

Daniel Katz Gallery

ANTIQUITY TO THE TWENTIETH CENTURY



Daniel Neuberger the Younger (Augsburg c.1620 - c.1681)

Lot and his Daughters

Coloured wax relief

42 x 32 x 2 cm (16 ¹/₄ x 12 ⁵/₁₆ x 0 ³/₁₆ inches)

The relief depicts an episode from the life of Lot, a nephew of Abraham, as recounted in the Old Testament [Genesis 19:30-38]. After his flight from Sodom and the subsequent death of his wife, Lot and his two daughters took refuge in a cave. Believing that not only the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah but also all human beings bar themselves had been wiped from the face of the earth, the daughters made their father drunk and then lay with him in turn, in order to perpetuate the human race. Each of the daughters gave birth to a boy. The son of the elder daughter was called Moab and became the ancestor of the Moabites, and the son of the younger, Ammon, ancestor of the Ammonites.

This biblical subject, together with that of "Susanna and the Elders", became popular with the onset of the Counter-Reformation since it allowed for representations of the female nude – always enjoyed by the discerning collector – in the guise of a religious theme. The sliding shutter integrated into the frame created a further thrill by hiding the delicate wax not only from potentially damaging sunlight but also from the eyes of those considered unsuited for such visual pleasures.

This exceptionally large wax relief is comparable both style and technique with Daniel Neuberger the Younger's work. It was probably conceived and executed in the early 1650s, when the young but already renowned Neuberger had gained his first commissions from Emperor Ferdinand III as well as from noblemen attached to the imperial court in Vienna.