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# Raphael paintings discovered during restoration of Vatican hall

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14:16 (GMT+2) Sat, 01 Jul 2017



Vatican City (dpa) – Two paintings by Italian Renaissance master Raphael have been discovered during restoration works of a Vatican Museums hall.

Raphael was said to have painted two allegorical figures, depicting Friendship and Justice, just before his death in 1520, aged 37. The discovery was made in the so-called Room of Constantine.

“We are now certain of the intervention of the master, the great Raphael,” Vatican Museum's restorer Fabio Piacentini said in a video released by the Vatican's TV services.

In the same video, German Professor Arnold Nesselrath, an art historian for the Vatican Museums, said the two oil paintings “are of a much higher quality than what surrounds them.”

The Room of Constantine was known to have been decorated by Raphael, but art historians had until now thought the artist did not have time to complete any painting himself, due to his premature death.

The Hall, one of four grand halls commissioned by Pope Julius II – who was also a patron to Michelangelo – was finished by Raphael's disciples. Its restoration started in March 2015, should be completed next year.