of Saint Vincent in the main chapel of the Lisbon Cathedral.

It is a masterpiece of Portuguese painting from the 15th century in which, in a very dry but powerfully realistic style, portray prominent figures of the Portuguese court of that time, including what is presumed to be a self-portrait, and traverses the entire society, nobility and clergy to the people.

The only figure immediately identified was that of “Infante D. Henrique”, since an identical image of him appeared in the contemporary work Chronicle of Guinea, by Gomes Eanes de Zurara, which led to the conclusion that the figures portrayed belong to the period that preceded the Portuguese Discoveries .

They were discovered at the end of the 19th century (1882), at the Paço Patriarcal de São Vicente de Fora in Lisbon. At the time it was estimated that the work would have been carried out between 1470 and 1480.



“Saint Vincent’s Panels” is an oil painting and tempera on wood and is on display at the National Museum of Ancient Art in Lisbon..



The panels were first presented to the public in 1910 at the Portuguese Academy of Fine Arts in 2 triptychs. In 1940 they were first presented to the public in the order in which they are now exhibited at the National Museum of Ancient Art (MNAA).