

Explaining the painting “Demeter.”

Demeter is the ancient Greek goddess of harvest and fertility. She is commonly associated with the bounty she gave to mankind. Her greatest gifts were cereals, which led to the development of civilization and her name in Greek means “Distribution mother.” She had a daughter with Zeus, “Persephone,” and both are forever associated with the seasons and the renewal of Earth’s bounty.

Goddess symbols were incorporated into the ancient worship of the goddess, often worn as jewelry, used in household décor, and worn as talismans to seek the goddess special gifts, blessing, or protection. Many goddess symbols survived in ancient art and more recent art of the 16 to 19th centuries. Most of the symbols come from the legends surrounding the goddess and could stand for the goddess and represent her, even without her presence. Some of our icons, representing a bountiful harvest, originated from the ancient symbols of Demeter and some are incorporated in this artwork.

What you see: A contemporary representation of the goddess observing the growth of a cereal plant.

The related symbols and hidden clues:

1. The word “Demeter” in Greek letters is embedded beneath several layers of paint and is slightly apparent throughout the painting.
2. The dominant colors are brown and light navy blue, the colors representing Demeter.
3. Her seat is made of sheaves of wheat.
4. Cornucopia, the horn of bounty, is on the right and contains, on purpose, several fruits unknown to the ancient Greeks to indicate that this is a contemporary representation and not a traditional one.
5. A growing wheat plant is on the left and a mature wheat spike is tied to her lower leg.
6. The shower of grains represents the autumn harvest of cereals.
7. Daisies are the goddess’ favorite flower.
8. The orange blossom in her hair and on the right side is one of her favorite perfumes.
9. The basket of corn (maize) below (unknown to the Greeks), originates from a common usage in Great Britain, where “corn” means cereal grains.
10. The head band, necklace, foot band, and the chain connecting her to the horn of plenty, are made of pearls, her favorite gem.
11. The eye of Zeus, her jealous first lover and the father of her daughter, is always watching from above to avoid more troubles with this goddess, which are in the tales of ancient Greek literature.

(This explanation was written in response to several requests to explain this work.)