

Abstract

Kayo Hirakawa, “Albrecht Dürer’s *Landauer Altarpiece*: Painter and Sculptor in Nuremberg”, *Studies in Western Art*, 7, 2002, pp. 24–41.

For *The Landauer Altarpiece* Dürer not only adopted the type of altarpiece current in Italy, the *pala*, but also designed an *aedicula* frame and stained glass. This paper discusses his elaboration from the viewpoint of competition with other masters in Nuremberg. In the late fifteenth century, the large-sized shrine altarpiece consisting of painting and sculpture was popular in Nuremberg; there Wolgemut, the former teacher of Dürer, supervised the production of this type of altarpiece and became the city’s most successful painter. In contrast, Dürer attempted to compose altarpieces consisting entirely of painting, while sculptors such as Kraft and Stoss also began to create peculiar church decorations made solely of the stone or wood sculpture in which they specialized. Judging from the amount of payment received, however, Dürer’s painting was not as highly esteemed as these masters’ works. Patricians in Nuremberg preferred large, splendid works to medium-sized paintings of superior quality. The ancestors of the donor Matthäus Landauer were painters and this would factor into his decision to order an altarpiece from Dürer. Given this rare opportunity, Dürer tried out various strategies to compete with the splendor of large-scale shrine altarpieces and sculpture.

© 2014 Kayo Hirakawa